

VILLAGE SPIRE

October 2017



Mission Sunday is October 22

Stay tuned for some
mission fun!

The Goblins are Coming!



Halloween Trick or Treat in the village is Tuesday, October 31, and once again our church will participate by greeting folks and handing out candy. Since the village is visited by thousands of witches and pirates, we will need LOTS of candy to hand out. Your donations will be appreciated. There will be a collection box in the church entry starting early October.

We also need some people to help hand out the candy. Please come and join in the fun. Coffee will be available.

Questions? Contact Liz MacMillan Stewart at liz@macstewart.net.

Growing Our Gifts Update

It's not too late to get involved in the Growing Our Gifts project, our fall fundraising (and FUN-raising) activity. When you sign up to participate, you'll be given \$10 in cash (and instructions) and asked to think of a way to make that seed money grow over the next month. You can participate alone or as part of a group. You can sell a product, perform a service, or think of another creative way to make it grow. Lots of suggestions and support are available.

During October, EVERYONE in the church is asked to participate by seeing what goods and services are being offered and taking advantage of the opportunity to make purchases. On Sunday, October 1, there will be a Growing Our Gifts Market at the fellowship time after the worship service. Participants can explain or display their goods and services, and everyone can shop!

Following this event, a list of remaining goods and services will be compiled and sent out with information about how to sign up or make purchases. Ads are also posted on the bulletin board outside the community room.

Sunday, October 29 is the target date for participants to complete their projects and submit their proceeds, but some activities may take additional time, so watch for continued participation opportunities beyond October.

Questions? Contact Kay Steeves (kksteeves@gmail.com or 249-5792), Sally Hooper (sallyhoop@comcast.net) or Cynthia Sears (eolas4all@gmail.com).



Church School

The Middle High Youth Group will meet on Sundays during worship in the Bean Room, from 10:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. A calendar will be posted on our website notifying MHYG members of upcoming events, as well as meeting themes.

The MHYG will be going to the Heifer Village Farm in Rutland, Massachusetts on October 1. The group will be presenting a check to Heifer International at this occasion. If you are interested in going, the Global Harvest Festival is a scheduled event on that day. Please visit <https://www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/experience-heifer/heifer-farm/events.html> for more information.

The Sunday church school program wants to thank Shannon Gascoyne for volunteering to assist in the Pre-K/Kindergarten class on several Sundays. As mentioned previously during Rally Day Sunday's announcements, assistants are needed to ensure the safety of all in each class. To sign up to assist, please visit the table in the community room during Fellowship Hour.



VILLAGE SPIRE

A Parish Newsletter
Editor, Andrea Cyr

The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Church school and nursery care available.

How to reach us:
Office Phone (603) 673-3231
www.ccamherst.org
[Facebook.com/ccamherst](https://www.facebook.com/ccamherst)

The church office
is open Monday–Friday,
from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Send in all news by the
15th of the month.

Announcements
for the Sunday bulletins
are due Thursdays.

OUR CHURCH STAFF:

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Marilyn Gibson
Church School Coordinator
mgibson@ccamherst.org



First and Third Wednesdays
10:00-11:30 a.m. in the parlor

The ANIMATE adult education series by SparkHouse is an exciting new way to learn and grow in faith outside of Sunday morning worship. The series uses short videos and engaging questions to inspire conversation about our Christian faith, practices, and sacred stories. The videos feature creative animation and presentations by contemporary pastors, writers, and theologians, and the material is accessible for all levels. Participants will receive a companion journal (\$8 suggested donation) that provides space to reflect, doodle, and ponder the material for each session. If you can't make the sessions you may join in the conversation on our church Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ccamherst.

Here are our October session dates and topics:

Wednesday, October 4 – “History: Parchment to Pixel”

Does the way we access the Bible change the way we read and interpret the Bible? Phyllis Tickle believes this question is paramount as technology makes it easier for us to carry the Bible in our pockets or look up a verse online and out of context. We'll trace the history of the Bible from its origins as a set of oral stories passed down from community to community, to the days of the Bible being read to the illiterate masses in Latin, to our current mass market approach.

Wed, October 18th – “Testaments: One Story, Two Parts”

What do we do with the Old Testament? That's the big question for Rachel Held Evans. For a long time, Rachel was troubled by the violence, the strange laws, and the treatment of women she found in the Old Testament. She's not alone. So how do we make sense of the images of an angry God with the God of love? How do we not only make peace with the Old Testament, but actually find value in it? Rachel's suggestion might surprise you.



