



***December Special Happenings!***

**Dec. 8th**

**Advent Workshop (after worship)**

**Heifer Living Gift Market (after worship)**

**Dec. 12th - Blue Christmas - 7:00 pm - Chapel**

**Dec. 14- Christmas Caroling at Sunrise Assisted Living - 3pm**

**Dec. 15th**

**Children in Worship**

**Paper Bag Pageant (during Worship)**

**Dec. 22nd**

**Worship 10am**

**Christmas Concert - 6:30 pm - Sanctuary**

**Dec. 24th**

**Candlelight Service - 5 pm - Sanctuary**

**Candlelight Service - 11 pm - Chapel**



**Worship Notes.**

**Music licenses:** One License with license #A-733437,  
and CCLI License #A-2267261 and Streaming  
#CSPL169342, Size A

**CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

United Church of Christ

5 Summer St. Lynnfield MA 01940

781-334-3050 [www.Centre-Church.org](http://www.Centre-Church.org)

We Welcome Everyone: An Open and Affirming Church

Rev Thomas Bentley, Pastor

Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School

Bella Travaglini, Administrative Assistant



*Rev. Thomas Bentley*

**"Messages from God"**

**CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

United Church of Christ

5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

**Communion Sunday**

**December 8, 2024**

**10:00 am**

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Randy Russell

Leader: Come, people of faith, come join your hearts in worship.  
**People: We hear the invitation and hunger to join in the feast.**  
Leader: God is faithful and calls us into the loving presence of Jesus, who is the Christ.  
**Leader & People: We come to join with those who watch and wait and celebrate. Amen.**

Opening Prayer *(in unison)*

Randy Russell

O Holy God, maker of every thought and thing, open our hearts this day.  
Help us to know your presence in this time and place. Restore us now, so we may see the special gift and calling that you have for each of us.  
Masterful potter of life, mold us into the vessels you would have us be.  
Help us be ready for your promised return, when you will be among us and within us with new, creative, healing energy. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer *(in unison)*

Randy Russell

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.  
And 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.

Lighting the Advent Candle  
Randy Russell: Today we continue in our Advent journey as we light three of the candles in the Advent Wreath. This Sunday our candle lighting will be done by Elizabeth Gaskins, Sage Gaskins, and Kat Whitcomb.

Elizabeth, Sage and Kat:

Today we light two candles- the first Candle is called HOPE and it is a reminder that God’s promises are true.

The second Candle is called PEACE, God’s gentle loving peace for our lives.

Who Would Think That What Was Needed” #153

1 Who would think that what was needed  
to transform and save the earth  
might not be a plan or army,  
proud in purpose, proved in worth?  
Who would think, despite derision,  
that a child should lead the way?  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.

2 Shepherds watch and sages wonder;  
monarchs scorn and angels sing;  
such a place as none would reckon  
hosts a holy helpless thing.  
Stable beasts and passing strangers  
watch a baby laid in hay;  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.

3 Centuries of skill and science  
span the past from which we move,  
yet experience questions whether  
with such progress we improve.  
In our search for sense and meaning,  
lest our hopes and humor fray,  
God surprises earth with heaven,  
coming here on Christmas Day.

## **“As with Gladness, Those of Old” #159**

- 1. As with gladness those of old  
Did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, true Morning Star, may we  
Ever more your splendor see.**
- 2. As with joyful steps they sped,  
to that lowly manger bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
One whom Heaven and Earth adore,  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek your mercy seat.**
- 3. As they offered gifts most rare  
At that manger plain and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin’s alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to you, from who they spring.**
- 4. Holy Jesus, every day  
Keep us in the narrow way,  
And when mortal things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds thy glory hide.**

Come, all is ready. Let the light of these candles, called HOPE, PEACE, bring brightness to your spirits.

[The first and second Advent Candles are lighted]

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Randy Russell

Patient, everlasting source of life, we know that you are present with those who gladly do what’s right; we know that you remember those who remember you; We know that your judgment is just. We hunger for the assurance of your love, but in our hearts we feel unclean. We fear that the acts we think so righteous are more like filthy bits of cloth, unfit to dress a wound or to clothe the naked. Do not be angry beyond measure, O holy and loving champion of the forgotten.

Do not remember our sins forever, but embrace us with your love, for we are all your people, even though we so often forget.

Words of Assurance (Isaiah 64)

Rev. Tom Bentley

Fear not, for our creator is the loving maker of every thought and thing. We are the clay; each one of us is being formed by God’s all-loving hand, crafted for a purpose and cherished as a vessel made for love. In the name of Jesus, who is the Christ, you are forgiven. Amen.

\*Opening Hymn

“As with Gladness, Those of Old”

#159

Old Testament Reading

Randy Russell

Baruch 5:1-9

*NRSV*

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting; for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. For God will give you evermore the name,

‘Righteous Peace, Godly Glory’.

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look towards the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One,

*Children ages 4 and up are invited to join us for Kid's Classroom in Room 10 with Barbara Langill and Christine Marshall. The children will return to sit with their families for Communion.*

**Offertory                    “Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old”                    Carter**

**\*Hymn of Praise (in unison)**  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**  
**Praise Christ, all creatures here below;**  
**Praise Holy Spirit evermore;**  
**Praise Living God, whom we adore.**

## Pastoral Prayer

**All are invited to celebrate the start of our Christmas Season with the Advent Workshop. There will be crafts, activities, wreath making, the Heifer Gift Market, along with the opportunity to buy last minute gifts!**

## #153