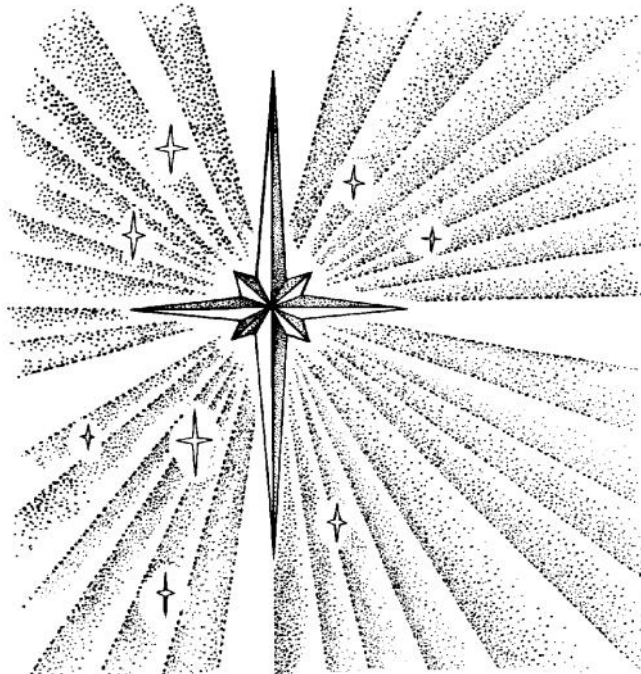


Welcome to *Amherst Presbyterian Church*. We are one of the visible churches for the invisible church that shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Christ that fills all in all.

You are so welcome to our worship every Sunday.



In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. *John 1:4-5*

## ***Second Sunday of Christmas***

**January 5, 2025 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:** We Three Kings of Orient Are Hopkins

**OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Liturgist*

**\* INTROIT:** I Will Enter His Gates (He Has Made Me Glad) # 2270 (*Sing the Faith*)

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: Arise, shine; for your light has come.  
The glory of God has risen among us.

**People: We are awake; we are alive!**  
**Praise God for deliverance and blessings.**

Liturgist: Lift up your eyes to see all around you.  
Let your hearts rejoice, and be radiant with hope.

**People: May justice water the earth like a shower;**  
**let righteousness and peace abound.**

Liturgist: Receive again the promises of the gospel.  
Participate in the mystery of Jesus Christ.

**People: God's ways are being revealed to us today.**  
**Our church proclaims the unsearchable riches of Christ.**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*(in unison)*

God of light, we admit our retreat into the shadows of pretension and exclusion. How often we choose to associate with people who are like us and then look down on others who differ from us. It is easier to discover their sins than to admit our own. We judge the poor and join their oppressors, while you call us to identify with those in need, that all may prosper together. We imagine that we alone are faithful stewards of your grace, while you welcome, as fellow saints with us, many whom we ignore. Save us from our earthbound judgments, that we may look up and be guided by the star that draws all people to yourself. Awed by your forgiving presence, we fall down to worship you. Amen.

## **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

*(in unison)*

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we can come to Almighty God in boldness and confidence, assured of the gift of grace and empowerment of the Spirit. Lift up your eyes to see the glory of God. Receive light and healing, for God has come to dwell in us and among us. Let your hearts rejoice and your faces be radiant as we share the abundance of God's love.

## **PASSING OF PEACE**

*Pastor*

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

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

\* **HYMN:** Arise, Your Light Is Come! # 744 (purple)

## **FIRST READING**

John 1:1-18

*Liturgist*

*(please turn to page 91 of the New Testament in your pew Bible)*

## **SECOND READING**

Matthew 2:1-12

*Pastor*

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men 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 at its rising, 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 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 wise men 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

*(continued on next page)*

king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, 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.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

**“Epiphany of the Lord”**

*Pastor*

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

\* **HYMN:** Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne # 2100 (*Sing the Faith*)

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*(in unison)*

The Nicene Creed (ecumenical)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

*(continued on next page)*

who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **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*

We are stewards of God's grace, entrusted with the unsearchable riches of Christ, channels through which the wisdom of God is offered to the world. Our prosperity gives us the marvelous opportunity to share. What treasures will we offer today to honor Christ? What costly offerings will be given with joy and worshipful devotion?

**OFFERTORY:**           The Song of Simeon       Buchanan

\* **DOXOLOGY:**       Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 606 (purple)

## **\* OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*(in unison)*

For the joy of giving, we offer the products of our labor for the ministry of this church, in outreach to the world. With concern for those who are poor, oppressed, and needy, we rededicate ourselves as helpers and advocates. Out of devotion to Christ, we commit our best, that the church may bear witness among the principalities and powers of this world. Help us all, O God, to be faithful stewards. Amen.

## \* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor: God sends us on our way, a bold and confident people.  
Look up, and be guided by the star of joy.

**People: We will open our eyes to the presence of God.  
We will look for God's activity all around us.**

Pastor: God's purposes in Christ are to be lived out by us.  
We are called to invite others to share in God's grace.

**People: We will witness to all we have seen and heard.  
By God's power, we will minister to others.**

Pastor: The glory of God has risen among us.  
We are blessed beyond all deserving.

**People: What we have received, we pass on with joy.  
We offer to all the unsearchable riches of Christ.**

**ALL: Amen.**

\* **HYMN:** Go Now In Peace

Go now in peace, never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.  
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can  
see. God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

**POSTLUDE:** Everybody Ought To Know Who Jesus Is / Lily of the Valley

### Today's Worship Team

Ministers: The People and Rev. Amir Tawadrous  
Music Director: Dr. Donna Lorenzo  
Liturgist: Tom Potts  
Vocalists: The APC Singers

## **PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Our friends and family in care facilities and at home, including:  
Tom & May Chou, Joan Hambleton, Betty Knowl, Lois McMillan, Gail Trankle

## APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — January 5, 2025

- Our Deacons will meet today at noon in Fellowship Hall.
- The Session will meet on Monday, Jan. 13 at 7:00 PM, via Zoom.
- All committee chairs should begin gathering their thoughts and materials for annual reports. Please contact the church office for past examples, or reach out to Pastor Amir for guidance if needed.
- We need people to assist with communion on Sunday, January 12, as well as throughout the coming months. Please sign up on the bulletin board across from the nursery. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve in our church.
- Thank you to everyone who bought poinsettias this year. They provided additional beauty to our sanctuary for Christmas. You're welcome to take them home with you now to enjoy there, or give them to a friend or relative to brighten their day.
- An Amherst lady with health challenges is seeking to hire someone to help her at home. If you or someone you know is interested, the details are on the courtyard bulletin board.

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

### ***Devotion of the Week***

Let us read ***John 1:1-18*** and ***Matthew 2:1-12***.

#### **Questions for your meditation:**

While both passages emphasize light imagery, what have you learned about God, yourself, faith, and life through what we may think of as the “dark”?

These passages call us to testify to the light, to share our stories of Christ, and to follow the light, to join Christ's work in feeding, caring, sheltering, and serving. Where have you, or where have you seen our church testifying to the light or following the light?

# **Amherst Presbyterian Church**

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## **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:** [www.amherstpreshurch.com](http://www.amherstpreshurch.com)

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