



# The Congregational Church of Needham

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

December 25, 2016  
**Christmas Day**

*Children will be joining us at Worship today.*

## **PRELUDE**

*Comfort Ye from Messiah  
George Frideric Handel*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

## **CONGREGATIONAL GREETING**

## **OPENING PRAYER**

For God to become a baby he had to  
Squeeze himself into a small space  
Confine himself into a fallible body  
Restrict himself to humanity  
Reduce himself to limited movements  
Become weak and vulnerable  
Rely on humans to take care of him

For Christ to become one of us  
He had to be born like us  
The light was hidden within the womb  
The bread of life had to learn how to eat  
The one who holds us, first had to be held  
The Lover was loved  
The Way had to learn to walk  
The Word had to learn to speak  
The Teacher was taught  
The Creator how to create  
This is our God! Welcome to our world!

**\*OPENING HYMN #132 (Black, New Century Hymnal)**

**Joy to the World!**

## **INTRODUCTION OF FAMILY**

The Salernos  
Heather, Kirby, Liam, Miles, Lucy

# LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

One: Rejoice, people of God! The light has come into the world.

*(All four Advent candles are lit.)*

O God, now we light the candle of your nativity!

*(The Christ candle is lit.)*

With the company of heaven and with sounds of great joy, you come to us. This is the time of light and resplendent joy.

**All: We have known times when God has come and brought life and light to our world.**

One: The prophet Isaiah proclaimed a time when those who walked in the shadows would see a great light. A light would shine and a child would be born to us. The evangelist Luke painted the nativity sky and repeated the heavenly song of the angels, "Glory, peace on earth and goodwill!" John declared that this great light is Christ, the Word made flesh. This great light lives among us. By it we behold God's glory—full of grace and truth. At Christ's nativity, we now rejoice.

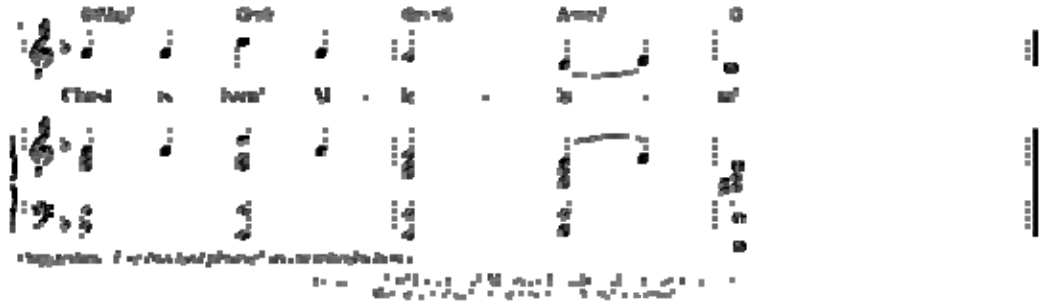
**All: God, our Life and Light, thank you for coming this day to us. Thanks for touching all heaven and earth with your splendor. In every corner of the world, shine this day with your peace. In every corner of our hearts, shine with your grace today. Amen.**

## Song for Lighting Advent Candles

*(All instruments play)*

Music for the first three candles and the Christ candle. The score is arranged in four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Name on us, O God, all joy and peace. Guide our path through shadows of night; Here with in us, We don't know when you will come to us, O Christ, the light of our hearts. Glory be to you, O God, and peace on earth."

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## CHILDREN'S TIME

“The Shepherd’s Gift” story by Mary Calhoun

## ANTHEM

Behold, I Bring You Glad Tidings  
*Maurice Greene*  
Maggie Furtak and Joseph Rondeau

## A SELECTION OF READINGS

### In the Midst of It All – Love Has Come by Barbara Doerrer-Peacock

In the midst of it all...  
a government tax, a burdened journey,  
a burgeoned town,  
no room  
in the midst of it all.

In the midst of it all...  
each single life, here and now,  
walks the hard pavement of ordinary life,  
wading through  
the sinking mud or flash flood  
of waking tasks,  
worried racks of anxious unknowns.  
But, somewhere in this night,  
the desert night of long ago,  
or this daily desert of a road—  
a twinkling here, a shining there,  
a flower blooms  
in deepest winter.  
Love has come  
and calms the shiver.

A warming kiss  
a soft embrace,  
a lighted window  
a stable place.

In the midst of it all...  
a hard won labor,  
grace is born in fleshly groans.  
The baby cries his birthday song

as angels weep and sweep  
the heaven-to-earthbound glory.

And, love has come,  
to each and every one of us  
whether our eyes are open  
and we perceive,  
or closed in lonely fear.

We will receive  
this love come to us –  
whether open-hearted  
in abundant waves,  
or in unsuspected  
and surprising ways.

Love has come.  
Love has come...  
Arise and shine – with the sun!  
Love has come  
in newborn grace  
to offer truth  
and God a face.

**HYMN #148 (Black, New Century Hymnal)**

**What Child Is This**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 2: 15-20

NT p. 55

**SERMON**

“A Gift Like No Other”  
Heike Werder

**HYMN #153 (Black, New Century Hymnal)**

**Who Would Think What Was Needed**

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

**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*

Puer Natus in Bethlehem  
*Josef Rheinberger, edited by Douglas J. Walczak*  
Maggie Furtak and Joseph Rondeau

**\*Doxology**

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

*Prayer of Dedication*

**\*CLOSING HYMN #154 (Black, New Century Hymnal)**

**Go Tell It on the Mountain**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

In Dulci Jubilo: Fantasia  
*Johann Sebastian Bach*

*\*You are invited to stand*

- Welcome to all who are here for the first time.
- Please silence your cell phone before attending the service.
- Please Check In on Facebook and let people know you are here.
- You can Tweet or Instagram during the service.
- Please ask an usher if you would like or need a hearing device.