Pancake Breakfast

Join us on Mission Sunday, October 22 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., before worship, for a special PANCAKE BREAKFAST put on by the Senior High Youth Group! This is our way of saying THANK YOU to the congregation for supporting our Mission Trip to Kentucky last June. Our youth and adult advisors spent 7 days in Appalachia helping to repair homes for families in need.

During the breakfast we'll show a photo slideshow of the highlights of our trip, and during worship that morning our teens will share their mission trip reflections. Bring your appetites and your openness to

sharing in the experiences of our youth! The breakfast is FREE for all who would like to attend, but anyone who would like to make a contribution towards next summer's mission trip is welcome to do so!



Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

The Rev. Richard G. Leavitt, Senior Pastor
October 2017

It's no accident that our Lord's Prayer is pointedly communal. "Our Father... give us this day *our* daily bread... forgive *us*... as *we* forgive... lead us not into temptation but deliver *us* from evil." An important part of Christian prayer is its ability to promote community, its lifting up of the bonds that unite us as interdependent children of God. The Book of Acts tells us how the early Christians gathered regularly "to hear the apostles teach, to share the common life, to break bread and to pray" (Acts 2:42 NEB). They prayed together whenever they ordained deacons, or appointed elders; they prayed for those who were sick or in prison; they prayed for new churches; they prayed for missionaries sent out on their behalf; but most of all they simply prayed in praise and adoration for their ongoing relationship with a loving, living God.

In contrast to the age of the early church, in our time there is only a limited sense of community among Christians. John Killinger points out that technology and mobility, individualism and urbanization, have all but destroyed the old concepts of neighborliness and friendship. We simply don't have the time! And so we are left fragmented, lonely, with few genuine friendships. And we feel more divided than tolerant of differences in our communities and across our nation because we hardly know each other in truly meaningful ways.

That seems to be the case everywhere—except where people pray together. When people are willing to risk the vulnerability of shared prayer their intimacy and sense of connectedness increases by leaps and bounds. To modify an old adage, "church people who pray together, stay together"—even though they may travel in different directions.

Some modern church members seem to believe that the "professional Christians" (the clergy) are the ones who should offer all prayers, as though our expertise somehow increases the likelihood of a favorable response from God. I disagree. We are only a true community of faith when all the members take seriously their shared responsibility as people of prayer. I am deeply moved whenever a seven or eight year-old adds his or her prayer card to the "Prayers of the People." Even though the grammar and spelling aren't correct, it shows they know their place in the body of Christ—integral in hope and faith and prayer.

Jesus told us to pray for one another. Just as you undoubtedly hope Maureen and I will pray for you, we are counting on you to pray for us. And all of us need to pray for one another. Even if you struggle with what to say or how to say it, or even to whom it is you're "speaking," keep on praying! It's not the words but the heart in tune with God that makes prayer so powerful. As your confidence improves, so too will the effectiveness of your spiritual contribution to the body of Christ.

So, in this new season of the church year, keep praying—for your pastors and leaders, for one another, for the church! Don't worry about the words. The Holy Spirit will take care of those. "Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above!"

Grace and peace,

Dick



Veteran's Day Display

Our church has a very rich and patriotic history. When we talk with our veterans, we realize how much we have contributed to that history.

Veteran's Day is November 11 and this year we would like to recognize the day by displaying all the varied military hats (enlisted, warrant officer and officer) of those who served. Hats will be on display in the church narthex on Sunday, November 12.

Anyone who would like to participate in this display, please contact Roger Hooper at Rhooper673@aol.com or John Swanson at swanjohnny@comcast.net.

Women's Retreat Take 2

This time it's definitely ON!! All women interested in an awesome retreat are invited to join us at Hallelujah Farms (<http://www.hallelujahfarm.com/>) on the weekend of October 6–7. There are two retreat options: an overnight on Friday and activities on Saturday (\$100) OR joining us for the day on Saturday only (\$50). Prices include meals.

Anyone interested should contact Vicky Leknes (vleknnes@gmail.com). Retreat planning opportunities (SOS) are available!

Altar Flowers Always Needed

Donated altar arrangements are always welcome. Flowers can be given to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The donor arranges with a local florist to have their chosen flowers delivered. After the service they may take the flowers home or donate them to a shut-in. There are many openings in the coming months. Please call Anne Krantz (673-9684) to schedule a Sunday.

