

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



*“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger
or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?”
Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not
do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”*

—Jesus in Matthew 25:44-45

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

October 13, 2019

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 a.m.

GATHERING CHIMES

Let us be gathered in silence so that we may prepare to worship.

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

O God, Thou Art the Father

David Paxton

INTROIT

Chancel Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Called to be God's people, we gather in joy-filled celebration of our Creating God.

Many: **We celebrate the miracles of creation we experience every day and night.**

One: Called to be a people of faith, we gather to praise our eternal and loving God.

Many: **We gather to give our thanks that God's love and grace are unconditionally offered to all.**

One: Called to be a people of hope and trust, we gather to give thanks for God's care and compassion

Many: **and to hear God's call to care for those who are most vulnerable to life's stresses and fears.**

All: **Let us respond with our worship, words, and song!**

*HYMN

Gather Us In

inside back pages

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

Eternal God, the refuge and help of all your children,

we praise you for all you have given us,

for all you have done for us,

for all that you are to us.

In our weakness, you are strength,

in our darkness, you are light,

in our sorrow, you are comfort and peace.

We cannot number your blessings,

we cannot quantify your love:

For all your blessings we bless you.

May we live as in your presence,

and love the things that you love,

and serve you in our daily lives.

Here us now, as we pray the words that 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.**

*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

arr. Roy Ringwald

Chancel Choir

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 16:19-31

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' He said, 'Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

SERMON

“Crossing the Chasm”

*HYMN

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

No. 438

You are invited to write your joys and concerns on the prayer cards in the pews, and pass to the minister to be lifted in prayer at this time.

JOYS AND CONCERNS 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

The Gift to Be Simple

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 give in grateful thanksgiving for all that you have given us, O God. In the upside down world of the gospel, we measure our wealth not by what we have, but what we can give away. Let us give away generously, in this offering, in our lives, to bless your church, your people, your creation. Amen.

*HYMN

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

No. 376

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Chancel Choir

*POSTLUDE

Fanfare Postlude on “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”

Aaron Williams/
Douglas Wagner

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



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. **The next new member orientations will be held October 17 and November 13.** New members will be formally received on Sunday, November 17. 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 Pre-K through grade 7 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

Gather Us In

Unison D A C G Gm/B^b Dm

1. Here in this place, the new light is stream-ing, sha-dows of doubt are
 2. We are the young—our lives are a mys-tery; we are the old, who
 3. Here we re-ceive new life in the wa-ters; here we re-ceive the
 4. Not just in build-ings, small and con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,

C G D A C G

van-ished a-way. See in this space our fears and our dream-ings,
 yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,
 bread of new birth; here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a-way, here in this place the new light is shin-ing;

Gm/B^b Dm C Am7 D

brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is God pres-ent, and now is the day.

WORDS and MUSIC: Marty Haugen, 1981

GATHER US IN
Irr.

A C/G D/F# G A C/G

Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in; our
 Gath-er us in— the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in— the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pass-ion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and

D/F# G A D A C G

spir-its in-flame. Call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;
 proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low-ly;
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,

Gm/Bb Dm C Am7 D C/D Gm/D D

we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Sunday, October 13, 2019

Borders & Barriers

Reflections on Luke 17:11-19

Borders are places of danger and drama. Wars begin on borders, and armies cross them on their way to conquest or defeat; we know this not only from our historical memories of World War I and II, but also from recent events like the conflicts in the Middle East. Think, for example, of the refugee camps across the borders of Syria, in nations that struggle to accommodate a dramatic influx of foreigners running for their lives.

Or consider the intense and divisive controversies swirling through the political scene in the United States, with questions of immigration and "border security" uppermost in media coverage and campaign rhetoric.

On our borders, we feel vulnerable, exposed, so we put up all sorts of barriers--walls, guards, and surveillance cameras to keep people out who, we fear, "need" to be kept out. In fact, one of the major issues that divides us is whether to build a stupendously expensive wall on the southern border of the United States, to protect the most powerful nation on earth from those who are seen as threats to its existence. Such "protection" comes with a price, including the cost of many other, pressing needs.

Who's in, who's out

Of course, as Charles B. Cousar reminds us, this isn't a story about the importance of thank-you notes; rather, it's a lesson in who's really an insider, and who's out.

One of the things early Christians wrestled with was how to relate to the Jewish roots of their faith, and what they should do about all these Gentiles coming into their churches. (The challenges of church growth, it seems, are in every age; I have actually heard church members express hesitation about their church becoming "too black" or "too gay.")

Many of the gospel stories, then, reflect the early Christian community, working out the problem of who they were, and why all of the Jewish people didn't follow Jesus, as they had. They would have heard this story with these questions in their minds, and presumably they would have thought, "Wow, the outsider was the one who recognized Jesus for who he was. Not the nine from his own people." —Rev. Kathryn Matthews

"Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude." — A.A.Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*