

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



*“To say that love is God is romantic idealism. To say that
God is love is either the last straw or the ultimate truth.”*

—Frederick Buechner

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

January 14, 2018

Second Sunday after Epiphany

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

Morning Song

Mark Roberts

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: God is calling. Do you not hear? You are being called by name, for a purpose.

People: God, you have searched us and know us. You discern our thoughts from far away.

Leader: Do not confuse the siren calls of the world for God's call. Do not confuse the values of this world for God's values.

People: You know, O God, when we sit and when we stand. You know when we lie down and where we go.

Leader: Your words and your deeds are known to God. You were known to God before you were born.

People: Your knowledge of us is more than we can understand. Your thoughts embrace us amid all you have created.

*HYMN

Called as Partners in Christ's Service

No. 343

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

We have come together, listening God, because you have spoken your word of summons and welcome. We are drawn irresistibly to the promise of your presence and by the persistence of your call. Speak to your servants here in ways we can understand. We want to hear the message you intend for us. Your expectations of us are high and holy. We tremble before you, eager for the

heavens to be opened, but eager also for our transformation. We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to say: **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)

O God, our lives are open before you. Help us to recognize in ourselves what you have seen there. Remove the distortions that keep us from acknowledging our sin. Awaken in us a sorrow over the wrong we have done and the good we have neglected. Create in us an earnest desire to change. O God, we are in touch with the pain we have caused and the pain within us. Because of your love and care, we can face and overcome the sins we here confess. Deliver us we pray.

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.

ANTHEM

Precious Lord
Chancel Choir

arr. Roy Ringwald

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Samuel 3:1-10

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SERMON

"Whispers in the Night"

*HYMN

Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak
verses 1, 2, 3 & 5 only

No. 426

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

Let Us Use the Grace Divine

Dale Wood

*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)

We have heard you calling us, loving God, in the cries of your children—cries for bread, for justice, for relief. We have seen you beckoning to us amid the greed and social distortions of our day. We have felt the pain of sisters and brothers caught up in damaging relationships that violate your holy temple within them. We want to help, and we believe your church can be Christ's healing presence for them. Show us the way to be messengers of your gentle judgment and powerful good news. May our offerings be used for the work of transformation in the church and in our world. Amen.

*HYMN

Take My Life
verses 1, 2, 5 & 6 only

No. 391

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Chancel Choir

*POSTLUDE

To God Be the Glory

Robert J. Powell

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

Portions of today's liturgy are adapted from Led by Love, by Lavon Bayler.



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

Anita Swanson

Dave and Joan Poltack

Gene Heighton, Joan Lyons, John Swanson

Dick Stout

Marilyn Gibson

Laura Green

The Dart Family

Wendy Valeri

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon In Charge

Greeters

Ushers

Liturgist

Church School Coordinator

Nursery Coordinator

Fellowship Hosts

Handbell Choir Director

THE CHURCH OFFICE is closed on Monday for the holiday.

THE ADULT STUDY GROUP will begin their next study series, *Animate: Faith*, on Wednesday, January 17. The *Animate* series by SparkHouse is an exciting new way to learn and grow in faith outside of Sunday morning worship. The series uses short videos followed by a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. All are welcome to join us in the parlor from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

CHURCH SCHOOL: It might be the dead of winter and a bit chilly outdoors, but there is an abundance of warmth enveloping our children. Our classrooms are ablaze with the talents, skills, and spiritual presence of teachers and assistants. Our thanks go out to Maureen Minner, Alison Batey, Sue Werst, Gretchen Davis, Larissa Riley, Heather Stone, Marianne Stone, Leanne Vitanzo, Jessica Bortolotto, Meredith Dart, Gretchen Pyles and Emma Pyles. When you see them, please offer thanks for their dedication to our youth, as they nurture their spiritual growth.

A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING will take place on Sunday, January 21 in the sanctuary immediately following the worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to approve going forward with a capital campaign feasibility study, and to discuss and ask approval to address the church's failing fire suppression system. All church members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:

January 21: Jonah 3:1-5, 10
 Psalm 62:5-12
 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
 Mark 1:14-20

January 28: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
 Psalm 111
 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
 Mark 1:21-28

COMMUNITY SUPPER NEEDS VOLUNTEERS:

Our next commitment at SHARE in Milford will be on **Tuesday, January 30** for a spaghetti supper, serving from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Your help is needed with table set up, greeting, kitchen help, serving, clean up and dessert 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 672-7244 or gibson@myfairpoint.net.

