



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NEEDHAM

December 6, 2015

Theme: The Season of Advent



Our 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.

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.



Sunday, December 6, 2015

10:00am

*Children are always welcome in Worship with their parents/guardians.
Pre-K children are invited to the nursery throughout the service.
Students in grades K-8 will begin in the Chapel and join their families in the Sanctuary for Communion.*

PRELUDE

Fantasie
Gabriel Faure (1845 - 1924)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sunu Yeh

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming,

People: We wait filled with hope,

Leader: Knowing your light will shine in the darkness.

People: We wait anticipating your peace,

Leader: Believing that one day it will fill our world.

People: We wait embracing your love,

Leader: May we reach out to share it with our neighbors.

People: We wait with joy,

Leader: Bathing our spirits in the expectation of your birth.

People: Lord we wait! Come soon and fill us with your life.

***OPENING HYMN # 110 (Red Hymnal)**

**O Come, O Come,
Emmanuel**

OPENING PRAYER

Call to Prayer

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us pray.

Unison Prayer

**God beyond time and space,
May we take this moment of worship and bless it.
May the grace experienced in this place
be multiplied to overflowing
so that your whole world sees the light of your love.
God of new surprises,
take each of us here, and bless us.
Create in us clean hearts,
refresh our spirits,
and transform our whole beings,
until we reflect your love and compassion through and
through.
In the name of Emmanuel, God with Us, hear us as we pray ...**

Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debt, debtors)

Prayer Response

ANTHEM

Ring Those Christmas Bells

Martha Sobaje

Joyful Noise and Hallelujah Choirs

Dave Darmofal – piano

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING (Led by members of our 2016 Confirmation Class)

Advent Liturgy

Today we light the second candle of our Advent Wreath—the Candle of Peace. We light it knowing full well that peace is elusive, and in some

parts of this world, it is almost completely absent. Yet in this season of Advent, we trust that God is never absent from us. God is always preparing something new. Help us to trust that even in war and discord, whether between countries, within families, or within our own hearts. God is present, gently leading us to new possibilities.

Lighting the Candle of Peace

Prayer: Loving God, in this time of preparation and planning, we thank you for the hope and peace you unfailingly offer us. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 3: 1-6

NT, p. 56

SERMON

“Advent Peace”
Heike Werder

HYMN (*seated*) # 104 (*Red Hymnal*)
People

Comfort, Comfort Ye My

OFFERTORY

Concerns and Celebrations

Anthem

Romance
Edward German (1862 – 1936)

***Doxology**

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

Prayer of Dedication

ORDER FOR THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table
Communion Prayer

Prayer Response

Holy, holy, holy. My heart, my heart adores you!
My heart knows how to say to you: Holy are you Lord!

Distribution of the Bread and Cup

Music for the Bread and Cup:

336 (Black Hymnal) Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face

343 (Black Hymnal) Jesus took the Bread

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us
at your table by granting us the presence of Christ.
Strengthen our faith. Increase our love for one another. Send
us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the
power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

***CLOSING HYMN # 110** (*Black Hymnal*)

**Now Bless the God
Of Israel**

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Adagio
Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

****You are invited to stand.***

- Welcome to all who are here for the first time. Please fill out the blue “Welcome” card in the pews to receive weekly emails or newsletters.
- Please turn off your cell phone before attending the service.
- Please ask an usher if you would like a copy of the sermon, or need a hearing device. Copies of the sermons are also available on the sermon link at www.needhamucc.org, our church website.

Thank you to Bruce Goody, guest flutist and Dave Darmofal, pianist for sharing their musical talent today.

Worship Leader: Sunu Yeh

Deacons: Frank Luppino, Joanne Seiden

Communion Servers: Sally Fitzgerald, Carol Oberle

Altar Guild: Diana Conroy

Ushers: Jim Leighton, Phil Gotwals, Rich Weitzel, Robert Kennedy

Flowers: Connie Kaufman

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Binna Mann by her family.

*The Congregational Church of Needham
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Needham, Massachusetts 02492
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The Rev. Dr. Susan Cartmell, Senior Minister
Valerie Becker, Music Director
The Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Heike Werder, Associate Minister
Madelyn Downer, Director of Children &
Youth Ministries

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Winter Mosaic: He Ye! Hear Ye! Come join us for "A Winter Mosaic". We hope that you will put **December 6th at 4pm** down on your calendar. Our Chancel Choir along with the The Friendly Chimers will perform selections appropriate to the season. A light reception will follow. Anyone who wishes to make a donation to help with this concert can contact Danielle in the church office or send the donation to the church with "Winter Concert Donation" in the memo line. We hope to see many of you at our concert! Valerie J. Becker.

