

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



“Today, God is still speaking, calling the earth to rise with the sun and to rest at its setting. God is still singing to creation, blessing each part to shine as it rises, and at the day or in the night, blessing the beauty of the earth.”

—adapted from Dr. Carlos J. Correa

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

June 18, 2017

Second Sunday after Pentecost—Father's Day

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

Faith of Our Fathers

Henri Hemy/
Lani Smith

GREETING AND WELCOME

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

NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come to worship...

People: Our God who formed our earthly home.

Leader: We come to worship...

People: Our God who gives us plants and water for sustenance.

Leader: We come to worship...

People: Our God who created us for great deeds and simple tasks.

Leader: We come to worship...

People: Our God who calls us to nurture our world.

Leader: Come, let us worship God.

*HYMN

Morning Has Broken

No. 469

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

Loving God, whose hand molded the planets and the plants, the creation and its creatures, may you be present with us who strive to know the way to love and live. May those who are restless or broken-hearted find peace in our midst. May we hear a word to call us beyond this place, to care for the earth and its inhabitants. May we find compassion as we pray together the words Jesus 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.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

Creator, in all our living, may we live with just enough for ourselves, living in a spirit of generosity. May we take just enough from the land and leave much for future generations. May we use just enough power to birth good in the world, leaving power to bring hope for others. May we speak just enough words to oversee with love. Inspired by your compassion to us, help us create a new world.

SILENT PRAYER... In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*GLORIA PATRI (Tune #579)

Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and Holy Spirit, One;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

Hallelujah
Wendy Valeri, handbells

Leonard Cohen

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Genesis 1:1-2:4 (CEV)
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (CEV)

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SERMON

"Who Cares?"

*HYMN

For the Beauty of the Earth
verses 1, 2 & 4 only

No. 473

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and PASTORAL PRAYER

ORGAN RESPONSE

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!

Leader: Because God replenishes us from the earth, let us give generously. When we give from our hearts, we help God meet the needs of others.

People: When we give from our hearts, the generosity goes far beyond the gift, it lifts spirits and encourages generosity in others.

Leader: Let us now receive our morning offering.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Father, Most Holy

David Cherwien

*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)

Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers and restoring our strength. Thank you for exposing our attitudes that are selfish, and our ways which are comfortable for us but not fair for others or for your world. Let our offerings today fulfill what you want and not just what we want. Let these gifts encourage others to follow the ways of Jesus. And may they come to know what joy there is when we give of ourselves for you. Amen.

*HYMN

All Things Bright and Beautiful

No. 267

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*ORGAN RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

God of Our Fathers

George W. Warren/
Mary McDonald

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

Portions of today's liturgy are adapted from the UCC Environmental & Energy Task Force.



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.
- **“Children in Church” Baskets** – While church school is on break for the summer, young children may choose an activity to bring to the pew with their families. Please return reusable items to the basket as you leave.
- **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 Wednesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 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

Michael Havay

Mark Baddeley

Wendy Valeri

Debbie Leavitt

Laura Green

Maureen R. Frescott

Sara L. Phelps

Marilyn Gibson

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon In Charge

Handbell Choir Director

Liturgist

Nursery Coordinator

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Church School Coordinator

FATHER'S DAY: Today we celebrate and give thanks for fathers, but additionally for all those men who take seriously the nurture and mentoring of the next generation of children beyond any biological connection. May all God's children have the opportunity to know the warmth, strength, gentleness, love, courage, and compassion of men who care about them and their healthy future in the world.

SUMMER SCHEDULE: Just a reminder that during the month of **June** our worship services continue to **start at 10:00 a.m.** For the months of July and August, we move to a 9:00 a.m. start time.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for June include canned fruit, flour, sugar, boxed mixes, baking supplies, coffee and tea. 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!

"CHILDREN IN CHURCH" BASKETS: During the summer, the church Sunday school (like other schools) goes on vacation. Children stay with their parents in the sanctuary. There is a basket in the back of the church containing activity bags for them to use during the service. Please return reusable items to the basket as you leave. Have a great summer and we look forward to reconnecting on Rally Day in September.

