



# The Congregational Church of Needham

*An open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ*

**December 10, 2017 10:00am**

**Second Sunday of Advent**

John the Baptist by Thomas Merton

*(Part three from a longer poem)*

St. John, strong Baptist,  
Angel before the face of the Messiah  
Desert-dweller, knowing the solitudes that lie  
Beyond anxiety and doubt,  
Eagle whose flight is higher than our atmosphere  
Of hesitation and surmise,  
You are the first Cistercian and the greatest Trappist:  
Never abandon us, your few but faithful children,  
For we remember your amazing life,  
Where you laid down for us the form and pattern of  
Our love for Christ,  
Being so close to Him you were His twin.  
Oh buy us, by your intercession, in your mighty heaven,  
Not your great name, St. John, or ministry,  
But oh, your solitude and death:  
And most of all, gain us your great command of graces,  
Making our poor hands also fountains full of life and wonder  
Spending, in endless rivers, to the universe,  
Christ, in secret, and His Father, and His sanctifying Spirit.

*Welcome to our worship service.  
Please join us for refreshments and time for fellowship immediately following the service.*

**PRELUDE**

Siciliano  
*Domenico Scarlatti*

**WELCOME SONG** (*see page 7*)

Soon and Very Soon (Andrae Crouch)

**Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!  
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!  
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We're going to see the King!**

**No more crying there, we are going to see the King!...**

**No more dying there, we are going to see the King!...**

**Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!...**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

**CONGREGATIONAL GREETING**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**\*OPENING HYMN #101** (*Black, New Century*)

**Comfort, Comfort O My People**

**TIME FOR CHILDREN**

*Children leave for Sunday School after the Lighting of the Advent Wreath Liturgy.*

**CHILDREN'S HYMN**

**Love Came Down at Christmas**

## **ADVENT WREATH LITURGY - The Candle of Peace**

This world we live in longs for peace -  
Peace around the world;  
Peace in our nation;  
Peace in our town;  
Peace in our church;  
Peace in our hearts;  
God, we come to call upon you.

**In a world where peace seems to be so far  
away, we call upon you, Prince of Peace, to come.**

In this season of Advent, we wait for the coming of Peace into our world.  
We await the birth of Emmanuel, God with us, who comes into our lives in a new way.

**Come, Messiah, come, and save us.**

*Light the second purple candle*

**Dear God, we pray for the peace that only You can bring through your Son, Jesus the  
Christ. May we walk in the paths of peace. Amen.**

**ANTHEM**

Wolcum Yole!(from Ceremony of Carols)  
*Benjamin Britten(1913-1976)*

## **SELECTION OF READINGS**

Isaiah 40:1-11 God's People Are Comforted

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to them that they have served their term, that their penalty is paid, that they have received from God's hand double for all their sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Sovereign One, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of God shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of God has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of God blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord God comes with

might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. She will feed her flock like a shepherd; She will gather the lambs in her arms, and carry them in her bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Gospel Mark 1:1-8 The Gospel According to Mark The Proclamation of John the Baptist  
The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” ’, John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

**HYMN #108** (*Black, New Century*)

**Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old**  
vs. 1-2

**SERMON**

Rev. Jim Mitulski

**HYMN #108** (*Black, New Century*)

**Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old**  
vs. 3-4

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

*Concerns and Celebrations*

*Prayers for Our Friends and Families, Our Church, Our Community, and the World.*

*Lord’s Prayer (please pray whatever form is familiar to you; many choose to pray Our Father, Our Mother, Our Father and Mother, Our Creator, or Our Maker, or Father/Mother God...debts/debtors or trespasses/those who trespass...)*

**OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS**

*In each of our pews today is a black friendship book which we encourage you to fill out and pass to the person next to you during the offering. If you have been with us before, just put down your name, but if you are new today, please let us know who you are. Thanks!*

Offertory Anthem

*\*Doxology*

Pilgrim Hymnal #128 v. 4, adapted  
Text: Christina Rossetti (1872) Tune Gustav Holst (1906)

*What shall I give thee, poor as I am  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise one, I would do my part;  
What I can I give thee, give my heart.*

*Prayer of Dedication*

**CLOSING HYMN #104** (*Black, New Century*)  
**Anointed**

**We Hail You God's**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

Recessional  
*J. L. Battman*

*Worship Assistants:* Heather, Liam, Miles Salerno

*Deacons:* Paul Brown, Lucy Slosser

*Altar Guild:* Laura Cullen

*Ushers:* David Libby, Alex Cullen, Nancy Lane, Scott Lively

*Flowers:* Connie Kaufman

*Flower Delivery:* Martha Lamb

*The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Larry Meehan  
from the Baker and Brennan families.*

## **Covenant**

We strive to be a joyful, welcoming Christian Community.