Stewardship Update: Thank you to everyone who has sent their pledges in. We currently have \$293,557.00 in pledges. Your pledges fund all of our programs, staff, and the upkeep of our buildings. We are seeking \$ 450,000 in pledges to fund our 2016 budget which means that we are at 65% of our goal. If you have not yet sent in your pledge please do so as soon as possible either by filling out a form and mailing it or dropping it off in the office, calling the office at 781-444-2510 or email to pledge@needhamucc.org. Thank you.

Advent Meditation and Labyrinth Walk (Monday Evenings 7-8pm): The Holiday Season is upon us, and if we are not busy already, we shall be as we prepare for Christmas. If you are seeking a more meditative approach to the Advent Seasons, join Rev. Heike for a time of prayer, meditation, and reflection on the four Monday evenings during the Advent seasons in Fellowship Hall. **We will meet from 7 to 8 pm on 12/7, 12/14, and 12/21.**

Advent Luncheons: Please join us in the dining room at 1180 GPA on Thursdays, **December 10th, and 17th** for soup, delicious bread, dessert, fellowship and conversation. All are welcome to attend!

Adult Bible Study, Sunday's @ 11:30 Conference Room: Small group discussion based on reading a few chapters of the Bible at a time. We meet immediately after church, from 11:30 to 12:30 in the reception room. This fall we will continue our study of the minor prophets. Take a look at how God is still speaking to us, even in stories from thousands of years ago! This is a great opportunity to discuss your spiritual questions with other people of faith. Everyone is welcome to drop in and join us. For more information, contact Sunu Yeh at dormouse99@gmail.com.

Guatemala Partner Family Letters Due December 15: Partner-Family Letters for the church's upcoming February delegation to Guatemala are due DECEMBER 15TH, to allow time for our volunteer translators to 'work their magic' of helping church families communicate with their families in Santa María Tzejá. Please do your part by getting your letter in on time. Letters should be sent to: Davejohnson@verizon.net. Thank you.

Calendars for a Cause: 2016 calendars with beautiful pictures taken by human rights observers in Guatemala are available each Sunday in December during Coffee Hour at the Guatemala table. Proceeds from the sales will benefit education, health care, and community development in our partner community, Santa Maria Tzeja. The price is \$18 per calendar, or two for \$30.

Flower Committee: The Flower Committee is looking for new members to coordinate altar flower arrangements throughout the year and decorate the church for the Christmas and Easter seasons. Each of us is responsible for one month for the altar flowers as well as participating in the holiday decorations to make the church festive and inviting. If interested, please contact Debbie Wentworth at 781-444-8382. The Christmas season is approaching... don't miss out on the festivities.

Need a Gift for Someone who has Everything? Or for a teacher?: Make a donation to benefit education in Santa Maria Tzeja and receive a beautiful donor card honoring someone special in your child's life. Your donation will help support students who wish to continue in school but whose families cannot afford the increased Computer Center fee of \$35/year to remain in middle school. The village had to raise the student fee to cover the increased costs to maintain the Computer Center. For more information, or to make a donation in any amount and receive a donor gift card, come to Guatemala table in Fellowship Hall after worship or contact Val Kistler at valk228@gmail.com.

Request for Altar Guild Volunteers: The Altar Guild is looking for volunteers. High school students are welcome to join. Please contact Carol Miller at millerc291@verizon.net for more information.

The Furniture Team needs your help: The church has lots of wonderful new space to furnish and put to work for church programs. Monetary and in-kind donations are welcome: **MOST WANTED FURNITURE LIST:** Two large conference tables and chairs, Nichols & Stone college arm chairs, Pair of modern upholstered chairs, Pair of traditional upholstered chairs, Loveseat, FIVE 60" round folding tables. Items must be in condition. Upholstered pieces can be in need of slipcovers. Please contact Judi Stewart at jmgstewart@verizon.net with photos and dimensions or call 781-449-3999. The furniture team would like to look at all furniture prior to donation.

LED Bulb Donations to Continue: If you are out shopping for energy efficient LED bulbs for your home, please consider purchasing one or two for the church. Please leave bulbs in the donation box located near the mailboxes in the church office. Check out the EMT bulletin board for more information about LED bulbs.

Chairs! Chairs! Chairs!: Now that the chapel renovation is completed, we need to give everyone a lovely place to sit. Twelve chairs have already been purchased through the generosity of the Chapel Committee and twelve more are

on order. Now we need your help to reach the goal of sixty more chairs. You may purchase one for \$175 which can include a plaque denoting a memorial or tribute. This is a fine way to honor a family member, celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion. Other monetary donations are welcome and will be applied to additional chairs. Checks and inscriptions can be sent to the church office. Thank you, The Chapel Committee

Thermostat Notice: We are currently testing the new heating system. Please do not touch any of the thermostats in the building especially in the Sanctuary.