The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:

June 25: Genesis 21:8-21
 Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
 Romans 6:1b-11
 Matthew 10:24-39

July 2: Genesis 22:1-14
 Psalm 13
 Romans 6:12-23
 Matthew 10:40-42

ATTENTION ALL LADIES! Would you be interested in participating in a women's retreat this fall? We are currently looking into a retreat on Star Island for the weekend of September 15-17, but any suggestions of places or dates would be welcome. Please contact Vicky Leknes at vleknes@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us. All women are welcome--it is always a wonderful, rejuvenating time!

SOS—JULY 4 TABLE ON THE GREEN: We need your help! Join us as we hand out cookies and church literature at a table on the village green during and after the parade. Pick up a copy of the recipe for simple cut out cookies in the community room, bake and deliver the cookies (2 per baggie if possible) to the church on July 3, or before 9:00 a.m. on July 4. Contact Sue Werst at 759-5344 or sue-w@pobox.com, or Carol Landon at carollandon@gmail.com with questions or to volunteer. Many new families are moving into Amherst, and last year we had many stop by the table with questions. Thanks for your support!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH! Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking.” Your offerings are directed to your church’s Conference, Local Church Ministries, and The Still Speaking Ministry for these purposes.

HOW TO WIN SOME \$\$\$ and support your church at the same time! Purchase a \$20 Rotary Club raffle ticket and you have a chance to win one of ten prizes valued from \$500—\$5,000. Your ticket has a coupon for \$20 at any of Giorgio’s locations when you spend \$50 or more on dinner (alcohol not included), valid until 8/31/17, along with coupons for Shattuck Paving and a full-service oil change! How does this benefit our church? \$10 of every \$20 ticket sold goes to the Congregational Church of Amherst, UCC. PLUS—if you purchase a ticket for the church (write their name on the ticket), it could be the grand prize winner!! The drawing date is Friday, July 28, 2017.

This is a fundraising effort of the Milford Rotary Club in conjunction with 100 Holes of Golf in One Day.

SOS OPPORTUNITY: We are looking for a volunteer to do some stone masonry work repairing/resetting a small stone wall behind the parsonage. Material needed is on site. Please contact John Swanson (swanjohnny@comcast.net) or Dick Stout (dick.stout@comcast.net) for more information.

Our Church Calendar June 18—24, 2017

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| Today | 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:10 a.m. Fellowship— Community Room |
| Monday | 7:00 p.m. Capital Campaign Com.— Parlor |
| Tuesday | 8:30 a.m. Men’s Fellowship— Youth Room 7:00 p.m. Vision & Team Leaders— Parlor |

Sunday, June 18, 2017

Of Fathers, Flags, and Pulpits

Fathers of the country and family fathers have spoken their minds standing under the Stars and Stripes and from the pulpits of churches, historic and contemporary.

- In 1954 Congress placed a ban on churches, prohibiting participation in political campaigns and endorsing candidates.
- The Vision of the United Church of Christ congregations in New Hampshire is for a world that seeks compassion, justice and peace for all people, a faith that celebrates the Holy Spirit as the source of joy, growth and healing, and a church that offers to all a dwelling place with and for God.

So, how do we put these together? Paraphrasing Prince Hamlet, "To speak, or not to speak. That is the question."

J.D. Greer pastors the Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, NC. He writes:

- The Christian worldview has ramifications for how we see everything in our lives, which certainly includes which approaches to governing people are the most just and helpful. Furthermore, Christian obedience requires that we stand up for truth, justice and compassion, so when we see groups in our society suffering unjustly, we have to speak out.
- The Scriptures are full of admonitions for God's people to rebuke evil, sometimes with stinging simplicity. Read through the prophets, and you hear God calling out injustices of all kinds – toward children, toward women, the outcast, the poor, the voiceless. Justice always carries a political element.
- In the 1850s, many Christian churches were reluctant to say anything specifically about slavery, even though they opposed the practice. Again in the 1960s, far too many churches stayed silent when they should have offered their hand – and their voice – to the Civil Rights movement. Both of these instances are embarrassments to the church today.
- It is precisely when the groundswell of emotion in our country is the loudest that the church is most tempted to cross the line and become a political entity. But where there is not a direct line between a biblical moral judgement and a specific policy prescription, the (institutional) church generally should not make an official statement.

Mr. Greer concludes: What I do know, beyond any doubt, is that we are called to teach accurately what God's Word says about various issues and to make disciples of all people.