

FOUNDED 1716  
*North Haven*  
*Congregational Church*  
United Church of Christ



North Haven, Connecticut  
*An Open & Affirming Congregation*

# **NORTH HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

## **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday, January 4, 2026**

9:30 a.m.

## Epiphany Sunday

# The Sacrament of Holy Communion

## **GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## PRELUDE: Sleep, Little Jesus

**\*OPENING HYMN: “What Star Is This, With Beams So Bright” P144**

## \*THE CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: We gather wondering, 'Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?'

**People: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the laughter of grandparents.**

Leader: We gather asking, 'Where will we find the Child of Christmas?'

**People: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.**

Leader: We gather wanting to know, where will we find the Christ  
who has come for us?

**People: We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy. ##**

## \*LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE ~*unison*

**God of all people, by the light of a star, you called seekers from afar, revealing your Son to all nations. May the light of your love open our hearts to the whole human family.**

**God of compassion, we recall how the questions of the Magi,  
were met with Herod's violence and Rachel's inconsolable grief.  
May the light of your peace illuminate our world so full of  
conflict.**

**God of grace, the wise ones found the child, the Light of the World, and travelled home by another way. May your guiding light lead us to Jesus and the new ways of your kingdom.**

**In the days ahead, as we journey as pilgrims of hope, may we walk together in constant trust and faithful sharing of our gifts, seeking the wisdom of your word, and following the light of Christ. Amen.** CAFOD - Catholic international development

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen. Amen.

**THE FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON:** Isaiah 60: 1-6

Pg 679

The Ingathering of the Dispersed

60 Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth  
and thick darkness the peoples,  
but the Lord will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.

<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together; they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.

<sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

<sup>6</sup> A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense  
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

**HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.**

**ANTHEM:** Over My Head (There is Music in the Air")

American Spiritual, arr. John L Bell  
Sung by the Chancel Choir  
Peter Froment, solo

### The Visit of the Magi

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east<sup>[b]</sup> and have come to pay him homage.”<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him,<sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah<sup>[c]</sup> was to be born.<sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.<sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was.<sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.<sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.<sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**MEDITATION:** “Following Their Lead”

Rev. Cindy

### PASTORAL CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

### THE OFFERTORY

\*Doxology  
Hundredth

Tune: Old

Praise God for gifts of hope and peace,  
Praise God for gifts of joy and love,  
Praise God for sending Christ to dwell,  
On earth for us—Emmanuel. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

# THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

**Preparation Hymn: "As We Gather at Your Table"**

V457

## INVITATION AND CONSECRATION

### The Lord's Prayer

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

**People: In the winter of our lives, Tender God, our passion for following Jesus, wilts in the chill of indifference. We could walk in the light, but tiptoe through the shadows of missed chances. We could look for you glory in others, but gaze instead in the mirror of selfishness, seeing our desires staring back at us. We could gather the broken of the world to our side, but hold them at arm's length from us.**

**Forgive us, Redeeming Grace. Jesus was bringing life and hope to all people. With grace and truth, he calls us to follow. Filling us with peace, he gathers us up and brings us home to you, serving as our Sibling, our Savior, our Friend.**

*Silence is kept*

**Leader: Grace upon grace; mercy upon mercy; hope upon hope; these are the gifts God pours out on us in this moment, and the moments of our lives to come.**

**People: Thanks be to God! We are filled to overflowing with God's tender love and peace. We are forgiven! Amen.**

### \*GREETING OF PEACE ~*unison*

**Leader: May the peace of God in Jesus Christ be with you always!**

**People: And also with you.**

**Leader: Let us share with each other signs of Christ's peace. The Great Thanksgiving**

**Leader: May the Child of Bethlehem be born in you.**

**People: And in your heart as well.**

**Leader: Children of God, lift up your hearts.**

**People: We lift them to the One who came to us that first Christmas day.**

**Leader: People of God, give thanks to the One who is always with us.**

**People: O come, O come, Emmanuel, to feed us at your table.**

## Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

When you were weary of chaos as your companion, Everlasting God, you whispered to the Word who sang

Creation's song:

Mountains sprang to attention,  
rivers and oceans splashed your feet,  
and the dust from the Carpenter's table  
was gathered up and shaped in your image.

Spirit breathed life into us, that we might dance with you forever.

But when we looked beyond your glory, and saw the shiny temptations the world dangled before our eyes, we rushed to embrace sin and death. Yet you looked past our rebellion, seeing the people we could become, and so you sent Isaiah and Hannah, Simeon and Anna as your faithful witnesses. When we continued to turn up the world's volume to drown out your pleas, you sent the Word of Hope in the silence of a stable.

