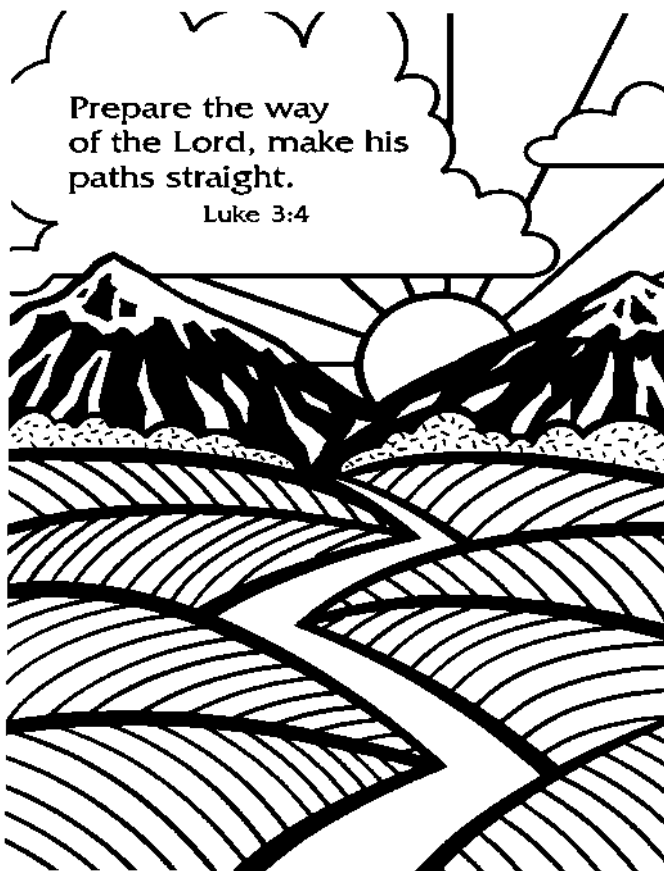


Welcome to *Amherst Presbyterian Church*. We are one of the visible churches for the invisible church that shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Christ that fills all in all.

You are so welcome to our worship every Sunday.



***2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent***

**December 5, 2021 at 10:30 AM**

*"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24*

AMHERST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
The Presbyterian Church in the USA  
*All Are Welcome*

\* We invite you to please stand, as you are able, for items preceded by an asterisk.

PRELUDE: Meditation on “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” by Aurelius Prudentius

**OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Liturgist*

\* INTROIT: People, Look East # 12 (*verses 1 & 5*)

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: Listen! Listen for a messenger from God.

The way is being prepared for Christ’s coming.

**People: We are here to listen for a word from God.**

**We have gathered to prepare for Christ’s advent.**

Liturgist: Come with your joys and sorrows, laughter and tears.

There is a place for you in the company of seekers.

**People: We thank God for our acceptance in the church.**

**We rejoice to offer the love of Christ to others.**

Liturgist: We are partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Claim anew today this opportunity and responsibility.

**People: We are glad God is doing great things among us.**

**We want to rejoin ourselves to God’s work in the world.**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*(in unison)*

O God, we have tried to cover up our sins, yet you know the disorder we have caused in our lives. You have witnessed our poor choices and our destructive habits. We have denied our baptism and ignored the responsibilities of discipleship. The good we do is often self-serving, while we avoid the full claims of gospel partnership. Hear our cries of repentance and turn our lives around, that we may know the wonder of your forgiveness. Amen.

## **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

*(in unison)*

Good news! God has done great things for us. We are loved; we are forgiven; we are claimed by God's grace. The Holy One has begun a good work in us. Even now, the love of God is expanding our knowledge, sharpening our discernment, and equipping us for excellence. Go and bear fruit.

## **PASSING OF PEACE**

*Pastor*

Pastor: "The Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you..."

People: "...and also with you."

\* **HYMN:** Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates # 8

## **FIRST READING**

Malachi 3:1-4

*Liturgist*

<sup>1</sup> See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

## **SECOND READING**

Luke 3:1-6

*Pastor*

<sup>1</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

*(continued on next page)*

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;  
<sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Pastor: The Word of God, to all people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**THE SERMON**

*Pastor*

**“Prepare the Way of the Lord”**

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION** ~ *Please observe this time of silence.*

\* **HYMN:** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel # 9

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

*(in unison)*

The Scots Confession (3.06)

When the fullness of time came God sent his Son, his eternal wisdom, the substance of his own glory, into this world, who took the nature of humanity from the substance of a woman, a virgin, by means of the Holy Ghost. And so was born the “just seed of David,” the “Angel of the great counsel of God,” the very Messiah promised, whom we confess and acknowledge to be Emmanuel, true God and true man, two perfect natures united and joined in one person.

**SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS**

*Pastor*

**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; 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.

## OFFERTORY INVITATION

*Liturgist*

What is a fitting offering that is pleasing to God? When we sense the wonder of God's majesty and realize the amazing extent of God's concern for us, we can only respond with all that we have and all we are. What we place on the altar is a small measure of our gratitude.

**OFFERTORY:** He Shall Feed His Flock by G.F. Handel

\* **DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592

\* **OFFERTORY PRAYER** *(in unison)*

How good you have been to us, gracious God! How meagerly we have responded. You have restored our fortunes when we felt all was lost. You have filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. We give thanks, not only with a portion of our income, but also through renewed commitment to righteous living. By your grace, we share in the work Christ came to accomplish among us. May love abound in and through us. Amen.

## \* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor: Remember those messengers of the faith you have known;  
rejoice and give thanks for their witness.

**People: We, too, will prepare the way of Christ;  
we will help to level the hills and valleys.**

Pastor: Hold one another in your hearts day by day;  
pray that love may rule all your relationships.

**People: We will weep with those who weep.  
We will rejoice with those who rejoice.**

Pastor: God will be with you wherever you go;  
the good work begun in you will be brought to completion.

**People: All flesh will see the salvation of our God;  
we will live in covenant with our Creator.**

**ALL: Amen.**

*(Please remain standing until the Christ candle passes your pew.)*

**POSTLUDE:** La Rejouissance by Handel

Today's Worship Team

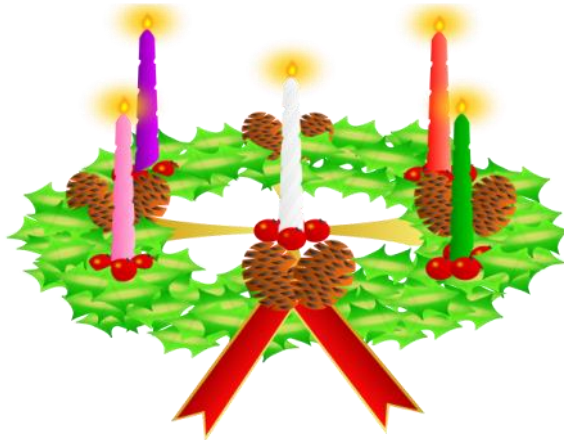
Ministers: The People and Rev. Amir Tawadrous  
Music Director: Donna Lorenzo  
Liturgist: Tom Potts  
Usher: Roberta Jones

**Devotion of the Week**

Let us read **Luke 3:1-6**.

**Questions for your meditation:**

What systems of power do we offer the most attention to these days?  
How does God seem to operate outside of our systems of power?



## **APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — December 5, 2021**

- Our current safety guidelines can be found on the back of your bulletin.
- The **Deacons** will meet **today** at **noon**, both at church and via Zoom.
- Our Deacons have also provided Christmas cards for the congregation to sign in the social room. These cards will be given to our homebound members in their Christmas bags.
- The **Budget Committee** will meet on **Monday, December 6** at **7 PM** at church.
- On **Tuesday, December 7** at **11:00 AM**, the Service of Witness to the Resurrection of the Lord for John McNeil will be held at Amherst Presbyterian Church.
- The **Session** will meet on **Monday, December 13** at **7 PM** via Zoom, with a special financial report at **6 PM**.
- The **Christmas Joy Offering** will be collected on behalf of the Presbyterian Mission (PC USA) through December 19. When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our Church — past, present and future. Flyers and envelopes are available in the Narthex.

Next week — **Sunday, December 12** — Worship Service at **10:30 AM**

### **PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Our friends and family in care facilities and at home, including:  
Doreen Connolly, Joan Hambleton, John Kelley Jr., Betty Knowl,  
Lois McMillan, Mel Palmer, Gail Trankle

Please observe the following safety guidelines for in-person worship:

- ◇ Per the Erie County Mask Mandate, anyone in an indoor, public location, is required to wear a mask/face covering.
- ◇ Everyone attending the worship service is asked to please wear a mask for the duration of the service, including while singing.
- ◇ People who are not from the same household are encouraged to sit 6 feet apart in the sanctuary.
- ◇ Worship leaders may temporarily remove their masks while speaking during the service if they are at least 12 feet away from others.
- ◇ If you haven't done so already, please sign the attendance sheet in the Narthex.



### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Office Phone:** 716-633-4656 / **Email:** AmherstPC@verizon.net

**Office hours:** 9:00am—1:00pm, **Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

**Rev. Amir's Cell:** 773-961-6977 / **Email:** APCpastor@verizon.net

**Rev. Amir's hours:** 9:00am—12:30pm, Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, and by appointment  
(scheduling your visit is recommended)

**Church website:** <https://amherstpreshurch.com>

**Facebook:** Amherst Presbyterian Church—closed group; ask to be invited