

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire



*“Every morning I want to kneel down on the golden cloth of  
the sand and say some kind of musical thanks for the world  
that is happening again—another day!”*

—Mary Oliver

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Amherst, New Hampshire

September 17, 2017

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 AM

“Blessed and Blessing”

*Let us be gathered in silence so that we and those who enter with us  
may pause, pray and prepare to worship God.*

PRELUDE

*The Peace of God*

Robert Lau

GREETING AND WELCOME

Members and visitors are asked to sign the Friendship Register and to use a nametag.

NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

INTROIT

Chancel Choir

\*HYMN

*Called as Partners in Christ's Service*  
verses 1, 2 & 4 only

No. 343

\*CALL TO WORSHIP, INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Let us worship God together:

**People: My soul praises you, O God!**

Left Side: Each of us gives thanks for the gift of life, for having this day. Whether it brings us joy or sorrow, pain or ease, may we take it as a blessing, something to puzzle out or treasure, something that may lead us closer to you.

**People: My soul praises you, O God!**

Right Side: Whether we sit alone or dance in the company of friends may we hear your Spirit calling to us: a call to faithfulness, to be a blessing to others; a call to stillness, to work, to play; a call to prayer, to study, to silence. May we answer,

**People: My soul praises you, O God!**

**All: We pray all of these things, in gratitude for many blessings, in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray: 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**



\*DOXOLOGY (Tune: *From All That Dwell Below the Skies*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below. Alleluia, Alleluia.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Amen.

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Gracious God, along with our offerings received this morning we dedicate our lives. Through each of our contributions we support the work and witness of your son Jesus Christ, here in this place and in the wider world. Accept our offerings, given in deep gratitude for the many blessings which we have received from you, O God. Amen.

\*HYMN

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*  
verses 1 & 2 only

No. 376

\*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

\*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*The congregation is invited to form a large circle around the sanctuary and to echo the words of the benediction as they receive and extend the blessing to all those around them.*

\*CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL RESPONSE

Come, O Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing your grace.

\*POSTLUDE

*Trumpet Tune*

G. F. Handel/Mark Williams

(\*Indicates that those who are able may stand.)

*Portions of today's liturgy are adapted from Before the Amen, edited by Maren C. Tirabassi and Maria I. Tirabassi.*

***The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:***

September 24:	Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
OR	Jonah 3:10-4:11 Psalm 145:1-8 Philippians 1:21-30 Matthew 20:1-16
October 1:	Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
OR	Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 Psalm 25:1-9 Philippians 2:1-13 Matthew 21:23-32



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST**  
**A Welcoming, Open and Affirming Congregation**  
**of the United Church of Christ**



**“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
you are welcome here.”**

*We, the members of the Congregational Church of Amherst, New Hampshire, United Church of Christ, believe God’s Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ call us to love all our neighbors as we would want to be loved. We are called to be as one body, seeking to walk together in the full life and ministry of our church.*

*We welcome each individual as a child of God. As covenant members of Christ’s church, we celebrate God’s love for people of all races and ethnic backgrounds, all mental and physical abilities, all socioeconomic backgrounds, all sexual orientations, all gender identities and gender expressions, and all of the other diverse attributes woven into the fabric of humankind.*

*With God’s grace, we invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship and sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of our church.*

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us this morning. Our membership is open to all those who choose to walk with us in our witness. Please speak with any of our deacons or pastors should you have any questions regarding our church or our membership.

**Worship Notes:**

- **Nursery Care** is provided for children ages two and under at the beginning of worship.
- **Church School** is available for children in preschool through grade 4 immediately following Children’s Time.
- **Joys and Concerns** may be written on the cards found in the pew racks. Cards will be collected by one of the pastors during the middle hymn and shared during the Prayers of the People.
- **Nametags** – Please remember to wear your nametag each Sunday, so that we may all greet our neighbors. If you do not have a permanent nametag, temporary nametags may be found inside the friendship registers. If you are in need of a new, permanent nametag, please see one of the deacons.
- **Fellowship** – Please join us in the community room following worship to welcome visitors and friends.
- **Emergencies** – In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given. An emergency plan is in place for the children in the nursery and in the church school.

The church office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Here’s how to reach us: by telephone 673-3231, or by email [andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org). If we are unavailable by phone, please feel free to leave a message using the personal directory, and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Visit our church’s website at [www.ccamherst.org](http://www.ccamherst.org), and follow us on Facebook at Facebook.com/ccamherst.

***Grounded in God’s Love—Serving Neighbors Near and Far—Welcoming to All***

## PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church Richard G. Leavitt Maureen R. Frescott Michael Havay Judi Simpson Travis, Larissa, James, Nicholas and Grace Riley Art and Vicky Leknes, Hamilton and Liz MacMillan Stewart Marilyn Gibson Laura Green	Ministers to the World Senior Pastor Associate Pastor Organist/Accompanist Deacon In Charge Greeters Ushers Church School Coordinator Nursery Coordinator
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Sara L. Phelps Wendy Valeri	Director of Music Handbell Choir Director

**ANIMATE: BIBLE**, the Fall Adult Ed series begins Wednesday, **September 20** from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. in the parlor. This new series uses short videos and engaging questions to inspire conversation and deepen our understanding of the Bible. Discussion will be led by Pastor Maureen. This 7-session series will run through December on the first and third Wednesday of every month. If you can't make the sessions, you may join in the conversation on our church FACEBOOK page at [www.facebook.com/ccamherst](http://www.facebook.com/ccamherst). Participants may purchase a companion journal for \$8.00 (optional) in the church office.

**CHURCH SCHOOL:** If you have not already registered your child/children, please do so either online at the Christian Education link or on paper at the table in the community room during Fellowship Hour.

