

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.

Jesus increased in wisdom
and in years, and in divine
and human favor.

Luke 2:52



First Sunday of Christmas

December 29, 2024 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

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

*** INTROIT:** Joy to the World! # 40 (blue) - Verses 1 & 2

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 Father, 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:** I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day (see insert)

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 2:18-21, 26

Liturgist

¹⁸ Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord"; and then they would return to their home. ²¹ And the Lord took note of Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

²⁶ Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and with the people.

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 him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they re-

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turned 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.**

SERMON "What did Jesus know and when did he know it?" *Pastor*

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

* **HYMN:** Go, Tell It on the Mountain # 29 (blue)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The Nicene Creed (ecumenical) *(in unison)*

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.

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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, 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

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

*** DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592 (blue)

*** 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:** Joy to the World! # 40 (blue) - Verse 4

POSTLUDE

Today’s Worship Team

Ministers: The People and Rev. Amir Tawadrous

Guest Organist: Nancy Lorenzo-Deleys

Liturgist: Tom Potts

Vocalists: The APC Singers

Devotion of the Week

Let us read **Luke 2:41-52.**

Questions for your meditation:

What spiritual disciplines do you use to grow in the knowledge of God?

How can our congregation’s Christian education program and worship life help you to be filled with the knowledge of God’s will so you can live a faithful, obedient, and fruitful life for the Lord?

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — December 29, 2024

- Pastor Amir invites you to a New Year's Eve time of prayer on Tuesday, Dec. 31 at 7:00 PM, via Zoom. Let us connect once more this year to pray for the upcoming year. Please let Pastor Amir know you would like to attend this online gathering so he can send you a Zoom link.
- Please note that the church office will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025 for New Year's Day. Pastor Amir can be reached on his cell phone for pastoral care emergencies.
- The Sewing group will meet on Friday, Jan. 3 at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall. No sewing experience is needed, so all are welcome. Bring a bagged lunch for the noontime break.
- Everyone is welcome in our Bible Study group that meets on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month before the worship service. Pastor Amir leads this discussion about and teaching from the lectionary texts and how they relate to one another. The next class will be on Sunday, Jan. 5 at 9:30 AM.
- Our Deacons will meet on Sunday, Jan. 5 at noon in Fellowship Hall.
- We are in need of volunteers to setup, serve, and clean up communion. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the nursery or contact the church office.

Next week — ***Sunday, January 5, 2025***

9:30 AM - Bible Study

10:30 AM - Worship Service

12:00 PM - Deacons' Meeting

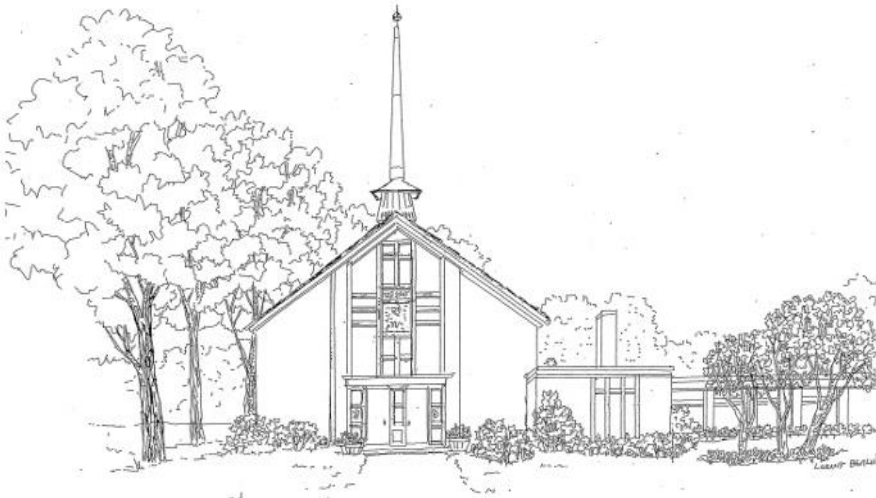
PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

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

Amherst Presbyterian Church

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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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

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