



# The Congregational Church of Needham

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

**December 31, 2017 10:00am**

*Welcome to our worship service.*

*Please join us for refreshments and time for fellowship immediately following the service.*

*Children and students in Kindergarten through 12th grade remain in worship this morning.  
Nursery care is offered for crib, toddler, and pre-K children. Our nursery is located at the bottom of the parking lot staircase, the first door on the left.*

## **PRELUDE**

Preamble  
*Louis Vierne*

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Heike and Maddie Downer, MDiv

## **CONGREGATIONAL GREETING**

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Leader: When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Jesus is presented at the temple,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Simeon holds Jesus in his arms,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Anna recognizes Jesus in the temple,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: This very morning,  
**People: God is here.**

Leader: In the future we cannot see,  
**People: God is there.**

**All: Let us worship God!**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN #144** (*Black, New Century*)

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

### **TIME FOR CHILDREN**

*Children return to sit with their families following Time for Children.*

### **ANTHEM**

Spring Carol (from Ceremony of Carols)  
*Benjamin Britten(1913 - 1976)*  
*Maggie Furtak and Joseph Rondeau*

### **READINGS**

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!  
Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!  
Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!  
Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!  
Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.  
He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.  
Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!  
Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!  
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!  
Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!  
Young men and women alike, old and young together!  
Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.  
He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

Luke 2:22-40 NRSV

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is

stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

**HYMN** (*see insert*)

**Creating God, Your Fingers Trace**

Verses 1 & 2, *from Hymns of Truth & Light 96*

**SERMON**

Maddie Downer, MDiv

**HYMN** (*see insert*)

**Creating God, Your Fingers Trace**

Verses 3 & 4, *from Hymns of Truth & Light 96*

## **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

Alleluia from Choral Cantata no 142  
*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

**\*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*

**God of Vision,  
Take these offerings of money  
and turn them into vision;  
vision of all people fed,  
vision of all people safe,  
vision of all people housed,  
vision of all people educated. Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN**

**Lord, Let Your Servant Go in Peace  
ST. PETER 8.6.8.6 ("In Christ There is No East or West")**

"Lord, let your servant go in peace;  
Your Word has been fulfilled."  
Because we've seen your saving grace  
We know that all is well.

Through all the sorrow, pain and death,  
We dare, O God, to sing.  
For you once sent your Son to earth —  
And that changed everything.

There's much we cannot understand,  
Nor order, nor control;  
We place our lives into your hands  
And trust you'll make us whole.

Lord, let your servants daily know  
That we are not alone;  
And may we find, where'er we go,  
You'll lead us safely home.

***Biblical Reference: Luke 2:29-32***

***Tune: Alexander Robert Reinagle, 1836 (In Christ There is No East or West)'***

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## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

Trumpet Voluntary  
*Henry Purcell*

*Worship Assistants:* Carolyn Bradley

*Deacons:* Jane Clayton-Matthews, Dibby Moder

*Ushers:* Dave Johnson, Jan Rubenstein, Todd Barth

*Flowers:* Connie Kaufman

## **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.)*

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 31, 2017**

**Request for Altar Flower Donation** Altar flower donations are needed for Sunday, January 14th. The cost of the arrangement is \$50 with a check payable to the Congregational Church of Needham. You may call the church office or contact Mary Lou Hughes at 781-449-1520 to receive more details if you are interested in remembering loved ones with flowers on the altar.

**VILLAGE FAIR - THE RESULTS ARE IN!** Thank you to everyone who participated in the Village Fair! There are too many of you to thank individually -- from the table leaders, the cooks, the bakers, and the sorters and pricers, to those who donated items and who worked on Fair day, to those who shopped at the fair. Through the efforts of EVERYONE, we raised over \$10,000! A portion of the proceeds will go toward a small beautification project, that being the addition of native plantings around our Great Plain Avenue sign next Spring. The bulk of the proceeds will go toward new windows in the chapel. Thank you!!  
Jane Brand, Chair, 2017 Village Fair

**The Transition Team** would like to thank everyone who attended the report back session on 12/17. Considering that it was short notice, 1 week before Christmas and the start of the Christmas pageant rehearsals, we were astounded and gratified by the strength of the response. If you were unable to make that meeting, and would like an executive summary please email the transition team to have a pdf sent, or pick up a report from the office. If you are comfortable with an email format, we respectfully ask that you use the pdf form to save our earth's resources.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Transition Team for any questions or concerns at [transitionteam@needhamucc.org](mailto:transitionteam@needhamucc.org)

**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.

**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 Sunday morning?** 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).

**YOUTH MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **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 signup 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.

12/17/2017 Collections\* = \$7,256

12/17/2017 Worship Attendance = 151 people

November Electronic Pledge Amount: \$12,085.21

Please contact the church office 781-444-2510 or [office@needhamucc.org](mailto:office@needhamucc.org) to find out how you can give electronically or pre-paid 2018 pledge money. \*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 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> Christmas 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>
Sunday January 31st	8:30 am 10:00 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i>
Tuesday January 2nd	6:00 pm	Community Dinner, <i>Linden Hall</i>
Thursday January 4th	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Lunch w/ Heike, <i>Linden Hall</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Friday January 5th	5:00 pm	Senior High Retreat
Sunday January 7th	8:30 am 10:00 am 4:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group Guatemala Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Monday January 8th	9:00 am 7:00 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i> Finance Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Tuesday January 9th	7:00 pm	Board Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Thursday January 11th	7:30 pm	Meditation Book Club, <i>Library</i>
Sunday January 14th	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Meditation w/ Sue Findlay, <i>Reception Room</i> Junior High Youth Group

## Creating God, Your Fingers Trace

1. Cre - at - ing God, your fin - gers trace  
 2. Sus - tain - ing God, your hands up - hold  
 3. Re - deem - ing God, your arms em - brace  
 4. In - dwell - ing God, your gos - pel claims

the bold de - signs of far - thest space;  
 earth's mys - teries known or yet un - told;  
 all now de - spised for creed or race;  
 one fam - ily with a bil - lion names;

let sun and moon and stars and light  
 let wa - ter's fra - gile blend with air,  
 let peace, de - scend - ing like a dove,  
 let ev - ery life be touched by grace

and what lies hid - den praise your might.  
 en - a - bling life, pro - claim your care.  
 make known on earth your heal - ing love.  
 un - til we praise you face to face.

WORDS: Jeffery Rowthorn, 1974

MUSIC: Cornish carol, harm. Jeffrey Rickard, 1992

In praising the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, Rowthorn speaks of the Trinity in contemporary language. Born in Wales, he is an ordained Episcopal clergyman, now Bishop at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Paris, France.

CORNISH CAROL  
LM

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