



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NEEDHAM

December 8, 2013

Theme: Family

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 8, 2013

10:00am

Childcare is available downstairs in the NEW crib/toddler room for infants and toddlers. Preschoolers, Grades 7-8, and 9-12 go directly downstairs to classes at 10am. Grades K-6 starts in the sanctuary and leave after "Time for Children" to the chapel and then go to their workshops. K-1st in Games, 2nd-3rd in Art, and 4th-6th in Theater. All workshops are downstairs in the main hallway.

PRELUDE

Pastorale
David Schack (b. 1947)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

K.M. Abraham

Leader: Let us light the candles of faith.

People: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Leader: A candle of hope, where despair stands guard.

People: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Leader: A candle of peace, for tempest-tossed days.

People: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Leader: A candle of love to inspire our day.

People: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Leader: A candle of joy to lift our spirits.

People: Come among us Holy One, as we sing.

***OPENING HYMN #110 (NCH)**

O Bless the God of Israel

OPENING PRAYER

K.M. Abraham

Call to Prayer

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us pray.

Unison Prayer

Like a tune in our heads, that won't let up,

Like a long-lost friend who finds us,

Like a healing we cannot explain,

Like the words of a prayer that binds us,

Like hope that won't bow to despair,

Lord Jesus, come again, to remind us

That we are your people.

Help us to prepare for your arrival, as we pray...

Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debts & debtors)

Prayer Response

Savior of the Nations, Come

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING

(Led by members of the 2014 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

ANTHEM

“Dormi, Dormi”
Traditional Italian Carol

*Sleep, o sleep my lovely child King Divine
Close your eyes and sweetly slumber.
O my treasure, do not weep. Sweetly sleep.
Close your eyes my son, my dear one.*

Arr. Mary Goetze
Joyful Noise
Dave Darmofal, piano

TIME FOR CHILDREN (Children to Bible Village during song.)

CHILDREN’S HYMN (#526) We Are Marching In The
Light of God

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 1:5-23 NT p. 53

SERMON The Elusive Perfect Family Susan Cartmell

HYMN (seated) #116 (NCH) O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Verses 2 & 4

MORNING PRAYER Heike Werder

Concerns and Celebrations

Call to Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Leader: O Lord, show your mercy upon us.

People: And grant us your salvation.

Leader: O God, make clean our hearts within us.

People: And take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Leader: Let us pray.

Pastoral Prayer

Congregational Response

Spirit of the Living God

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

OFFERTORY

Bring A Torch, Jeanette, Isabella
arr. Mark Hayes
Courtney Brennan, soloist

***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 #102 (NCH) O How Shall I Receive You**

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Go in Peace
tune: Ocean Park

POSTLUDE

Sleepers Wake, A Voice is Calling
arr. Wilbur Held (b. 1914)

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

(NCH) stands for New Century Hymnal

- 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.

Worship Leader: K.M. Abraham

Deacons: Cici Hunt, Carole Oberle

Ushers: Alex Cullen, Eric Slosser, Nancy Lane, Frank Luppino

Altar Guild: Debbie Wentworth

Flowers: Connie Kaufman

Flower Delivery: Joanne Seiden

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



BLUE CHRISTMAS Healing Service

Tuesday
December 17
7:00p.m.

**This service is open
to everyone.**

The Congregational Church of Needham
1154 Great Plain Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492
Telephone 781-444-2510; Fax 781-444-3580
E-mail: office@needhamucc.org
www.needhamucc.org

The Rev. Susan Cartmell, Senior Minister
The Rev. Heike Werder, Associate Minister
The Rev. Jamie Green, Youth Minister

Bobby DeRegis, Director of Music Ministries
Valerie Becker, Dir of Youth Music
The Rev. Dr. Paul Clavton, Pastor Emeritus

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY! Capital Campaign and Construction Update. The Church Board and Design Team will be holding an information meeting in the Chapel from 11:15-12:00 today. They will discuss what we are doing today and in the coming months to bring this plan to life.

TODAY! December 8th- GOD IN AMERICA: "Of God and Caesar". **Episode 6** brings the series into the present day, exploring the religious and political aspirations of conservative evangelicals' moral crusade over divisive social issues like abortion and gay marriage. Across America, the religious marketplace expanded as new waves of immigrants from Asia, the Middle East and Latin America made the United States the most religiously diverse nation on earth. The series closes with reflections on the role of faith in the public life of the country, from the ongoing quest for religious liberty to the enduring idea of America as the "City on a Hill" envisioned by the Puritans nearly 400 years ago.

Today Bible Study in the Reception Room at 11:30 Sunday Group **Update:** They will meet today to discuss Chap. 10 of Saving Jesus from the Church and consider switching to a more classic Bible study when they begin meeting in January. Contact Sunu Yeh for more information- dormouse99@gmail.com.

FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON, DEC 11TH - Join us for Friendly Society's festive holiday luncheon on Wednesday, Dec 11th. Tickets are \$10 and will be on sale after church services at coffee hours on Dec 1st and 8th. Tickets must be purchased by Dec 9th.

Luncheon will be served at noon and Heike will add to the holiday cheer by playing carols on her flute. All women of the church are encouraged to attend and bring a friend as well.