*Worship Assistant:* Salerno Family

*Deacons:* Jean Veigas

*Altar Guild:* Jane Clayton Matthews

*Ushers:* Rob Blauvelt, Craig Morrison, Valerie Kistler

*Flowers:* Connie Kaufman

### **Attendance and Collection**

12/18/2016 Worship Attendance = 168 people \*12/18/2016 Collection = \$2,650  
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 & Pledge amount does not include additional pledges received electronically.*

### **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

\*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  
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781-444-2510, ext. 105

Director of Children & Youth Ministries  
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Music Director  
Valerie Becker  
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Organist/Accompanist  
Sangyoung Kim

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

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781-444-2510, ext. 100

Bookkeeper  
Suzanne Leslie  
[Finance@needhamucc.org](mailto:Finance@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 113

Handyman  
Bill Donovan

Housekeeper  
Sanira Alchaar

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

## Calendar December 25-January 15

Sunday, December 25th <b>Christmas Day</b>	10:00am	Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i>
Sunday, January 1st	10:00am	Worship Service, <i>Chapel</i>
Monday, January 2nd <b>New Year's Day</b>		Office Closed
Tuesday, January 3rd	10:00am 6:00pm 7:00pm	Prayer Shawl, <i>1180 GPA</i> Community Dinner, <i>Linden Hall</i> Board Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i>
Thursday, January 5th	12:00pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Lunch with Heike, <i>1180 GPA</i> Music Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Friday, January 6th	6:30 pm	Family Epiphany Party
Sunday, January 8th <b>Epiphany Service</b>	10:00am 11:30am 11:45am 7:00 pm	Epiphany Worship Service– Rev. Cody Sanders PhD. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, <i>Sanctuary</i> Welcoming Church Forum w/ First Baptist Church Youth Committee Meeting Guatemala Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Monday, January 9th	9:00 am	Cancer Support Group, <i>1154 Reception</i>
Tuesday, January 10th	7:00 pm	Board Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i>
Wednesday, January 11th	7:00 pm	Deacons Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i>
Thursday, January 12th	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	CE Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Sunday, January 15th <b>Martin Luther King Day Service</b>	8:15 am 10:00am 11:30am	Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Bible Study, <i>1154 Reception</i>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Guatemala Partner-Family Letters Due January 1st:** It's time to write your partner-family letter for your family in Santa María Tzejá, so that they can be translated in time to be packed up and delivered to eagerly awaiting hands in February! Deadline: January 1st. Please send your letter to Dave Johnson: [davebjohnson77@gmail.com](mailto:davebjohnson77@gmail.com). Thank you.

**February Diversity Book Group with First Baptist Church and First Unitarian Universalists:  
February 28 at First Baptist Church**

MARCH: Book 1 - a graphic novel by Congressman John Lewis (suggested by John Kirk.) MARCH Book 3 just won the National Book Award [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/graphic-novel-march-book-3-wins-national-book-award/2016/11/17/eeb497aa-ac7b-11e6-8b45-f8e493f06fcd\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.cb8289d0f36c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/graphic-novel-march-book-3-wins-national-book-award/2016/11/17/eeb497aa-ac7b-11e6-8b45-f8e493f06fcd_story.html?utm_term=.cb8289d0f36c). You have plenty of time to read it even if you have never read a graphic novel. Be adventurous! Take a risk!

**2017 Calendars to Support Santa Maria Tzeja**

NISGUA Calendars to benefit our partner village in Guatemala will again be available after worship every Sunday in December. Find us at the Guatemala table to buy one for yourself or as a gift: \$18 each or 2 for \$30.

**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 showing that your gift was given in his or her honor. Your donation will support education in our partner village, Santa Maria Tzeja. See the gift cards at the Guatemala table after worship in Fellowship Hall.

## Youth News

**Stay Connected Follow @NeedhamUCC on Instagram** for updates on church life, particularly from our family ministries including Christian Education and Youth Ministries!

**Junior High Youth Group:** Most Sundays from 5:00 - 6:30 PM. We meet for discussion, activities, and group games. Our regular meetings are on hiatus until after the pageant - join us at the all youth events and Christmas pageant!

**Epiphany Party:** Mark your calendars now to join us in celebrating Epiphany on **Friday, January 6 from 6:30-8:30**. Come for any/all of the evening. We will serve pizza and salad as well as King Cake. We'll have singing and blessings and fun activities for all ages. Go through your closets and bring any gently worn coats you may have as we will be collecting coats for One Warm Coat. And... if you want to dress to impress, wear your shiniest outfit! We're celebrating the kings arriving underneath that brilliant, shining star after all! RSVPs are not required but are helpful --Email Maddie at [youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:youth@needhamucc.org)

**Bible Village Winter Open House:** Sunday, February 12 during and after worship you are invited to join your children in their Sunday School classes and to participate with them in their faith journeys.

**April VBS: God's Kingdom: Tuesday, April 18 - Friday, April 21; 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

Whether you're an adventurous princess or a courageous knight, you'll love learning about all the stories that bring meaning to our world - particularly the story we ourselves are characters in... the story of God and God's people! We'll explore the important stories of our faith using arts and crafts, storytelling, theater, games, and cooking workshops. Cooking workshops do not use nuts but some items may be processed on shared equipment. VBS is open to students up to grade 5. Pre-K participants must be potty-trained. Students in grades 9-12 may apply to work as Counselors; students in grades 6-8 may apply to participate as volunteer Counselors-in-training. Registration required by Sunday, March 19; Scholarships available.

**Christian Education/Sunday School :** Volunteer teachers needed. It takes a village! We need teachers for all of our classes! Sign up to teach at: <http://www.tinyurl.com/SignUp2Teach>