We seek to be faithful in a world torn by suffering, injustice, oppression, and war.

We are inspired by God, Christ's Ministry, and the examples of other faithful people.

We join together in worship and song, fellowship, study, and mission to embrace the risks and challenges of continuing Christ's ministry

We struggle to live out our faith in the world by furthering justice and peace, witnessing to the truth, and proclaiming God's love and mercy for all people.

## **Open and Affirming Statement**

As a covenant community we are committed to the belief that all people are created equal before God.

In affirmation of the inclusive love of Christ Jesus, we welcome persons of any race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and economic circumstance to full participation in our community life and ministry.

We strive to reflect these beliefs in the language and content of our worship and in our lives together.

*(This statement adopted in 2000, reflects the welcome of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people and their friends and families.)*

# Soon and Very Soon

Capo 3 F(D)

B $\flat$ (G) F(D)

1,4 Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King!  
 2 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King!  
 3 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King!

C7(A7) F(D)

Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King!  
 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King!  
 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King!

F(D) B $\flat$ (G) F(D) A7(F#7) Dm(Bm)

Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King! Hal-le-  
 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King! Hal-le-  
 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King! Hal-le-

(B7/F#) (Em/G) (D/A) (Gm6) (D/A) (F#m/A) (D)  
 D7/A Gm/B $\flat$  F/C B $\flat$ m6 F/C Am/C F

lu - jah! Hal-le - lu - jah! We're going to see the King!

Welcome to all who are new or here for the first time! If you are interested in learning more about our church, please email Rev. Jim at [revjim@needhamucc.org](mailto:revjim@needhamucc.org), Rev Heike at [revheike@needhamucc.org](mailto:revheike@needhamucc.org) or call the office at 781-444-2510 to set up a conversation.

For updates on church life, our family ministries, Christian Education and Youth Ministries follow us at: **@NeedhamUCC on Instagram**

**Congregational Church of Needham UCC on Facebook**

**@needhamucc on Twitter [www.needhamucc.org](http://www.needhamucc.org)**

Please silence your cell phone before attending the service. You can Check In on Facebook and let people know you are here. Feel free to Tweet, Snapchat, or Instagram during the service. If you would like or need a hearing device an usher will be able to assist you. Children's Childcare is offered for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers in the Nursery located downstairs during the service.

#### **Rev. Jim Mitulski's Office Hours**

Please contact the church office to schedule an appointment during his office hours of Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm; Thursday 2-5pm Evening hours are also available by appointment.

\*If these times do not work for you please contact the office for alternate availability.

#### **Staff**

Interim Senior Minister—The Rev. Jim Mitulski  
[RevJim@needhamucc.org](mailto:RevJim@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 106

Associate Minister—The Rev. Heike Werder  
[RevHeike@needhamucc.org](mailto:RevHeike@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 105

Director of Children & Youth Ministries—Madelyn Downer  
[Youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:Youth@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 104

Organist/Accompanist—Sangyoung Kim

Housekeeper—Sanira Alchaar

Church Administrator—Danielle Jurdan  
[Office@needhamucc.org](mailto:Office@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 101

Office Assistant & Bookkeeper—Cindy Sullivan  
[Office2@needhamucc.org](mailto:Office2@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 100

Music Director—Valerie Becker  
[musicdirector@needhamucc.org](mailto:musicdirector@needhamucc.org)

Handyman—Bill Donovan

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*The Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton, Pastor Emeritus*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

**December 10, 2017**

*Please be advised that the Sunday, December 10th meetings to discuss a rental to High Rock Church Metrowest as well as the Special Meeting of the Congregation scheduled for Sunday, December 17th have been cancelled. High Rock Church Metrowest has located alternate worship space and we no longer need to consider renting to them at this time.*

**Christmas Flower Offering Envelopes Are Now Available** We are collecting donations in memory of loved ones for the poinsettias that decorate the church at Christmas time. Christmas Flower Offering envelopes will be available in the church pews and the church office. Please return envelopes to the office by December 18. After the Christmas Eve services, many of the plants will be given to people in our congregation who are sick, homebound or in need of a little extra attention.

**Bringing back a holiday favorite - Cheese Balls for sale for your holiday entertaining!**

A group of women gathered to make cheese balls – a Women’s Morning Fellowship favorite “Blast from the Past!” Herbed and Cheddar cheeseballs will be on sale this Sunday after church for \$ 8.00 each at coffee hour after church in Fellowship Hall. You will have the opportunity to try this favorite holiday treat before you buy. Proceeds will support future fellowship events for the Friendly Society.