Babysitting Fundraiser – Sat., Dec. 14th, 10am-4pm

The Senior High Youth Group will babysit kids ages 3 and up at church while you shop or enjoy an afternoon off! \$20 for first kid, \$10 for additional kids. Includes lunch, snacks, games, crafts, and a special showing of the brand new Christmas VeggieTales movie! More info and registration forms at www.needhamucc.org/babysitting

December 15, 2013 - The Rev. Dr. Brita Gill-Austern presents: Giving the Gifts that Matter: Hope, Faith and Love

Christmas is a time where we turn to gift giving and forget that the most precious gifts we can give another are faith, hope and love. The Bible has long told us of the preciousness of these 3 gifts, come now and learn

what scientific, medical and sociological research is now discovering about faith, hope and love and how you might give the most important gifts of all. Join Rev. Brita Gill-Austern as we discuss these gifts and the Christmas Season.

“Who are our families” will be the topic of discussion at the next **Men’s Breakfast, Sunday, December 15, 2013 at 8:15 am in the Library.** The Men’s Breakfast brings men of all ages and persuasions together once a month before worship in honest and lively discussion touching our faith and our lives in today’s complex world. We gather for breakfast and fellowship at 8:15am and begin to discuss our topic by 9am. Men of all ages are welcome.

BLUE Christmas SERVICE Tuesday Dec. 17, Chapel at 7 p.m.

This is a Christmas Service for people in the church and community who need a little extra HOPE this year.

Not everyone is looking forward to a very merry Christmas. Some people are a diagnosis, a longstanding illness, a family problem, a professional setback. Rev. Susan will speak. Simple hymns with Cello and Recorder. Follow the luminary to the Chapel door.

Christmas Caroling: Sun, Dec 22, 4-6pm

For all ages! Meet at church at 4pm to carol at 3 nursing homes and 1 Needham neighborhood, then back to church for cookies and cocoa!

CHRISTMAS FLOWER OFFERING ENVELOPES AVAILABLE NOW-

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 or the church office. Please return envelopes to the office by December 19. 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.

NOMINATIONS -- If you are interested in serving on the church Board or one of its standing committees (Deacons, Outreach, Christian Education and Youth), please let us know! The ad hoc nominations committee is putting together a slate of nominees for January's annual meeting. If you would like to serve please get in touch with either Martha Lamb (Martha_lamb@aol.com) or Jane Brand (ajbrand@comcast.net), and let us know in what capacity you would like to serve!

The Giving Tree continues!

There are still 20 ornaments left on the Giving Tree near the chapel that represent mothers and children from the Elizabeth Stone House, a

domestic abuse shelter in Boston. Please take an ornament and buy 2-3 gifts from their wish list, and deliver back to the church, unwrapped, by Dec 15.

Bible Study - Thursday Group Update: They will take a break until Jan. 9 then they start to read a new book on the 23rd Psalm- The Lord is My Shepherd by Rabbi Harold Kushner. Contact Christine Weitzel for more information cweitzel@verizon.net

Christmas Pageant

Today, Sunday, December 8th is the LAST day to sign up for the Christmas Pageant! Casting sheets are available at www.needhamucc.org/pageant and also on the Christmas bulletin board at the church. Kids and adults of all ages are welcome to participate!

Pageant Schedule:

- **Sunday, December 15th: 11:30am-2pm: Rehearsal (lunch included)**
- **Sunday, December 22nd: 11:30am-2pm: Rehearsal (lunch included)**
- **Tuesday, December 24th: 2-4pm: Dress rehearsal (snacks included)**
- **Tuesday, December 24th: 4-5pm: Performance**

Alternative Giving in December

Looking for a Christmas gift for the person who doesn't really need any more "stuff"? Consider making a donation to the Guatemala Partnership. You will receive a 'gift' card for the person you're honoring. Drop by the Guatemala table in Fellowship Hall after worship each Sunday through Christmas. Colorful calendars that will also be available for purchase, with a portion of the sale benefiting our partner village.

Reminder to Partner Families

Don't forget your partner family in Santa Maria Tzeja as you celebrate the joy of the Christmas season. It's a perfect time to write your letter to them so that the letter can be translated and taken down by the February delegation. Please e-mail your letter to: davebjohnson@verizon.net by January 4th. 'Hard-copy' photos, holiday cards, or other inserts can be delivered later to the Guatemala Partnership box in the church office. Several families in SMT are awaiting new Needham families to correspond with, so if you would like to learn more about the program, please let Dave Johnson know.

CALENDAR December 8 – December 15

Sunday December 8th	9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> 9:15am Joyful Noise Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> 10am Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> 11:15am Church Design Team Meeting, <i>Chapel</i> 11:30am Bible Study <i>Reception Room</i> God in America, 6 th Episode, <i>Linden Hall</i> Hallelujah Choir Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> Friendly Chime Ringers Rehearsal, <i>Sanct.</i> 12noon Shepherd's Staff Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> 5pm Junior High Youth Group Movie 7pm Senior High Youth Group Movie
Monday December 9th	9am Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i> , 7:00pm Finance Team, <i>Conference Room</i> . Immigration Task Force, <i>Library</i>
Wednesday December 11th	11:30am Friendly Christmas Lunch, <i>Linden Hall</i> 7pm Board Meeting, <i>Library</i> 7:30pm Design Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Thursday December 12th	10:30am Bible Study, <i>Reception Room</i> 12pm Lunch with Heike, <i>Library</i>
Saturday December 14th	10am Christmas Shopping Babysitting, <i>Stevenson Hall</i>
Sunday December 15th	8:15am Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> 9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> 9:15am Joyful Noise Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> 10am Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> 11:30am Adult Ed. with Brita Gill-Austern, <i>Library</i> Pageant Lunch & Rehearsal, <i>Linden Hall</i> Hallelujah Choir Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> 12noon Shepherd's Staff Rehearsal, <i>Choir Room</i> 4pm Junior High Bowling 7pm Senior High