

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.



1st Sunday of Christmas

December 26, 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 Dona Nobis Pacem (traditional)

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

*** INTROIT:** Once in Royal David's City # 49 (verses 1, 2, and 4)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Men and women, old and young, together:
Praise God and exalt the Author of Life.

**People: Praise God in the highest heavens.
Praise God, all dwellers on the earth.**

Liturgist: God commanded, and we were created.
God sustains us and enables us to grow.

**People: Praise God, all who seek to live in faithfulness.
Glorify God's name and join the loving community.**

Liturgist: Know that we are chosen by God, holy and beloved.
We are called into one body, the church of Jesus Christ.

**People: Let us draw close to God and to one another.
Let us join with all creation to worship God.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

Heavenly Parent, we have wandered away to pursue our own agenda. We have laid aside your expectation that we will forbear one another and forgive. We harbor grudges against people. There are some we neglect and some we disdain. We have viewed them neither as your beloved nor as our sisters and brothers. The peace of Christ does not rule in our hearts. Your truth is not what flows from our lips or finds expression in our actions. O God, turn us around, that what we do may be a genuine expression of your love, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

God has already forgiven us. When we are truly sorry and repent of our neglect and our wrongful thoughts and deeds, we are able to accept that forgiveness. God offers healing for our brokenness. The scars of resentment against others are taken away so we can forgive them. The love of God enables us to love. Praise God from the earth. Draw close to the eternal and exalt the name of the one who rules all time and space.

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

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

* **HYMN:** Joy to the World! # 40

FIRST READING

Colossians 3:12-17

Liturgist

¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

SECOND READING

Luke 2:41-52

Pastor

⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for

(continued on next page)

him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." ⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE SERMON

Pastor

"I Heard the Bells"

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

* **HYMN:** I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day (insert)

STATEMENT OF FAITH

(in unison)

The Westminster Confession of Faith (6.187, 6.188 and 6.190)

God in infinite and perfect love, having provided in the covenant of grace, through the mediation and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, a way of life and salvation, sufficient for and adapted to the whole lost race of humans, does freely offer this salvation to all people in the gospel.

In the gospel God declares his love for the world and his desire that all people should be saved; reveals fully and clearly the only way of salvation; promises eternal life to all who truly repent and believe in Christ; invites and commands all to embrace the offered mercy; and by his Spirit accompanying the Word pleads with everyone to accept his gracious invitation.

(continued on next page)

Since there is no other way of salvation than that revealed in the gospel, and since in the divinely established and ordinary method of grace faith comes by hearing the Word of God, Christ has commissioned his Church to go into all the world and to make disciples of all nations. All believers are, therefore, under obligation to sustain the ordinance of the Christian religion where they are already established, and to contribute by their prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of Christ throughout the whole earth.

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

In the name of Jesus Christ, we respond to God's forgiveness and empowerment with thanksgiving and praise. As we have been blessed, so we share. May our offerings express compassion and kindness within our faith community and in our outreach to our immediate surroundings and to the world.

OFFERTORY:

The Birthday of a King by Neidinger

*** DOXOLOGY:**

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592

*** OFFERTORY PRAYER**

(in unison)

We are thankful for the love that gave us life, for the mission that gives purpose to our days, and for the peace that Christ grants to us. Keep us from needless anxiety, that we may give without counting the cost. We give ourselves as well as our money, that your Word may spread where it is not known and take root where it has not been heeded. Amen.

*** COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Teach and admonish one another in all wisdom.

People: We will spend time in study and prayer.

We will listen and speak as God inspires us.

Pastor: Put on--as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved--

compassion, kindness, meekness, and patience.

People: We will forgive as we have been forgiven.

We will put on love that binds us in perfect harmony.

Pastor: The peace of Christ will rule in your hearts.

You will know God's favor day after day.

People: We will praise God's name in all we do.

We will join with faithful people to give daily thanks.

ALL: Amen.

*** HYMN:** Go Now in Peace *(insert)*

POSTLUDE: Go Tell It on the Mountain (traditional spiritual)

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 **Colossians 3:12-17** and **Luke 2:41-52**.

Questions for your meditation:

How can you offer yourself more grace? How can you offer others more grace? What do you need to surrender in order to move into this new year with compassion, kindness, patience, love and grace?

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — December 26, 2021

- Our current safety guidelines can be found on the back of your bulletin.
- Today's flowers are from the DelBello Family.
- Last week's flowers were dedicated to absent friends and family, from Tom.
- Don't forget to take home your poinsettias if you haven't done so already. Thank you for sharing them with us to decorate the sanctuary.
- The church office will be closed on Monday, December 27 for Christmas and Monday, January 3 for New Years. As always, Pastor Amir is available for pastoral care emergencies, even when the office is closed.
- The next Deacons' Meeting will be on Sunday, January 2 at noon.
- Thank you to our Deacons for providing Christmas cards and gift bags to our home-bound members. The gift bags included cookies, candy, pen, paper, hand lotion, and a pocket prayer quilt.
- Beginning in January, the weekly **newsletter** is moving to Wednesdays! Anything not submitted in time for publication can go in the Sunday bulletin and/or the following week's newsletter. Be sure to get your January birthday/anniversary information into the church office this week.

Next week — ***Sunday, January 2, 2022*** — 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