Therefore, we join with the angels of Bethlehem's skies, and all those who sing of your steadfast love, in every time and place:

**People: Holy are you, God of Christ-filled mornings. All creation remembers your steadfast love and faithfulness, breaking out in joyous song: 'Hosanna in the highest!'**

**Blessed is the One who brings us the victory of God. Hosanna in the highest!**

As we remember Immanuel coming to us, we would keep awake, preparing ourselves to live out that mystery we call faith:

**People: In the beginning, Christ was with you, creating life: on the cross, Christ dies with you, defeating death; from the empty tomb, Christ rose with you, bringing salvation; from glory, Christ will come again with you, the Light which could not be overcome. ##**

On the night before Jesus died, he took a loaf of bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said,

“Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.”

After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying, “This is the new covenant, remember me.”

Let us share in the bread and the cup.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**People: Eternal God, pour out your Holy Spirit on all of us gathered here, that we who walked in darkness might walk forth in the light of Christ. Shine your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, so that your glorious grace and love might flow through us as the very presence of Christ. As we receive these gifts, may we shine forth as your people, that the glory of Christ might be revealed for all to see. Amen.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN: "I Am the Light of the World"**

V87

John Strathdee, 1969

In response to a "Christmas Poem" by Howard Thurman 1948

## \*THE BENEDICTION

**THE POSTLUDE: We Three Kings**

by John Henry Hopkins

Arr. By Eugenie Rocherolle

\*Those who are able, please stand.

## Today's service prayers are from Thom M. Shuman's Playing Hopscotch in Heaven Lectionary Liturgies for RCL A.

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**Deacon** is Jim Bennett. **Greeter** is Joan Bennett. **Scripture Reader** is Jim Bennett. **Communion Servers** are Jim and Joan Bennett. **Camera Operator** is Damon Quinn.

**Join us for Fellowship Hour** following worship.

## Welcome Rev. Margret Hofmeister!

We are pleased to welcome The Rev. Margret Hofmeister, Area Conference Minister, Southwest Region of the Sounthern New England Conference, UCC.

Rev. Margret Hofmeister supports and resources clergy, congregations, and associations of the Southwest region in their efforts to live the love and justice of Jesus in their locale.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Kimberly Noel 01/05, Karlee Etter 01/05, Carl Flodquist 01/06, Bradley Schweickert 01/07.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:** Suzanne & Nigel Light 01/18

**In Our Prayers This Week are:** The Family of Michael Heaney, The Family of Herb Schneider, The Family of Paul DePoto, The Rev. Deb Ruotolo, Lee Guckert and her Family, Linda Rankin, Linda Shannon, Marlene Bellonio, Meg Adams, Ann Schneider, and Charlotte Shea.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Annual Meeting and Annual Reports** – the annual Meeting of the Congregation is scheduled for Sunday, January 25. Annual Reports will be available in the office starting Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, and at Sunday Worship on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Mission Teams and staff, if you have not already done so, please submit your reports to the office.

**Safety Mission Team** - We have been considering ways in which to make our church safer for members and visitors. The Safety Team has met with people from both the police and fire departments to get some advice. One plan we will initiate in the very near future is locking the doors on Sunday morning shortly after the service has started. Anyone who arrives late will have to ring the doorbell at the elevator entrance to be let in. Thanks for your cooperation. We all want our church to be a safe place. Cheryl Bogert, for the Safety Mission Team

**Food Pantry needs:** Bottles of apple juice, crackers, pasta sauce, canned mixed vegetables, and cereal.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS\*

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1/4</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>WORSHIP:</b> Second Sunday after Christmas
		2:00 p.m.	Tibetan American (K,CR, RR)
<b>Monday</b>	<b>1/5</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>FOOD PANTRY OPEN</b>
		1:00	Retired Fed. Employees (CH)
		4:00	BIBLE STUDY (Zoom)
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1/6</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Al-Anon (K)</b>
		12:00 p.m.	PLP (Library)
		6:00	BIBLE STUDY (Zoom)
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1/7</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>FOOD PANTRY OPEN</b>
		7:00 p.m.	Lions Club (CH)
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1/8</b>	<b>2:30 p.m.</b>	<b>FOOD COUNCIL (K)</b>
		6:30	Mothers of Twins (K)
		7:00	CHANCEL CHOIR
<b>Friday</b>	<b>1/9</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>FOOD PANTRY OPEN</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>1/10</b>		
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1/11</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>WORSHIP:</b> Third Sunday after Christmas
		2:00 p.m.	Tibetan American (K,CR, RR)

\*Small print indicates non-Church function

**Bold print starts new day.**

# Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG

Elizabeth Anderson  
Larry Ballantyne  
Martin & Patience Benassi  
Jim & Joan Bennett  
Mark & Laurel Bessette  
Cheryl Bogert  
Priscilla Bradford  
Elaine & Sonny Burr  
Mark & Martha Butterworth  
Sandy Carter  
Suzanne Cifelli  
Ed & Mary Ellen Collett  
Susan Compton  
Kim & Tom Coughlin  
George & Florence Coulston  
Jim & Leslie Dockendorff  
Laura & Dave Donle  
Ken & Ann Dubar  
Doris Ferner  
Carl & Lillian Flodquist  
Gail Fulop  
Jody & Rich Gallagher  
Sara & Brian Gannon  
Merrilee & George Gladkosky  
Wendy & Tom Glynn  
Susan Guckert  
Nancy Gutowski,  
Peter & Cheryl Hall  
Eleanor Harple  
Kathleen Harple  
Vivian Harris  
Susan Beth & Robert Higgins  
Carla & Michael Hill  
Linda Howe  
Bernard & Elfie Hummel  
Barbara Joslyn