GAME NIGHT: Join us Saturday, February 10

for game night and supper. All ages welcome! The evening begins with supper at 5:00, followed by games for everyone, including ping pong and Bingo. Fellowship Committee members will be bringing casseroles and beverages; we are asking folks to bring a side salad or a dessert to share. Questions? Contact Meredith Dart at meredith.dart@stellas.com.

BEWARE OF FALLING SNOW AND ICE: It is that time of year again when we remind everyone that snow and ice may fall from our roof at any time. Please use caution when in our driveway, and do not walk too close to the building.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE:

- ✓ Church school assistants needed. Contact Marilyn Gibson, Church School Coordinator (mgibson@ccamherst.org or 673-3231, ext. 20).
- ✓ January 28: Bakers needed to provide cookies for the New England Colonial Meetinghouses presentation. Contact Anne Krantz (annekrantz@comcast.net or 673-9684).
- ✓ February 10: Game night volunteers and participants! Contact Roger Hooper (rhooper673@aol.com or 673-7032).

Come One! Come All!



to an evening of food, fellowship,
fun and fabulous entertainment!

The Annual Spaghetti Dinner
& Variety Show
Saturday, January 27 at 6:00 p.m.
in the community room

If you have an act or talent you'd like to share,
we would love to hear from you!
Contact Pastor Maureen at 673-3231, ext. 14
or pastormaureen@ccamherst.org.

All proceeds benefit the SHYG's
2018 mission trip to Miami.

Our Church Calendar January 14—20, 2018

Today	10:00 a.m. Worship 11:10 a.m. Fellowship— Community Room 11:30 a.m. Small Group Ministry— Youth Room 11:30 a.m. Capital Campaign—Parlor 6:00 p.m. Senior High Youth Group— Youth Room
Monday	10:00 a.m. WA Workshop—Vestry
Tuesday	8:30 a.m. Men's Fellowship— Youth Room 7:00 p.m. Tuesday Team Time
Wednesday	10:00 a.m. Animate: Faith Study Group— Parlor
Thursday	6:00 p.m. Handbell Choir—Sanctuary 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir—Vestry

Sunday, January 14, 2018

Beginning Our Journey The Value and Benefits of a Feasibility Study

As many of you know, the Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee and Trustees of the Facility have been working hard to research the scope and costs of the major renovations our church is in need of. Some of these include replacing our fire suppression and alarm system, upgrading our electrical system, windows, kitchen, parsonage, grounds and support of our missions.

But creating a list is the easy part. Now our congregation needs to be consulted and decide our best path to complete these or other improvements. How? On January 21, we will be asking our congregation for approval to move forward with conducting a Feasibility Study to determine whether we have enough interest and financial commitment to move ahead with these capital projects; and which projects we want to pursue. In preparation for the vote, we want to share with you why we believe a Feasibility Study will be a helpful and important process for our church.

What is a Feasibility Study? A capital campaign feasibility study has three main purposes:

- 1) To assess the congregation's familiarity with the building projects, the degree of priority held for the projects, and the sense of readiness to move forward with the projects
- 2) To assess the congregation's financial capacity and personal commitment to a capital campaign at this time
- 3) And to examine the best timing of the projected capital campaign

As important, a good feasibility study also offers our community the opportunity

- To listen for hopes and concerns among a significant cross-section of the congregation
To identify strengths and weaknesses in the case for the campaign
- To expand the size of the group who are familiar with the details and timelines of the building project(s) and learn more about what's involved in considering a capital campaign
- To project leadership structures and processes vital to planning a successful capital campaign

And to reflect back other possible opportunities that exist for the congregation at this time

How will the Study be done?

The Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee has interviewed several campaign consultants and are asking for the congregation's support to officially engage Peter Heinrichs and Susan Lewis of Full Harvest Fundraising, LLC (www.fullharvestfundraising.com) to advise us on this process and to conduct the study. Peter and Susan have worked with many UCC churches throughout the northeast, conducting feasibility studies and advising on capital campaigns, annual stewardship campaigns and other church initiatives. They come well-recommended by everyone we spoke with.

The benefits of using an outside consultant for this process are many, and have been verified by research as the most effective way to prepare for a successful capital campaign. Furthermore, research has shown that funds raised in a campaign more than cover the costs of hiring a consultant to assist with this process.

Please plan on attending the Jan 21st Congregational meeting, and be part of the discussion and decision making.

Who do I contact if I want more information or to volunteer to help with this process? Your Capital Campaign Exploratory committee of Susan Bagnara-Thornton, Todd Whitney, Doug Topliffe, or Will Redway would love to hear from you.