Community Supper Needs Volunteers



The next FREE community supper at our church will be on Thursday, October 5, serving from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. A delicious ham supper is being planned. Your help is needed with table set up, kitchen help, serving, clean up and desert making. This is a great opportunity to serve your community.

If you can help, please contact Bob Miskelly at robertmiskelly@comcast.net or 554-8789; or Bob Gibson at gibson@myfairpoint.net or 672-7244.

Looking ahead, the next community supper will be held at the SHARE center in Milford on Tuesday, *November 7*. Volunteers will also be needed for this date—let us know if you can help.

THANK YOU to everyone who has helped make these suppers at our church and at SHARE successful!

SHARE Food Pantry

The SHARE Food Pantry continues to be busy. Please know your donations are needed and truly appreciated.



October
Pantry Requests:
Toothbrushes,
toothpaste,
deodorant, shampoo,
conditioner, bar soap

Donations may be left in the cupboard in the narthex, or in the marked containers near the community room. Thank you for your continuous support!



What is Small Group Ministry?

Small Group Ministry is where 8-10 people meet in a committed group with the intention of establishing deeper connections with each other and with God.

The groups meet once a month from October to June, and are led by trained lay members of the congregation.

The group meetings run 1.5 hours and include a check-in, a short topic reading, discussion of the topic, and closing prayer.

We have 3 groups that meet at a variety of times/days to allow members to pick a group that best fits their schedule.

Benefits of Small Groups

Allows for deeper conversations that we can't always have in committee meetings or during coffee hour.

Provides a relaxing and safe place to explore and ask questions about issues of faith and life.

Facilitates the building of friendships and creates an atmosphere of mutual encouragement, support, and prayer.

Participants feel a greater connection to one another and to God, and are FIVE TIMES less likely to drift away from church.

All of our groups follow a common curriculum provided by Pastor Maureen. This year our focus theme is the Christian Calendar Year.

Topics for 2017-2018

- October: Rally Day: Starting Anew
- November: Advent: Waiting in the Dark
- December: Christmas: God With Us
- January: Epiphany: Revelations
- February: Ash Wednesday: Mortality
- March: Lent: Letting Go
- April: Easter: Healing & Hope
- May: Pentecost: Future Dreams
- June: Ordinary Time: Go and Do

Choose a Group!

Tuesday, October 3
1:30–3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 4
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 15
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

How To Get Involved

You may join a group at any time of the year as long as your choice is still open. Each group is limited to 10 members.

Sign up online at ccamherst.org or fill out a registration form in the church office.

You may also sign up by contacting Pastor Maureen at 603-673-3231 x14 or pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Church World Service Hurricane Relief: Emergency Cleanup Bucket & Hygiene Kit Drive

This has been a devastating hurricane season, with Harvey, Irma and Jose in our rearview mirror, and Maria barreling up the Atlantic. And the season goes through November 1st, so who knows if there will be more to come.

Needless to say, our help is desperately needed. The World Service team is hosting an Emergency Cleanup Bucket & Hygiene Kit drive through Sunday, October 22. These kits are distributed by Church World Service, throughout the country and the world, to those most in need.

There are many ways to participate, both individually or to partner with someone: Small groups? Church School? Middle High and Senior High? Teams? This can be a meaningful project to adopt and it takes minimal time and effort. We have asked the schools to partner with us in this project, and will be publicizing the drive to the local community as well.

Collection points are the church and the home of Nancy Protzmann, 14 Candlewood Drive. If you are interested in learning more about this project please contact Nancy (uvmcats84@gmail.com or 603-321-7099) or go to <http://cwskits.org/>.

Emergency Cleanup Buckets

Supplies needed:

- ⇒ One five-gallon bucket with resealable lid (If bucket has been used, clean well but do not use if it has held chemicals of any kind.)
- ⇒ Four scouring pads
- ⇒ Seven sponges, including one large
- ⇒ One scrub brush
- ⇒ Eighteen reusable cleaning towels (e.g. Easy Wipes)
- ⇒ One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent
- ⇒ One 16-28 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap
- ⇒ One 12-16 oz. bottle of household cleaner that can be mixed with water (no spray bottles)
- ⇒ One package of 48-50 clothespins
- ⇒ Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- ⇒ Five dust masks
- ⇒ Two pairs non-surgical, non-latex gloves
- ⇒ One pair work gloves, cotton with leather palm or all leather
- ⇒ 24-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll and removed from carton
- ⇒ One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent

All cleaning items must be new— all liquid items must be capped and securely tightened. Place all items into the bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment. Snap the lid on tight and seal with packing tape.

