

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



*"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another,  
God lives in us and God's love is made complete in us."*

- 1 John 4:12

# 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."*

December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 a.m.

## Shine Sunday

GATHERING CHIMES

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

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

*Once in Royal David's City*

Dan Forrest/  
Douglas E. Wagner

INTROIT

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

*The congregation may remain seated.*

One: We light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas  
in anticipation of the inbreaking of God's light in Jesus.

**Many: The first candle reflects the Hope we feel as we wait for that light.**

One: The second candle reflects our dreams for Peace.

**Many: The third candle reflects our longing for Joy.**

One: Today we light the fourth candle, the candle of Love.

*(all four Advent candles are lit)*

One: This candle reminds us of the love that God has for all of us.

**Many: This candle reminds us of the strength and courage we find in that love.**

One: This candle reminds us that God calls us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

**Many: This candle reminds us to lean into love, always.**

**All: Let us worship together in Love!**

\*HYMN

*Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

pages 10 and 11

*Please rise in body or spirit.*

WELCOMING GOD'S PRESENCE (unison)

*The congregation may be seated.*

**Holy One, as we stand on the threshold of Christmas,  
we light our last Advent candle in anticipation of your arrival.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Shower us with the peace we long to feel.  
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained.  
Magnify your love within us,  
and teach us to walk in the light of Jesus. Amen.**

\*SONG OF PRAISE

*Gloria*

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

CHURCH SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

*Away in a Manger*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

**Hark! The heralds angels sing, "Glory to the new born king.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!  
Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the new born King!**

*Joy to the World!*

**Joy to the World! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And Heaven and nature sing, and Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.**

**\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

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

ANTHEM

*The Holly and the Ivy*  
Chancel Choir

John Rutter

SHINE REFLECTION

“Expecting Jesus”

WIDENING OUR WELCOME

Quinn Tremblay, Senior Youth Group

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND PRAYERS

*All are invited to place offerings and prayer cards in the plates as they're passed.*

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

*Ring Little Bells/O Come, Little Children*

Larry Shackley

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (contemporary version)

**Mother and Father God, all around us,**

**Holy is Your name.**

**May your Reign come, may Your will be done,**

**In our world and in Yours .**

**Give us strength and sustenance for this day,**

**and forgive our wrongdoings**

**as we forgive those who wrong us.**

**Help us to resist harmful distractions,**

**and keep our hearts from being swayed by fear.**

**All of Creation is Yours, O God,**

**May we see You and feel You with us, always. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

No. 23

\*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

\*BLESSING OUR COMMUNITY

One: Let us carry the Spirit of Advent into our world!

**Many: Offering good news to all who long to hear it.**

One: In the midst of brokenness and division,

**Many: We proclaim the God of Peace.**

One: In the midst of sorrow and grief,

**Many: We proclaim the God of Joy.**

One: In the midst of apathy and despair,

**Many: We proclaim the God of Hope.**

**All: We go now, as followers of Jesus,  
as conduits of God's Love, offered to all. Amen!**

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

\*POSTLUDE

*Yuletide Joyeux*

Craig A. Penfield

*(\*Please rise in body or spirit.)*



## Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, December 24

5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Our **5:00 p.m. Family Service** is tailored for families with young children and for the young at heart. Come hear the Christmas story as told by our Junior and Senior Youth Groups in our traditional Christmas Pageant. We'll raise our child-friendly glow stick "candles" as we sing *Silent Night* and *Joy to the World* together!

Our **8:00 p.m. Candlelight Service** tells the Christmas story through lessons and carols with music from our Bell and Chancel Choirs. As the sanctuary gradually fills with candlelight and the singing of *Silent Night*, we proclaim the birth of Jesus, the light of the world!

*Both services will be livestreamed on Facebook and will be available on our website after 9:30 p.m.*

# 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  
Rev. Maureen R. Frescott  
Rev. Charlotte E. Y. Bell  
Sara L. Phelps  
Michael Havay  
Sally Bowkett  
Liz MacMillan, Gail Wiegand  
The Pyle Family  
Gretchen and Chris Pyles  
Patricia Bodan

Ministers to the World  
Senior Pastor  
Associate Pastor  
Director of Music  
Organist/Accompanist  
Deacon in Charge  
Deacons  
Advent Candle Lighting  
Ushers  
Videographer

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## LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley  
Deb Boczenowski  
Gretchen Davis  
Matt Emmons and Vicky Leknes  
Larissa Riley  
Melissa Lewis

Director of Youth Ministries  
Teacher, Preschool/Kindergarten  
Assistant Teacher, Preschool/Kindergarten  
Teachers, Grades 1 to 4  
Teacher, Grades 5 to 7  
Nursery Attendant

**THE WREATHS ON THE FRONT OF OUR CHURCH** and the many seasonal decorations have been provided by the Jackson Fund, established many years ago by Robert Jackson to honor his mother's tradition of providing Christmas wreaths for our church. Elizabeth Darling Jackson began this family's tradition of providing the wreaths on the advice of her mother, Louella Darling.

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for December include toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorants, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap, feminine hygiene products, diapers, and wipes. Donations may be left in our SHARE collection containers found in the narthex, the church office, and outside the community room. Donations may also 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!

**THE CHRISTMAS FUND** for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a unique special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that allows us to recognize and honor those who serve our beloved church. One of the special aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds do not support programs, make grants to institutions, or fund advocacy programs, but rather, they provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay employees. Thank you for your generosity and support.

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

# CCA Worship Service Reflection

The theme of the service was...

I learned...

I did not understand or still wonder about...

Something that helped connect my faith to my everyday life was...

# Journey to Bethlehem



Sunday, December 21, 2025

LOVE  
⇒ JESUS ⇐  
grows  
in faith  
CHANGE  
THE WORLD

