

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire



*“Not all those who wander are lost.”*

—J.R.R. Tolkien

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire

*"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here."*

January 7, 2024

Epiphany Sunday

10:00 a.m.

GATHERING CHIMES

*Let us be gathered in silence so that we may prepare to worship.*

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

*The Golden Carol*

Robert J. Powell

INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

*Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.*

One: Arise! Shine!

**Many: For the Glory of God shines around us!**

One: Arise! Shine!

**Many: For the inbreaking of God has come at last!**

One: Arise! Shine!

**Many: For we come from all directions seeking the Christ.**

One: Arise! Shine! For the Light of God will lead our journeys!

**Many: Come, let us adore Christ!**

\*HYMN

*What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright*

No. 68

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

*The congregation may be seated.*

**God with us, we come together this morning to seek your presence. Here we offer you our journeys, laying before you the good, the bad, and the ugly of our lives. We lift up our whole selves to you so that we may be replenished, healed, made whole, and comforted. Keep us in your light that casts out all darkness, as we pray with the words you taught us saying,**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

\*SONG OF PRAISE

*Gloria*

**Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANTHEM

*One Star*  
Chancel Choir

Ed Harris

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of God be with you. **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

SERMON

"Following Your Star"

\*HYMN

*O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*

No. 69

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

*If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew. Cards will be collected by one of the pastors during the hymn after the sermon, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.*

CHORAL RESPONSE

SHARING OUR OFFERINGS and RECEIVING OUR STAR GIFTS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*What Strangers Are These?*

Alexandre Guilmant/  
Michael Ryan

\*DOXOLOGY (Tune: *From All That Dwell Below the Skies*)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below. Alleluia, Alleluia.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Amen.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

**Generous God, we bring our gifts as an act of awe and wonder, knowing that you multiply every effort. We share the joy of the magi, for we too have seen the star and know the joy of giving. We praise you with our gifts and with our lives, that the great riches of Christ might be opened for all to experience. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*We welcome all people to join in receiving this sacrament. Children may participate at the discretion of their parents.*

CALL TO COMMUNION

One: God be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many: We lift them to God.**

One: Let us give thanks to God most high.

**Many: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

COMMUNION PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

BREAKING OF THE BREAD and POURING OF THE CUP

CONSECRATING PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

*Communion at CCA is open to anyone who would like to partake. When you receive the bread, eat at your own pace, symbolizing our individual relationship with God. When you receive the juice, drink with the whole congregation, symbolizing our communion as the Body of Christ. The bread is gluten, egg, and dairy free and the juice is non-alcoholic, so that there may be no barriers to Christ's table.*

ORGAN MEDITATION

*Jesus, Redeemer of the World*

Robert J. Powell

*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*

J.C. Bach/  
Gilbert M. Martin

COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

**We give thanks, loving God, for the bond of this ritual and communal meal that links us to all who have called upon your name. May your wisdom grow within us. May your word inspire us. May the nourishment of this bread and cup strengthen us for the journey, as you send us out into the world as people of courage, compassion, and commitment. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*  
verses 1, 2 and 4 only

No. 376

\*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

\*COMMISSION AND BLESSING

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

\*POSTLUDE

*Yuletide Joyeux*

Craig A. Penfield

*(\*Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.)*

*Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service  
obtained from One License with license #A-731944.*

# THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST, NH, UCC



**A Welcoming, Open and Affirming Congregation  
of the United Church of Christ**



**“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
you are welcome here.”**

*We, the members of The Congregational Church of Amherst, New Hampshire, United Church of Christ, believe God’s Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ call us to love all our neighbors as we would want to be loved. We are called to be as one body, seeking to walk together in the full life and ministry of our church.*

*We welcome each individual as a child of God. As covenant members of Christ’s church, we celebrate God’s love for people of all races and ethnic backgrounds, all mental and physical abilities, all socioeconomic backgrounds, all sexual orientations, all gender identities and gender expressions, and all of the other diverse attributes woven into the fabric of humankind.*

*With God’s grace, we invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship and sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of our church.*

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. Our membership is open to all those who choose to walk with us in our witness. Please speak with any of our deacons or pastors should you have any questions regarding our church or our membership.

## Worship Notes:

- Church school is available for children Pre-K through grade 7.
- Our church nursery is staffed and available for parents with young children.
- Joys and Concerns may be written on the cards found in the pews. You are also welcome to submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the worship service.
- Please remember to wear your nametag each Sunday, so that we may all greet our neighbors. If you do not have a permanent nametag, temporary nametags may be found inside the friendship registers. If you are in need of a new, permanent nametag, please see one of the deacons.
- Please join us in the community room for a time of fellowship after the worship service. Coffee and beverages are offered.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given. An emergency plan is in place for the children in the church school.

The church office is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 1:00 p.m., and available Monday through Friday by telephone 673-3231 and by email [info@ccamherst.org](mailto:info@ccamherst.org). Please feel free to leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Visit our church’s website at [www.ccamherst.org](http://www.ccamherst.org), and follow us on Facebook.com/ccamherst and Instagram.com/ccamherstnh.

***Grounded in God’s Love—Serving Neighbors Near and Far—Welcoming to All***

## PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church  
 Kevin G. S. Marsh  
 Rev. Shayna Appel  
 Sara L. Phelps  
 Michael Havay  
 Mark and Fran Baddeley  
 Doug Topliffe

Ministers to the World  
 Acting Associate Pastor  
 Guest Pastor  
 Director of Music  
 Organist/Accompanist  
 Deacons in Charge  
 Videographer

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## LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley  
 Sue Werst  
 Dave Hagerstrom  
 Gretchen Davis

Church School Coordinator  
 Teacher, Preschool to Elementary  
 Teacher, Grades 5 to 7  
 Nursery Attendant

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for January include toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorants, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap, feminine hygiene products, diapers and wipes. Donations should be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford; if you are unsure where, please call their office at 673-9898. Many thanks for your continuing support!

**DONATED ALTAR FLOWERS WELCOME:** Flowers can be given to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The donor arranges with a local florist to have their chosen flowers delivered, or can create their own arrangement and bring it on Sunday. After the service they may take the flowers home or donate them to someone in need of some cheer. There are many openings in the coming months. Contact Sue Stout, or Andrea in the church office, to schedule a Sunday.

**BEWARE OF FALLING SNOW AND ICE:** During the winter months, we want to remind everyone that snow and ice may fall from our roof at any time. Please use caution when in our driveway, and do not walk too close to the building.

### Financial Summary (as of November 30, 2023)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$218,660	\$214,413	\$ 4,247
Expenses	\$196,094	\$207,713	\$(11,619)
Net Income	\$ 22,567	\$ 6,700	\$ 15,867

*Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar; as such, some columns may not appear to total correctly.*

*We hope you are finding this information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Finance Team: Ken Bell, Don Lyon, Paul Spiess (Treasurer), Doug Topliffe, and Todd Whitney.*

*Sunday, January 7, 2024*

## **Our Church Calendar**

**January 7—13, 2024**

Some events are taking place virtually.  
Links are sent out directly by email, and a list  
of recurring meetings with their links can be found  
in the member section of our website.

Today	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Fellowship
	11:15 a.m.	Youth Choir
	11:30 a.m.	Small Group Ministry
	2:00 p.m.	Middle High Youth Group
	4:30 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Luncheon
Tuesday	10:00 a.m.	WA Board
	7:00 p.m.	Diaconate
	7:00 p.m.	Trustees of the Facility
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Congregational Care
	4:00 p.m.	Communications
	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir
Saturday	12:00 p.m.	Memorial Service for Fay Deysher