

# VILLAGE SPIRE

November 2019



## Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 8  
At 3:00 p.m.



Featuring the Chancel Choir  
and the Bell Choir

Sara L. Phelps, *Director of Music*  
Michael Havay, *Organist/Accompanist*  
Wendy Valeri, *Bell Choir Director*

## Finding Your WHY

Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor  
November 2019

I have a question for you:

Why are you a part of a church?

When asked this question, most people will respond not with a "why" but with a "what:"

*"I come for the music."*

*"I come to hear an inspiring message on Sunday morning."*

*"I come for the programs for my children."*

Even the reasons we give that we think are a "why" answer are actually a "what" answer:

*"I come for the sense of community."*

*"I come to be of service to others and to God."*

*"I come for to be a part of something bigger than myself."*

Our "why" actually goes much deeper than we realize.

Therefore, to get to our "why" we have to ask deeper questions:

What is it about being a part of a community that makes it a priority for you?

What feelings arise for you when you're serving God and serving others?

What benefits do you find in being a part of something bigger than yourself?

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## Our Time, Our Turn: The Next Steps

Work on the critical projects for the meetinghouse and parsonage are near completion, and the campaign committee is not slowing down! We are turning our attention to the next items on the project list, including exterior painting of the meetinghouse, the meetinghouse windows, and renovation of the kitchen.

The success of the fundraising campaign and the under-budget completion of the critical projects are due to the diligent and transparent work of the campaign committee, and we want to make sure that such success continues. Here are the next steps:

- Existing church electrical projects should be completed by November. With the exception of one or two fixtures scheduled to be upgraded, the church is now illuminated with energy-efficient LED technology.
- We will have an updated building assessment done. After extensive research, Barbara Williams and Pat Buben have recommended and the committee has agreed to hire Steve Bedard of Bedard Preservation, a highly-regarded, respected preservation specialist with 40+ years of experience, to conduct the assessment.
- The assessment is required when applying for an LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) grant. Receiving an LCHIP award is a gateway for grants from other institutions and organizations for current and future needs.
- For our last campaign 20 years ago, the church contracted with Richard Hill for an engineering report, which has proved invaluable and will be used as a

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## November at a Glance

*November 3: Communion Sunday,  
Guest Preacher The Rev. Shayna Appel*

*November 7: Community Supper,  
Community Room, Amherst*

*November 10: Sunday Sermon: "First  
Fruits," Pastor Maureen Preaching*

*November 13: New Member  
Information Session*

*November 17: New Member Sunday,  
Pastor Maureen Preaching*

*November 23: WA Holiday Fair*

*November 24: Creative Worship:*

*"Thanking," Confirmation  
Class Commissioning*



## 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.  
July & August Worship 9:00 a.m.

Church school and nursery care available.

How to reach us:  
Office Phone (603) 673-3231  
[www.ccamherst.org](http://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  
15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Announcements  
for the Sunday bulletins  
are due Thursday morning.

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### OUR CHURCH STAFF:

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*Church School Coordinator*  
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## Adult Ed Series Wednesday, November 20th 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the Parlor

Our Fall/Winter Adult Ed series continues with Season Three of THE STORY OF GOD, the popular series produced by the National Geographic Channel and hosted by the actor Morgan Freeman. We'll travel around the world and learn about the differences and similarities in our world's religions and how they each tell the story of God for their believers. The format for each 90-minute session includes a 45-minute video presentation and a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. Join us every first and third Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. (Does not meet the first Wednesday in November or January.) All are welcome!