Roberta & Bruno Juliano  
Linda Lacobelli  
Dan & Lynn Lafleur  
Ross Lanius  
Carol Lasse  
Nancy & Ken Mahoney  
Ted & Joyce Manzo  
Rhonda & John Masnato  
Barbara & Rick Massey  
Jeanne & William Mecca  
Kathleen & Robert Mickolyzck  
Carol Mitchell  
Bryant & Sara Munson  
Dave & Barbara Nelson  
Lynne & Rob Nielsen  
William Olmstead  
Stephen & Mabel Peterson  
Dot Pierce  
Damon & Gressa Quinn  
Jeanne Reardon  
Lynn Reardon  
Betsey Reid  
Jane & Tom Romans  
Robert Scheidecker  
Adam & Julie Schweickert  
Stephen & Linda Simonson  
Cheryl Solecki  
Peter & Vicky Struk Jr.  
John & Sue Tibor  
Doris Vigliotto  
Catherine Welch

Pledges as of 1-2-26

With Thanks from the Generosity  
Mission Team: Joan Bennett, Cheryl  
Bogert, Priscilla Bradford, Sue  
Cifelli, and Mabel Peterson

\*OPENING HYMN: "What Star Is This, With Beams So Bright" P144

3. O Je - sus, while the star of grace Im - pels us  
4. To God the Fa - ther, heaven - ly Light, To Christ, re - than the noon - day light? 'Tis sent to announce a new - born  
shall a star pro - ceed"; And lo! the east - ern sa - ges  
on to seek thy face, Let not our sloth - ful hearts re -  
vealed in earth - ly night, To God the Ho - ly Ghost we  
king, Glad ti - dings of our God to bring.  
stand, To read in heaven the Lord's com - mand.  
fuse The guid - ance of thy light to use.  
raise An end - less song of thank - ful praise! A - men."/>

1. What star is this, with beams so bright, More love - ly  
2. 'Tis now ful - filled what God de - creed, "From Ja - cob  
3. O Je - sus, while the star of grace Im - pels us  
4. To God the Fa - ther, heaven - ly Light, To Christ, re -

than the noon - day light? 'Tis sent to announce a new - born  
shall a star pro - ceed"; And lo! the east - ern sa - ges  
on to seek thy face, Let not our sloth - ful hearts re -  
vealed in earth - ly night, To God the Ho - ly Ghost we

king, Glad ti - dings of our God to bring.  
stand, To read in heaven the Lord's com - mand.  
fuse The guid - ance of thy light to use.  
raise An end - less song of thank - ful praise! A - men.

**Church Staff:** All the Members, Ministers to the World

The Reverend Cindy Stasko, Bridge Pastor

Karlee Etter, Ministry Coordinator for Children

Jeffrey Hutchins, Director of Music

Heather Meachen, Organist

Julie Schweickert, Office Manager

Dave Nelson, Sexton

# Preparation Hymn: “As We Gather at Your Table”

V457

F Gm7 F Dm Bb C  
 1 As we gath - er at your ta - ble, as we list - en  
 2 Turn our wor - ship in - to wit - ness in the sac - ra -  
 3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum - mon oth - er guests to

Bb F Gm7 F Dm  
 to your word, help us know, O God, your pres - ence,  
 ment of life; send us forth to love and serve you,  
 share that feast where tri - umph - ant Love will wel - come

Dm Bb C7 Bb F C  
 let our hearts and minds be stirred. Nour - ish us with sa - cred  
 bring - ing peace where there is strife. Give us, Christ, your great com -  
 those who had been last and least. There no more will en - vy

Dm Am F Bb C Dm  
 sto - ry till we claim it as our own; teach us through this  
 pas - sion to for - give as you for - gave; may we still be -  
 blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy, as we join with

Dm7 Gm7 Bb F Gm7 Am Gm Gm7 F  
 ho - ly ban - quet how to make Love's vic - tory known.  
 hold your im - age in the world you died to save.  
 saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound - ing joy.

## CLOSING HYMN: "I am the Light of the World"

V87

Refrain (Unison)

"I am the light of the world!"

You peo- ple come and fol- low

me!" If you fol- low and love you'll learn the mys- te- ry of

what you were meant to do and be.

1 When the song of the an - gels is  
 2 — To find the lost and lone - ly  
 3 — To free the pris - oner from all  
 4 To bring hope to ev - ery task you

stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the  
 one, to heal the bro - ken soul with love, to  
 chains, to make the pow - er - ful care, to  
 do, to dance at a ba - by's new birth, to