

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Gray Road, North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
Organized in 1806



Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here. — The United Church of Christ

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025 ~ 9:30 a.m.

We Gather to Worship God

*Those who are able may stand.

Bold type indicates Congregational Responses

Prelude –

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

9:30 am

Welcome and Announcements

Grounding Prayer

Introit: Choir: Sing and shout, the day is here.

Congregation: Soon a Morning Star will rise.

Choir: Joy will wipe away each tear.

Congregation: Soon a Morning Star will rise.

(repeat as directed)

Call to Worship

– adapted from ***Worship Ways***

Pastor: To love is the greatest gift bestowed upon us. It is a surrender to God's holy power.

People: **God loves us, despite all our mistakes, so we pray for the patience of hope!**

Pastor: Love is a sacred vow God has made to us, a rainbow in the sky, a baby in the manger.

People: **God loves us just as we are, and we give thanks and whisper "amen."**

***Hymn – *Once in Royal David's City* – vv. 1, 2 & 4**

CH # 165

Words: Cecil F. Alexander, 1848, alt. Music: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur H. Mann, 1919

Once in Royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was the mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

Christ came down to earth from heaven, love incarnate for us all,
and his shelter as stable and his cradle as a stall;
with the poor, the scorned the lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
for that child who seemed so helpless lives and reigns in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

Invocation

from **Psalm 80:1-3, 18**

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead your people like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth! . . .

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Then we will never turn back from you; give us life,

and we will call on your name, as Jesus taught us to pray—

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you. — Response: **And also with you.**

Choir Anthem – *Star of Promise, Light of Glory*

- from *Rhapsody in Bluegrass: A Christmas Jubilee* by Joseph M. Martin

Discipleship for All Ages – The Advent Wreath: The Candle of Love

Reader: Advent means coming.

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

We are preparing ourselves for the days when . . .

The Lord himself will give you a sign.

Look, the young woman is with child

and shall bear a son

and shall name him Immanuel (which means “God is with us.”)

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

People: **Revealing God, visit us and fill us with your Spirit. Bring your good news to life within us. Give us courage to carry your light into the injustices and shadows of this world. Amen.**

Hymn – *One Candle Is Lit* – v. 4

CH # 128

**Come wander where lion and lamb gently play,
Where evil is banished and faith takes the day;
A Babe in a manger to fool the world’s eyes.
One candle is lit for God’s loving surprise.**

(Children may be dismissed to Sunday School)

Scripture Readings

First Testament

New Testament

Isaiah 7:10-16

Romans 1:1-7

The Good News

Bathsheba: Surprising Love

(see 2 Samuel 11:1—12:24)

Pastor Paul Day

Hymn – *God’s Love Made Visible!

CH # 171

Words: Iola Brubeck, 1975; Music: Dave Brubeck, 1975

God’s love made visible! Incomprehensible!

Christ is invincible! His love shall reign! From love so bountiful,
blessings uncountable make death surmountable! His love shall reign!
Joyfully pray for peace and good will! All of our yearning he will fulfill.
Live in a loving way! Praise him for every day!
Open your hearts and pray. His love shall reign!

God gave the Son to us to dwell as one of us
a blessing unto us! His love shall reign! To him all honor bring,
heaven and earth will sing, praising our Lord and King! His love shall reign!
Open all doors this day of his birth, all of good will inherit the earth.
His star will always be guiding humanity throughout eternity! His love shall reign!

Prayers of God's People

+ The Offering of Our Gifts and Ourselves to God +

God has told us many times and, in many ways, where love flows from—it comes from the hand we extend when we have enough and even when we do not. Let us bring forth the true joy of this season and give as we are able.

Offertory –

***Doxology:** Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

from *Worship Ways*

Love and Light of the world, we give you thanks for these gifts, and for the ability to share your love in a tangible form. Help us to remember, as we await Christ's birth, to give as generously as we receive, knowing we will always be rich in your abundant love. Amen.

*Hymn – *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

CH # 153

Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849; Music: Richard S. Willis, 1850

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And you beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow,
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever circling years shall come the time foretold;
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

*Charge and Benediction

***Response:** Love, love, strong love, my love I give to you.
Love, love, strong love, my love I give to you.
Not as the world gives I give to you,
Not as the world gives, I give to you.
Love, love, strong love, my love I give to you.

Postlude –

We Go Forth to Serve God and Our Neighbors

"Introit adapted from Joseph M. Martin's A Morning Star Will Rise, featured in Rhapsody in Bluegrass: A Christmas Jubilee." "Response - Words and music by Marian M. Thomas copyright 2000.

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THIS WEEK*

Today 10:30 am, Coffee Hour
Tue. 10:00 am, Tuesday Gals
Wed. 5:00 pm, Family Christmas Eve Service
11:00 pm, Service of Lessons and Carols

Next Lord's Day, December 28 – The First Sunday after Christmas

8:30 am, Choir Rehearsal
9:30 am, Worship
10:30 am, Coffee Hour

IN OUR PRAYERS*

Congregation & Community: Sheila Babcock, Terri Bickford, Candy Burgess, Carol Davis, Sandra and Vince Golonka, the Moon Family, Steve Quentel, Lori Martin and Kaitlin Quentel, Holly and Charles Slonina, Susanellen Stearns, Nancy White.

Wider World: People recovering from natural disasters in the U.S. and around the world; Black Mountain Orphanage; Peace in Ukraine, Gaza, and elsewhere.

Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Day
Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper: Lyn Glassock
Music Director: David Myers-Wakeman
Organists: Peter Dickson & Jesse Myers-Wakeman
Sexton: Mark R. H. Heath
Treasurer: Liz McGlinn, CPA, CGMA
Church Phone: 829-3644
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Church Website: <http://nyccucc.com>
Maine Conference Website: www.maineucc.org
YouTube: youtube.com/c/nyccucc

Note: This service is recorded and streamed on YouTube.

If you are not receiving church emails and would like to, please send an email to nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com asking to be added to the list. Like the NYCC FB page and you will be notified of what is happening there, too!

Offerings can also be made online at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1301940>.

*Please submit items for the Church Calendar or the Prayer List to Lyn Glassock by Tuesday in order to be included in the bulletin. Thank You.