



ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 20, 2020 @ 10am

The Congregational Church of Needham (MA),
United Church of Christ

www.NeedhamUCC.org

“Those Who Dream Are Not Alone”

PRELUDE

Once in Royal David's City

WELCOME & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

I dream of music that makes my heart swell.

I dream of trees that take my breath away.

I dream of sunrises that wrap me in light.

I dream of family dinners that feel like home.

I dream of church services that give me hope.

I dream of love as the default.

So today, as we draw near to Christmas day, we light the candle of love.

May this light burn bright as a reminder that God is here and God is love.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God for a love like that.

Let us pray...

HYMN

“Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine” (see below)

READING FROM SCRIPTURE

from the Gospels, Luke 1:26-45

TIME ESPECIALLY WITH CHILDREN

The Rev. Maddie Foster

SERMON

The Rev. John MacIver Gage

HYMN

“Come Let Us Dream God's Dream Again” (see below)

SHARING OUR PRAYERS & THE LORD'S PRAYER (using these or words closest to your own heart)

Our Father in heaven, holy is your name. Your reign come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen.

ANTHEM

Love Came Down at Christmas
The Chancel Choir

by J. Rutter

OFFERING OURSELVES, DOING THE WORK

SINGING OUR THANKS & PRAISE

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, you heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

BLESSING & COMMISSION

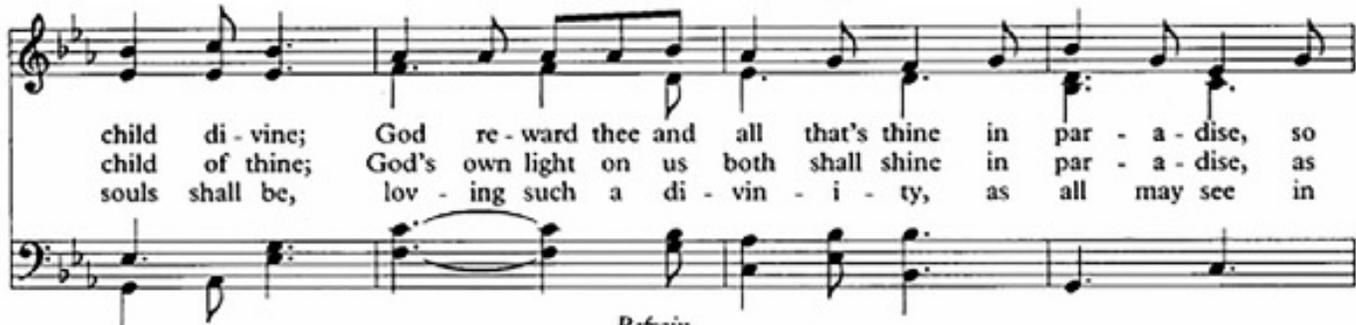
*The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in memory of
Carolyn Greene & Ray Greene, Jr. by the Stewart Family*

Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine

Unison



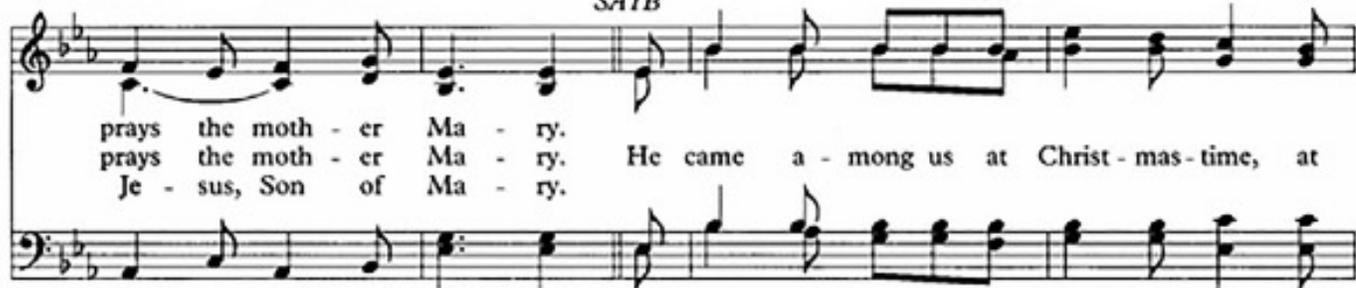
1. Jo - seph dear - est, Jo - seph mine, help me cra - dle the
2. Glad - ly, dear one, la - dy mine, help I cra - dle this
3. All shall come and bow the knee; wise and hap - py their



child di - vine; God re - ward thee and all that's thine in par - a - dise, so
child of thine; God's own light on us both shall shine in par - a - dise, as
souls shall be, lov - ing such a di - vin - i - ty, as all may see in

Refrain

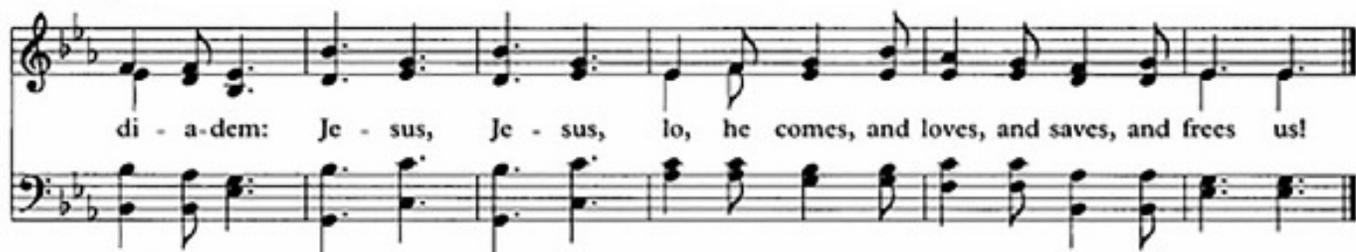
SATB



prays the moth - er Ma - ry.
prays the moth - er Ma - ry. He came a - mong us at Christ - mas - time, at
Je - sus, Son of Ma - ry.



