

United Church of Christ,
Congregational Boxborough

723 Massachusetts Ave., Boxborough, MA 01719
978-263-7387
https://www.boxboroughucc.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you BELONG here.

July 19, 2026 9:30 a.m.
Santa!

Prelude *Jesu, Joy of Man's Dressing* J.S. Bach

Welcome & Announcements Pastor Fran Graveson

* Hymn #132 (Pilgrim Red hymnal) *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Fideles

O Come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O Come, let us adore him, O Come, let us adore him,
O Come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Call to Worship Lay Leader

One: God of Love, all seasons of the year have radiant light that shines. All seasons of the year hold infinite possibilities.

All: The work of Christmas continues all year. Let us see the light, let us dream of the possibilities.

One: We come together as the Beloved Community.

All: May we hold the love of Christmas in our hearts and share it with the world throughout all of our days.

A Story of St. Nicholas

Myra, Turkey was a thriving port city in the fourth century with a Bishop named Nicholas. He became known as a miracle worker. In the 13th century, one story of his works was written like this:

It was so on a time that all the province of St. Nicholas suffered a great famine. Ships ladened with wheat were to arrive in the port. Nicholas prayed the mariners would help the starving at least with several bushels of wheat from each ship. The sailors said, "We dare not! For it is all measured out and we must deliver all of it to the emperor in Alexandria." Nicholas said to them, "Do this and I promise in the truth of God, that the shipment shall not be lessened or diminished when you deliver it to the emperor. The sailors delivered so much out of each ship and when they arrived in Alexandria, they delivered exactly what they had received. Nicholas distributed the wheat to the families starving in Myra and the sailors spread the story of the miracle of wheat. St Nicholas became the saint of sailors, keeping them safe on the high seas.

* Passing of the Peace

One: We take this time in community to share God's peace from one heart to another. The peace of God be with you.

All: And also, with you.

* Song of Celebration *Away In the Manger*

Away in the manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

A Story of St. Nicolas

St. Nicholas is said to have given away all his inheritance and wealth away to the poor during his life. He especially focused on bringing joy and help to children. The most famous story is when he left bags of gold in the shoes of three young girls because the family had no dowries to help them to marry. This story grew into the tradition of St. Nicholas visiting homes the night before the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6th. The night-time visit that brought gifts and goodies into the homes of children in the dark of winter. St Nicholas became a beloved Wonderworker in the Russian and Greek Orthodox churches.

Scripture Reading Lay Leader

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Anthem *For Christmas* Senghas
Performed by: Peter Senghas, Tineke Vandegrift, Todd Waddington

Discussion with Nicolette Wellington "A String of Christmas Lights"

Sermon Pastor Fran Graveson

Prayers of the People, Pastoral Prayer, and Jesus' Prayer

Creator God, 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.

Offering
Invitation to Generosity

Offertory *O Holy Night* Adam
*Sung Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

*Dedication of the Offering

Holy One, this is our offering. May our offering change us as much as it changes the world. May we see the things we do, no matter how small or mundane, as the way that we contribute goodness to the world, creating more life, more joy, more love. Amen.

* Hymn #154 (NCH Black hymnal) *Go Tell It on the Mountain* Work

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.
Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! Above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.
Refrain

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.
Refrain

Benediction

Postlude *Joy to the World* Handel

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***Denotes times in the service when the congregation will stand in body or spirit.**

Elfie says: Jingle them bells, all year long.