

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



***“In matters of love: When giving, be generous!
When taking, be thankful!”***

—Mehmet Murat Ildan

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

November 19, 2017

Thanksgiving Sunday
Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost
"Sharing the Harvest"

10:00 AM

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

PRELUDE

All Praise and Thanks to God
Handbell Choir

Bill Ingram

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

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, you thankful people, come. Let us gather before God and lift up our songs of praise and thanksgiving.

People: **God our maker does provide for our wants to be supplied. Let us give thanks for God's generous spirit.**

Leader: Let us give thanks for so many blessings. Let us give thanks for the beauty of the earth.

People: **Let us praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

*HYMN

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
verses 1, 2 & 4 only

No. 551

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)

God of all, thank you for the life you give us, the goods which you supplied to us, the power to make a difference in this world. Be with us in our daily tasks, our daily joys, our daily sorrows, so that every day, every minute belongs to you. In Jesus' name we pray the words he taught us: **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.**

*SONG OF PRAISE (Tune: KREMSNER #559)

Beside us to guide us, O God, we perceive you
Ordaining, maintaining the power of life.
Yes, yours be the glory; let all tell the story.
Our God, be ever with us, in gladness and strife.

CHILDREN'S TIME "Thank You for Sharing God's Love"

GROWING OUR GIFTS CELEBRATION

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of God be with you. AND ALSO WITH YOU.

ANTHEM

Sing to the Lord of Harvest
Chancel Choir

arr. Healey Willan

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Leviticus 23:22 and Deuteronomy 24:19-21
(combined)

Pages 105 & 173

HOMILY

"Gleaning on the Everlasting Arms"

*HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

insert

SHARING THE HARVEST

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

Chancel Choir

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Along with our offering collected this morning, we dedicate the generous contributions of those who give monthly or electronically. All of our offerings support the work and witness of Jesus Christ here in this place and in the wider world. Each is given to the glory of God in faithful appreciation for many received blessings. Thanks be to God!

OFFERTORY MUSIC

O God Beyond All Praising

Gustav Holst/
Anna Laura Page

*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, source of all blessings, you have been extravagant in your generosity. You have planted within us the seeds of hope. You have nurtured within us the saplings of faith. You have harvested the fruits of your creation and spread before us the feast of all possibility. Words cannot express the gratitude with which we come before you. We say, "Thank You," anyway! Amen.

*HYMN

Now Thank We All Our God

No. 555

*FORMING A CIRCLE OF LOVE

We invite you to form a circle around the outer edges of the sanctuary and to join hands with your neighbor for the benediction. Those with limited mobility may remain seated yet still connected.

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Simple Gifts

Shaker hymn

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free, 'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right, it will be in the valley of Love and Delight.
When true simplicity is gained, to bow and to bend we will not be ashamed.
To turn and to turn will be our delight, 'till by turning, turning we come 'round right.

*POSTLUDE

Now Thank We All Our God

Johann Cruger/
Gregg Sewell

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

The invocation is adapted from Lisa Frenz's Lisa's Liturgies. Other 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:

November 26: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Psalm 100
OR Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Psalm 95:1-7a
Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46

December 3: Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37



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. 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, 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
 Sara L. Phelps
 Michael Havay
 Wendy Valeri
 Kathy Johnson
 Marti Warren
 Art and Vicky Leknes
 Marilyn Gibson
 Laura Green
 Art and Vicky Leknes

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor
 Associate Pastor
 Director of Music
 Organist/Accompanist
 Handbell Choir Director
 Deacon In Charge
 Greeter
 Ushers
 Church School Coordinator
 Nursery Coordinator
 Fellowship Hosts

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are given in thanksgiving for families near and far, biological and chosen, close and estranged; from Mike, Sally, Sasha, Scott and Cassie, in honor of the Chabot, Lucchini, Dmyterko and Varanka families.

READ TO FEED: The Heifer International *Read to Feed* project ends next Sunday, November 26. Please bring your sponsor envelopes with the contributions to church school. Thank you to everyone for your support in this mission.