Christ - mas - time, in Beth - le - hem; let us bring him from far and wide Love's



di - a - dem: Je - sus, Je - sus, lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us!

Come Let Us Dream God's Dream Again

Come let us dream God's dream a - gain.
The lame shall walk, the blind shall see,
But know the cost of claim - ing sight
When ha - tred ends and war shall cease,

Come one and all, let us as - cend
the doors swing wide, all pri - s'ners free,
of God's new day, of wrongsmade right,
so all may dwell in deep - est peace,

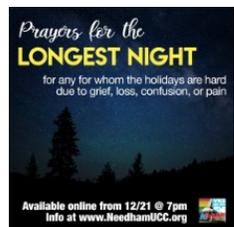
the moun - tain top where those of old
the low - ly raised, the proudbrought low.
for some like Christ have paid the price,
then be as - sured the time is near

saw God's new day on earth un - fold.
This is God's dream: let jus - tice flow.
their lives for love a sac - ri - fice.
when per - fect love casts out all fear.

Events, Events, Fellowship and Mission



Church Family Christmas Party – 12/20 @ 4pm LIVE! via Zoom - Join us for a Congregational Church family Christmas party for all ages. We'll break into groups for an in-house (*your* house) holiday-themed scavenger hunt; we'll lean into the awkwardness of Zoom-delay for a carol sing-off; we'll give prizes for the most spirited “gay apparel” (as in “*Don we now...*”); and, especially for the children among us, we'll share a story about Santa's own “reason for the season” (hint: it has to do with the best gift God ever gave the world).



Longest Night Service available from Monday, 12/21 @ 7pm via YouTube. As beautiful as God's gift of love in Jesus is, our observance of Advent and Christmas should never be a forced march to false happiness for anyone. “Immanuel” means “God with us” right where we are, and that include in the shadow of the star, in grief, loss, confusion, and pain. That's never been truer than this year, when the shadows are deep for so many folks. This service is a reminder that God is indeed with us, no matter who we are, no matter where we are on life's journey. Love persists, even now.

This service will premiere on our YouTube channel (“Congregational Church of Needham”) on the longest night of the year, Mon., Dec. 21 @ 7pm and be available to watch any time after. Direct connection info will be available on our website at www.NeedhamUCC.org.



Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy! **Christmas Pageant - Thursday, 12/24 @ 4pm LIVE! via Zoom at our usual worship link at <http://zoom.us/j/907548568>**

At the heart of our faith lies the Jesus story, and that story begins with Jesus' birth on the outskirts of human history, among the vulnerable, poor, and oppressed, those deemed “lowest and least” in the eyes of the world. It was there that God's love “came a floweret bright” to lighten every load and lift every spirit. That is the story the children of our congregation will share with us once again this year in our Christmas pageant—but how much we need to hear it afresh!

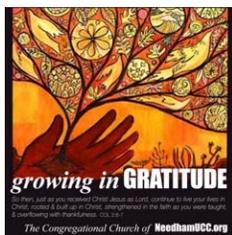
“Those Who Dream” Daily Devotional for Advent-Christmas-Epiphany - Set aside some time this season to renew your spirit with this daily devotional of reading, art, reflection, and rest keyed to our “Those Who Dream” theme. We hope this helps turn your holidays into holy days. The devotional is available for download as a pdf file at www.NeedhamUCC.org/devotional



Just in time for the holidays! The Guatemala Partnership has a limited number of face masks for sale. These make great stocking stuffers! 100% of the proceeds go to support education and healthcare in Santa Maria Tzeja, Guatemala. If you are interested in purchasing a mask, or learning more about the Guatemala Partnership, please contact Jeff Clausen at clausenj@gmail.com. Includes free delivery in the Boston Metro area or free shipping anywhere in the U.S.! Masks are \$20 dollars & payment may be made via debit/credit, paypal, and venmo.

Donate Towards Rosemary Christmas Trees – This year we purchased Rosemary Christmas Trees and delivered them to some members of our church family reminding them they are in our thoughts and in our hearts. If you would like to make a donation to help cover the costs of these trees, visit the PayPal link on our website at www.NeedhamUCC.org (choose “Christmas Flowers” from the drop-down menu) or send your check made out to “Congregational Church of Needham” with the memo: “Christmas Flowers” to the church office.

Watch Our Online Christmas Concert! - Valerie Becker, our music director, has compiled a video reprise of some of the “greatest hits” of our Chancel Choir and Friendly Chimers from Christmas concerts past into an online Christmas concert to enrich our holiday season. The concert appears on our church YouTube channel (“Congregational Church of Needham”) and is available to watch any time! Direct connection info is available on our website at www.NeedhamUCC.org.



growing in GRATITUDE - Stewardship 2020 "Gratitude runs completely counter to the ‘never-enough’ culture of the world around us. It asks us to give thanks for everything in our lives, good or bad, that has brought us to the present moment; to receive this moment, with all its blessings and challenges, as a gift; and to look to the future with hope and commitment. With all that is happening in the world, this has definitely been a year for lots of gratitude practice." Please consider how you can generously support our church and work together from a place of generosity this year. Fill out a pledge form at www.NeedhamUCC.org/Giving