*Do not enclose money inside the kits or in the shipping boxes.



Hygiene Kit

- ⇒ One hand towel measuring approximately 15"x 28" to 16"x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)
- ⇒ One washcloth
- ⇒ One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
- ⇒ One finger nail or toe nail clipper removed from the package
- ⇒ One bath size bar of soap in the wrapper
- ⇒ One toothbrush in the package
- ⇒ Ten standard size Band-aids

All items need to fit inside a one-gallon plastic zipper closure bag. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal before boxing. Do not add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended expiration date toothpaste will be added to each Hygiene Kit just prior to its journey.

*Do not enclose money inside the kits or in the shipping boxes.

**DISASTER
RELIEF:
YOU CAN HELP!**



Fair Harvard

Anne Krantz, Historian

I read with curiosity a letter in the summer issue of *Harvard Magazine* decrying the contest announced last April to rewrite the last line of the 1836 alma mater "Fair Harvard:"

*"Be the herald of Light, and the bearer of Love,
Till the stock of the Puritans die."*

Another column about this controversial idea ends with, "The Puritan community had not weighed in."

So on behalf of our church I weighed in, in defense of our own Puritan founders, with a letter to the editor telling the story of our church's founding by Daniel Wilkins (Harvard 1736), followed by Jeremiah Barnard (Harvard 1773). Incredibly it was published in the Sept/Oct issue:

Certainly it is up to Harvard's own historians to defend Samuel Gilman's stirring 1811 alma mater, "Fair Harvard." But I am curious why there is pressure to erase the word "Puritans." They were fundamental to Harvard's founding and the founding of so many New England towns. Why deny history?

Instead, we should emulate an illustrious Amherst, New Hampshire, minister, Josiah G. Davis (Yale 1837), who said in 1874, in his "Historical Discourse" delivered at the centennial celebration of the construction of Amherst's Congregational Meeting-House: "Each age gathers wisdom from the labors and researches of the preceding age. In every science, and in every art, we are constrained to acknowledge our indebtedness to the genius and industry of departed generations."

The church itself just celebrated the 275th anniversary of its founding, when Daniel Wilkins (Harvard 1736) was ordained as the first minister and wrote the first church covenant, signed on November 22, 1741: a simple statement of beliefs to sustain the 14 families living in the wilderness settlement. Church and town government were one in Colonial America, where one church denomination was the established church and the minister was paid through local taxation.

Wilkins served as minister for 42 years, until 1783. Jeremiah Barnard (Harvard 1773) was engaged in 1779 to serve with Wilkins in his declining years and stayed until 1835. So for 94 years Harvard graduates led, served, and influenced the folks of a little New Hampshire town. Please honor these tough pioneer families who endured the New England wilderness under the wise and tenacious leadership of two humble Harvard graduates who devoted their entire careers to serving these rural families. Thanks to our "departed generation's" collective stamina, faith, and hope, America and Amherst survived. Hopefully "Fair Harvard" will, too! Anne Krantz, Historian, Congregational Church of Amherst

I did not realize that "Fair Harvard is THE Harvard Alma Mater. I assumed it was a forgotten, obscure song. Reading its odd and awkward lyrics, I couldn't imagine that it would make a nice song, so I just listened to it on YouTube. It is a beautiful hymn set to the Irish air, "Believe Me, if All Those Endearing Young Charms."

To listen to this stirring version with the choir and organ, follow this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-SjMwBG1mk>. For the complete lyrics, click: <https://www.harvard.edu/on-campus/commencement/fair-harvard>



Lyrics to "Fair Harvard"

Fair Harvard! we join in thy Jubilee
throng,
And with blessings surrender thee o'er
By these Festival-rites, from the Age
that is past,
To the Age that is waiting before.
O Relic and Type of our ancestors'
worth,
That hast long kept their memory
warm,
First flow'r of their wilderness! Star of
their night!
Calm rising thro' change and thro'
storm.

Farewell! be thy destinies onward and
bright!
To thy children the lesson still give,
With freedom to think, and with
patience to bear,
And for Right ever bravely to live.
Let not moss-covered Error moor thee
at its side,
As the world on Truth's current glides
by,
Be the herald of Light, and the bearer
of Love,
Till the stock of the Puritans die.

Samuel Gilman, Class of 1811
[Revised 1998]

The Congregational Church
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Amherst, NH 03031

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LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR
AS YOURSELF.

MATTHEW 22:39