**SAVE THE DATE - Friendly Christmas Luncheon and Advent Lunch on December 14th. Details to follow.**

**Mindfulness Meditation Today, December 10th and again on December 24th at 11:30am in the Chapel.** The Mindfulness Practice Group meets twice a month on the second and fourth Sunday’s for Mindfulness Meditation in the Chapel.

**The Transition Team** has several goals in the process of preparing our Church Profile. While the survey completion was critical, we also are striving for as much transparency as possible. With that in mind, we will be posting updates in the bulletin each week. The content will be generated by questions that we get from the congregation, so thank you in advance for your contributions.

Look for the “Transition Team” page on the church website where each week’s message will be archived. Check it frequently. Stop by the Transition Team table each week during Coffee Hour to ask questions or share concerns.

The Transition Team met yesterday (12/9) with the Representative from *Holy Cow Consulting* to receive a summary and analysis of the results of all but the last 7 questions of the survey. Those questions will be analyzed by the Transition Team.

We invite you to join us on **Sunday, December 17, at 9:00am and again at 11:30am in the chapel** to hear a report of the survey results. If you are unable to attend on December 17, please know that all of this information will also be sent out in the form of an email or letter. Following the dissemination of the survey results, we will hold small group meetings in January. These meetings will utilize a variety of formats and venues to allow further discussion and input from the congregation.

Have a question for the Transition Team?

Want to set up a meeting with a Transition Team member?

Please be in touch with us at [transitionteam@needhamucc.org](mailto:transitionteam@needhamucc.org) We welcome all opinions!

Your Transition Team,

Deb Abraham

Carl Madsen

Alan Clayton-Matthews

Rev. Jim Mitulski

Diana Conroy

Barbra Morton

Claudia Darmofal

Heather Salerno

Frank Luppino

**A Christmas caroling outing is being planned for Saturday, Dec. 16, in the late afternoon.** YOU ARE INVITED! We'll probably go to Briarwood and Avery Manor and perhaps other spots. Everyone is welcome, but we are particularly hoping that families with children will join in. Please let Dianne Rees know if you'd like attend, so you can get a message back with the details. [diannerees123@gmail.com](mailto:diannerees123@gmail.com)

**Calling all Bakers!** As part of our Membership care efforts, the desire has been expressed to improve upon our coffee hour offerings. And what better way than to offer home baked and nut free goodies, including also gluten free items. Rev. Heike invites anyone to a monthly afternoon of baking at the church. The next date is **December 20, 2017 in the 1154 GPA kitchen.** We can bake a lot in one afternoon and then freeze the goods for Sunday's coffee hour. If you wish to contribute to coffee hour but cannot help us bake, we gratefully accept donations. Please contact Rev. Heike if you want to help or donate.

**Lost and Found** There are a few items in the lost and found basket located in the office copy room. Please stop by to see if any of the items belong to you. Any items not claimed by December 31st will be donated or thrown away.

**Giving Tree: THANK YOU FOR GIVING!**

All of the ornaments have been taken from our Giving Tree - thank you! During church hours, you can drop the gifts off in Maddie's office. Toys can also be placed under the tree - please use

a post-it to mark them with your name! Gift cards that are dropped off outside of office hours can be placed in the black lock box on the door of Danielle Jurdan's office. Your ministry through this project helps to fill Christmas with an abundance of joy for so many families. Thank you for your participation!

**Calendars on Sale to Benefit Santa María Tzejá:** Please stop by the Guatemala table during Coffee Hour on Sundays in December to purchase a colorful NISGUA calendar for yourself or as a gift. Cost: \$20. Note: Ali Durbin's youngest daughter appears in one of the monthly photos that focus on human rights/social justice issues.

**Alternative Giving:** Looking for a meaningful gift to give? Consider a donation (in any amount) to the Guatemala Partnership and receive a card to give to a loved one (or teacher) showing that your gift was given in his or her honor. Your donation will support education in our partner village, Santa María Tzejá. See the gift cards at the Guatemala table after worship in Fellowship Hall during December.

Partner Family Letters to Guatemala: Ho, ho, ho, it's time to write your letter to your partner family in Santa María Tzejá. Fill in the family about your Christmas celebrations and traditions. Deadline for letters is January 2, 2018. Please send to: [davebjohnson77@gmail.com](mailto:davebjohnson77@gmail.com).

**NEEDHAM UCC FAMILY COOKBOOK:** Submit Your Recipes Now! Our Youth Groups will be compiling recipes through January for a new Congregational Church of Needham cookbook! You are invited to contribute your favorite recipe to be included. You can email the recipe to [youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:youth@needhamucc.org) or bring a printed copy and put it in Maddie's mailbox in the copy room! Additionally, if you'd like to share one or two sentences on a memory related to your recipe we will include that as well! Recipes will be collected through January 31. The cookbooks will be released in time for preparing your Easter dinner!