Bible Village: The Sunday School program is looking for intergenerational volunteer teachers! Parents, high school and college students, sage church members, curious and fun people who can show our kids how much God loves them by leading a Bible Village workshop—all are invited to teach! We provide all of the materials and the lessons beforehand. Lessons are straightforward and easy to teach—and our kids are so much fun! Sign-up at: www.tinyurl.com/ChildrenYouthSignUp

Noah's Ark Preschool: Noah's Ark Preschool is in the process of enrolling children for the 2016-2017 school year! We offer priority enrollment to members of the Congregational Church of Needham, as availability exists, now through November 20th. We invite you to call us to receive information about our program and to schedule a time to come in for a tour!

Family Promise: We were delighted to support First Congregational Church Natick's Family Time on Sunday and Dinner and Family Time on Monday of Thanksgiving week. Please go to <http://mihn.pbworks.com/w/page/8216393/FrontPage> to learn about more ways you can participate. Thank you, Susan Kirk and Heidi Weisel

FROM JUDY MONGIARDO FAMILY PROMISE- The reality of not having a home of one's own is never starker than at the holiday time. That is why your generosity to our families this past week was so very much appreciated. Not only did you provide welcoming shelter, food and hospitality, but you thought of the details which would make their time special from volunteers sharing their Thanksgiving evening, to providing familiar, comfort food of the family's tradition on Friday, and special invitations to holiday celebrations on Sunday. All this while each volunteer was also handling the responsibilities that come with Thanksgiving in their own lives.

We cherish how each of your church communities came together to fill the 50 or so volunteer roles to serve our families during this busy week. Please share our deepest thanks with all. Gratefully, Judy

CALENDAR December 6th—December 20th

Sunday, Dec. 6th	10:00 am 11:00 am 11:30 am 11:40 am 4:00 pm 6:00 pm	Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Pageant Sign Up Bible Study, <i>Conference Room</i> Guatemala Meeting, <i>Library</i> Friendly Chime Ringers, <i>Sanctuary</i> Winter Mosaic Concert, <i>Sanctuary</i> Concert Reception, <i>Fellowship Hall</i>
Monday, Dec. 7th	8:30 am 7:00 pm 7:15 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>1154 Reception</i> Labyrinth Meditation, <i>Fellowship Hall</i> EMT Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Tuesday, Dec. 8th	7:00 pm	Outreach Meeting, <i>1180 GPA</i>
Thursday, Dec. 10th	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Advent Lunch, <i>1180 GPA</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Sunday, Dec. 13th	10:00 am 11:30 am 11:40 am 5:00 pm 7:00 pm	Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Pageant Rehearsal Bible Study, <i>Conference Room</i> The Friendly Chime Ringers, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group
Monday, Dec. 14th	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>1154 Reception</i> Labyrinth Meditation, <i>Fellowship Hall</i>
Wed., Dec. 16th	7:30 pm	Music Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Thursday, Dec. 17th	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Advent Lunch, <i>1180 GPA</i> Choir Practice, <i>Linden AB</i>
Sunday, Dec. 20th	8:15 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 11:40 am	Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Bible Study, <i>Conference Room</i> Pageant Rehearsal Friendly Chime Ringers, <i>Sanctuary</i>

COMMUNION

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is served on the first Sunday of every month in our church. Along with Baptism, it is one of two sacraments in the United Church of Christ.

At Holy Communion we remember that Jesus ate with his disciples on the last night before he died. In that upper room he transformed the Passover meal something new. As he broke the bread that night he reminded them that it was a symbol for his own body which was broken for all of us. As he lifted the cup of wine he told them that it was a symbol of the covenant- which had come from Abraham and Moses - between us and God.

So when we eat the bread and dip it into the cup we remember that God loved us so much that God sent Jesus. Through Christ we came to know God even better. At this table, through faith, we believe Christ joins us and comes to be our host.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey you are welcome at this table. We offer children instruction in the sacrament of Holy Communion in the second grade. We leave it to families to decide if their children will take the communion, but everyone is welcome at any age. If your child will not be taking communion but would like a short blessing, please tell one of the ministers.

When you come forward the minister will give you the bread and say – "The Bread of Heaven for you". Many people respond saying, "Amen" or "Thanks be to God". Dip the bread into the cup of grape juice. As you do, the Deacon will say, "The cup of salvation for you." Again you may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God." You are encouraged to eat the bread soaked in the juice right away, and then return to your seat down the side aisle.

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