At the same time, volunteer in the church school program by visiting the Church School table in the community room during Fellowship Hour.

### Our Church Calendar September 17—23, 2017

Today	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:10 a.m.	Fellowship— Community Room
	6:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group—Youth Room
Monday	9:30 a.m.	WA Workshop—Vestry
Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Men's Fellowship— Youth Room
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Animate: Bible—Parlor
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Handbell Choir— Sanctuary
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir—Vestry

**GROWING OUR GIFTS:** Last Sunday, we kicked off the Growing Our Gifts project, a combination fundraiser and community building activity. Sign up will continue after today's service. Pick up your \$10 seed money and decide how you would like to make it grow! Lots of ideas and support are available to make it easy to participate -- and fun for all. Feel free to direct any questions to Sally Hooper, Cynthia Sears or Kay Steeves.

Two examples of possible projects: 1) Use the seed money to cook or bake something which you offer for sale (good for any age participant or group). 2) Offer your assistance to someone needing help with a moving or organizing project. See the bulletin board in the back hallway for lots more examples.

**FROM YOUR CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM:** Our Congregational Care Team is always busy "behind the scenes" helping with meals, transportation, visits and phone calls. We respond to issues and concerns that are brought to our attention within our congregation. There is a continuous need throughout the year and people are extremely thankful for the assistance.

If you who would like to be on our calling list, PLEASE email your contact information to Sara Phelps at [kalben1@comcast.net](mailto:kalben1@comcast.net). Cell phone numbers, as well as home phones, are very helpful. Even if you think we already have your information, please send it anyway. There is no need to tell her your schedule and availability, we will simply have a way to reach you. If you are unable to help at that time we will continue to call others. Thank you!

## *Woman's Association's Fall Rummage Sale*



**Helpers are needed at the following times:**

**Wednesday, September 27:** From noon until 4:00 we will set up tables, haul rummage to the Community Room and begin sorting clothing. Strong backs are appreciated!

**Thursday, September 28:** Beginning at 9:30 and lasting through the afternoon we need a lot of help sorting rummage in both the vestry and Community Room.

**Friday, September 29:** Help with final preparations is needed in the morning, beginning at 9:30. The sale is open from 4-7 pm. Extra sales help is always needed.

**Saturday, September 30:** Clean-up help is needed beginning at noon. Pack up unsold merchandise, take down tables, sweep floors, take trash to dump.

We appreciate any amount of time that volunteers have to help with the Rummage Sale, which raises money to support both the church and community charities. Come by the church when you're able to help or contact Sally Bowkett at 673-7409 to sign up for a specific job.

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for September include canned ham, side dishes (pasta mix, Hamburger Helper, etc.), ravioli and beef-a-roni. Donations can be left in the SHARE cupboard in the narthex or in the container by the community room entrance. Many thanks for your continuing support!

## ***Hurricane Relief—How You Can Help***

*Below is a reprint of the congregational email Pastor Dick sent two weeks ago. At the time, Hurricane Irma hadn't yet struck. Many folks are wondering what they can do to help, so we thought it appropriate to reprint this.*

Most of us have been distraught and riveted by the pictures and news reports in the wake of Hurricane Harvey this past week. Watching the frail, the elderly and families with young children struggling against the flood currents; seeing emergency boats navigating the streets in search of more victims to rescue; is wrenching and surreal. Many folks are leaving with just the few possessions they can carry, or with beloved pets tucked under their arms, or with nothing at all except the clothes on their backs, while their homes are swallowed by the rising water.

Debbie and I spent an intern year community organizing in Houston when I was in seminary many years ago. And while we haven't kept close contact with most of the folks from that place, we remember it well. There were many dear people who befriended us that year. Even back then, whenever even two inches of rain fell there was often incredible flooding throughout the city. Thirty, forty or fifty inches of rain in one multi-day storm is simply unimaginable.

There are many reputable relief organizations that are requesting donations to help with the recovery that will surely be needed for many months and years to come. But there are also some who will prey upon the well-intentioned by siphoning donations or spending the money poorly. If you have an agency you already trust, that's great. Give generously! Two avenues of support I often utilize at times like these are our **UCC Disaster Relief Ministries** ([http://www.ucc.org/disaster\\_hurricane\\_harvey](http://www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey)) and **Church World Service** (<https://cwsglobal.org/>). Both are organizations proven trustworthy, they utilize the network of churches already on the ground in these places of disaster, and they target the funds and aid to the particular disaster you specify. We have about two dozen UCC churches in the Houston area already. Many of them will be stepping up to help with relief efforts. Church World Service is the ecumenical network that we often support with Blankets Plus Sunday and our annual CROP Walk.

The United Church of Christ web site suggests several things you can do to help with relief efforts:

1. Pray for all the families and individuals affected by this tragedy, including the rescue, relief, and medical workers.
2. Make a monetary contribution for ongoing emergency and relief efforts.
3. Consider gathering items to send in CWS Emergency Clean Up Buckets (sponges, disinfectant, gloves, etc.—there's a list) (We did this several years ago following an earlier disaster).
4. Plan for a possible volunteer work effort to help cleanup and rebuild people's homes once the infra-structure to support outside groups is re-established (some months from now). (We sent an adult team to Florida several years ago following Hurricane Hugo. Our SHYG goes on mission trips regularly for this type of volunteer work.)

If you would like to make a donation to either or both of these organizations and have us send it along, feel free to write a check to CCA with "Hurricane Relief" in the memo line. When one suffers, we all suffer. When one is lifted up, we all rejoice. I hope you will give generously, and continue to lift our brothers and sisters in prayer. And may God be praised through every generous, caring act of love.