**Bible Study** Please join us in the reception room from 11:30-12:30 for Bible Study. We gather to read and discuss a few chapters of the Bible each week. This fall we will be reading Revelations. No advance reading required, so please drop by if you would like to try us out! For questions, contact Sunu Yeh at [dormouse99@gmail.com](mailto:dormouse99@gmail.com).

**What are you doing next Sunday?** Would you like to contribute to the life of our church, but are worried that you might not have the time? Consider ushering! Ushers serve one Sunday per month, and need to be in the sanctuary from about 20 minutes before and 20 minutes after service. Interested? Please speak with Eric Slosser or email him at [eric@slosser.net](mailto:eric@slosser.net).

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL & FAMILY MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

Our rehearsal schedule is listed below; participants need to be able to make at least one rehearsal prior to Christmas Eve along with the Christmas Eve rehearsal and service. Please come to Maddie, our youth director, with any questions!

Sunday, December 10: Lunch and rehearsal 11:30

Sunday, December 17: Lunch and rehearsal 11:30 (costumes distributed)

Sunday, December 24: Rehearsal 2:30-3:30, worship begins at 4

### **COOKIES WITH SANTA: Saturday, December 17, 11:30-1:30 PM**

Join Santa Claus in the reception room for cookies and pictures. Parents, bring your phone or camera to take a picture of your little with the jolly old elf himself! Santa's favorite snack of milk and cookies will be served to all! Gluten-free and nut-safe options will be available.

### **YOUTH MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**This Week:** Jr High 4:00-5:30; SR High 6:30-8:00; Baking for Cookies with Santa.

### **SR HIGH LOCK-IN: Friday, January 5-Saturday, January 6, 2018**

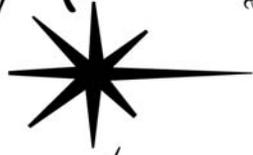
Senior High Youth Group students gather for their winter lock-in here at the church at 7:00 pm on Friday. On Saturday, we will head to snow tubing at the Nashoba Valley Tubing Park before returning at 2 PM. Meals: Students will eat dinner on Friday and breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The cost to students is \$50. If this event is cost-prohibitive for your student or family, please reach out to Maddie at [youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:youth@needhamucc.org). Friends of youth group members are welcome to join! RSVPs for this event are due Sunday, December 3, 2017 on the sign-up sheet outside Maddie's office. We are in need of 1 adult chaperone for overnight on Friday and 2 drivers on Saturday. Minimum of 6 students.

12/03/2017 Collections\* = \$15,944    12/03/2017 Worship Attendance = 115 people

November Electronic Pledge Amount: \$11,665.21

Please contact the church office 781-444-2510 or [office@needhamucc.org](mailto:office@needhamucc.org) to find out how you can give electronically. \*Collection amount does not include additional pledges received electronically. Our current pledge amount for 2017 is \$367,804.00. This represents a budget shortfall of \$56,459.00 for the year.

Sunday December 10th	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am  4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Meditation w/ Sue Findlay, <i>Chapel</i> Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group
Monday December 11th	9:00 am 7:00 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i> Finance Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Tuesday December 12th	7:00 pm	Board Meeting, <i>Library</i> Outreach Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Wednesday December 13th	7:00 pm	Advent Vespers, <i>Chapel</i> Deacon's Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Thursday December 14th	12:00 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Friendly Lunch, <i>Linden Hall</i> EMT Meeting, <i>Offsite Meeting</i> Meditation Book Club, <i>Library</i>
Sunday December 17th	8:15 am 8:30 am 9:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am  4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Transition Team Reportback, <i>Chapel</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Meditation w/ Sue Findlay, <i>Chapel</i> Cookies with Santa, <i>Reception Room</i> Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Transition Team Reportback, <i>Chapel</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group
Monday December 18th	9:00 am 7:00 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i> Transition Team, <i>Library</i>
Wednesday December 20th	7:00 pm	Advent Vespers, <i>Chapel</i>
Sunday December 24th	8:30 am 10:00 am 2:00 pm 4:00 pm 9:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Family Worship & Pageant, <i>Sanctuary</i> Candlelight Worship & Communion, <i>Sanctuary</i>
Monday December 25th — Tuesday January 2nd		Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! <i>Office Closed</i>



*Peace and Good*

*Will to All!*

at the Congregational Church of Needham  
United Church of Christ

Christmas Concert on Dec. 3rd at 4pm

Children's Pageant on Dec. 24th at 4pm

Candlelight Communion on Dec. 24th at 9pm

**Wednesdays, Dec. 6, 13 & 20 at 7pm**  
**Candlelight Prayer and singing in the Chapel**

Community Worship Sundays at 10am  
Childcare and Children's Church

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[@needhamucc](https://www.instagram.com/needhamucc)