ANNUAL CHOIR CONCERT: Mark your calendars for Sunday, **December 10** and join us for our annual Choir Christmas Concert. This holiday favorite begins at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary and features our Chancel Choir, our Youth Choir and our Handbell Choir. We will be joined by special guest, Linda True Stromski on flute. The Chancel and Youth Choirs are directed by Sara Phelps and accompanied by Michael Havay. The Handbell Choir is directed by Wendy Valeri.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed Thursday through Monday, November 23—27, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Our Church Calendar November 19—25, 2017

Today	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:10 a.m.	Fellowship— Community Room
	11:20 a.m.	Youth Choir—Vestry
	11:30 a.m.	Small Group Ministry—Parlor
	11:30 a.m.	World Service Committee— Meeting Room
	6:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group—Youth Room
Monday	3:30 p.m.	Youth Choir—Vestry
	7:00 p.m.	Church School Teachers—Parlor
Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Men's Fellowship— Youth Room

HOLIDAY SUCCESS: Need a gift card for the person you picked from the holiday tree? For a teacher, friend, babysitter, in-laws? We can help! As well as making great gifts, think ahead to where you'll be shopping and you can use gift cards when you shop. They make great stocking stuffers too! By purchasing gift cards from the SUCCESS program, you can get a jump on your shopping and help the church at the same time. Orders can be placed today after church in the community room and arrive for next Sunday. Bring your checkbook! Stop by to ask questions and be part of our SUCCESS!

WA CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND PROGRAM: The Woman's Association cordially invites all to join them on Monday, December 4 for their festive Christmas program followed by their always delicious potluck luncheon. Please contact Carol Barth (423-0208) if you want to sign-up for a dish to bring. Come at 10:00 a.m. with your potluck dish, and join us for coffee; the program begins at 10:30.

Nancy Baker, a Currier Museum docent, has prepared a new winter art program for us entitled *A Mind of Winter*. In a four season climate, winter asks us to shift our mindset, to develop a new spiritual and emotional relationship between the hearth and the landscape. This program will explore the ways we adapt to a season of natural dormancy through art, poetry and folktale.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for November include pancake mix and syrup, condiments, cooking sauces and seasonings, cooking oil. 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!

Christmas Gift Drives Signup/Wrapping/Return Information



Signups for the Christmas gift drives will continue today and next Sunday, November 26. Thank you to all those who have signed up to make Christmas special for someone in need. Please return all gifts to the church no later than Tuesday, December 5. Wrapping instructions for each organization is as follows:

Crestwood: Gifts should be returned unwrapped in a gift bag with the star attached to the bag.

SHARE: Children's gifts should be unwrapped, but with wrapping paper included, and the star/inventory slip attached on the outside. Family gifts should be wrapped and also have the star/inventory slip attached. Family gift cards can be placed in an envelope with the family number on the outside of the envelope.

Bethany Christian Services: Please place gift card(s) in an envelope with the gender/age on the outside.

SOS—BREAKFAST DONATIONS NEEDED! Our Breakfast with Santa event is Saturday, December 9, and we are in need of bakers to donate breakfast casseroles and mini muffins. We also need donations of fruit, eggs and apple juice. Contact Anita Swanson at neetoswanson@comcast.net or 673-7612 if you can help. Many thanks!

Sunday, November 19, 2017

How May I Love Thee?

Who are the “Thee?” I don’t know them. Why should I give away my time, my talents, my bucks to a “Thee” I don’t know? John was probably sputtering when Jesus told him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me? Take care of my sheep!” Now, here we are, both sheep and shepherds. Peter Millar writes in *Our Hearts Still Sing*:

Worldwide 800 million people are living in chronic hunger.

- Ø 2 billion people are undernourished.
- Ø One fifth of the world’s population receives 83% of the world’s income. The poorest fifth receives 1.5%.
- Ø 3 billion people in the world live on less than \$2 a day. 20% of the world live on less than \$1 a day.
- Ø 130 million children have no access to basic primary education.
- Ø Every year millions of people are reduced to grinding poverty because up to 40% of their country’s income is spent on servicing foreign debt.

*God of everyone on earth,
how do I respond to these grim statistics?
Do I beg for mercy, or send money to Oxfam,
or change my lifestyle, or work in Africa or say more prayers...
I am confused, uncertain, inwardly restless.
Yet in my calmer moods, I sense this discomfort
is one of your surprising gifts in my life –
opening my eyes to see the world with informed awareness:
to walk with greater tenderness upon your earth.*

Here we are – sheep, goats, shepherds, and the Thee. With open eyes and wallets and prayers, we approach Thanksgiving, ready to be caring – caring through SHARE, caring through the NH Food Bank, and caring with baskets from our congregation. These are a few of the ways we may love thee with singing hearts.

*How do I love thee
Let me count the ways
How much do I love you
Well, multiply your love by infiniti.
Queen Latifah Lyrics*