### The Story of God – Upcoming Schedule

- November 20 – "Search for The Devil"
- December 4 – "Gods Among Us"
- December 18 – "Visions of God"
- January 15 – "Deadly Sins"
- February 5 – "Divine Secrets"
- February 19 - "Holy Laws"



## Good Stuff Sale Thanks

The members of the Woman's Association would like to thank the following "Friends of the WA" for generously donating their time to work on our Fall Good Stuff (formerly Rummage) Sale. Their help was invaluable in making the sale so successful: Diane Albert, Cindy Beckley, Becky Bolin, Sierra Burke, Carol Byatt, Bill Dallas, Gretchen Davis, Maureen Frescott, Marty Furst, Marilyn Gibson, Charlie Glover, Leona Hendrickson, Carol Landon, Joan Lyons, Don Lyon, Heather MacDonald, Bruce Manchester, Gail Most, Dave Poltack, Lora Philp, Nancy Protzmann, Kate Kennedy, Carolin Sanchez, Dick Stout, Holly Tonnesen, Doug Topliffe, Sue Upton & son Will, Jenn Whitney.

## SHARE Food Pantry

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

November  
Pantry Requests:  
pancake mix and syrup,  
condiments, cooking  
sauces and seasonings,  
cooking oils, jelly,  
cold cereal



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!

## ***Finding Your WHY***, continued from page 1

It sounds counterintuitive, but to get to our "WHY" we have to first answer these "what" questions. Because our "WHY" has an emotional connection that is not easily articulated.

The parts of our brain that process language and emotion often have a meandering way of communicating, so when we're asked a question like, "Why do you come to church?" we naturally respond with a what: music, programming, community...rather than with the underlying why: love, growth, belonging.

At this point you may be asking yourself, "WHY is this even important?"

It's important because our "WHY" is our motivation for all that we do.

It's where we find meaning, purpose, and joy.

If we know our "WHY" we have a clearer understanding of how we might express our purpose and our joy, and how we might connect with others who might benefit from it.

This is true for organizations as well.

A church that knows its collective "WHY" has a clearer understanding of its mission, and is better able to articulate and live into that mission.

And a church that knows its "WHY" is more likely to draw in others who connect with that mission, because it connects with their "WHY" as well.

On Sunday, January 12 – after we've put the holiday busyness behind us – we've scheduled a congregational forum to help us begin the conversation of finding our "WHY?" We'll begin the forum by revealing the results of the CAT Survey that we participated in last spring. In September, we had an open session with a trained analyst who spent two hours walking us through those results. We learned what our "drivers" are – the areas that drive our energy and sense of satisfaction. Our drivers give us an indication what is important to our congregation. The survey revealed what our top priorities are and where we'd like to place additional energy – both with the things we're doing now and what we'd like to be doing in the future. The CAT results also painted a picture of our congregational culture – our strengths, our potential challenge areas, and our unique characteristics that shape our identity as a church.

After we reveal and discuss the CAT results, we'll explore what comes next. How might we use these results to help us find our congregational "WHY?" What do our drivers, priorities, and culture tell us about how we might best serve God in the world? And in this age of declining church involvement, how might discovering our "WHY" help us connect others in our community to this mission that means so much to us? People may no longer be drawn in by the "whats" of church, but our God created us to respond to the ultimate "WHY" – which is to live in relationship with our Creator. How we express that relationship together as church in today's world – with our collective passions, gifts, and talents - is the "WHY" we're seeking to discern.

Our Vision Team will play a key role in helping us to formulate and shape an action plan based on our "WHY?" – but we can't do that without you. We had a high participation level in the CAT survey, and we hope to continue that as we move into 2020 and take the next step in being a transformational church in the world. In November and December, we'll have CAT Survey teasers that will give you a chance to guess where we may have landed on the CAT Quadrants that map the level of energy and satisfaction in our congregation, our ability to adapt to and accept change, and where we fall on a theological spectrum as people of faith.

In the end, the CAT survey is just a tool to help us discern the reason why we've come together as individuals to be the church in the world. It's the catalyst for further conversation, with the gathered body and God present. I hope you can join us on January 12 to be a part of that conversation, and help us find our "WHY."

Peace and blessings,

***Maureen***



## **Small Groups Bring Us Closer Together and Closer to God!**

Our theme this year is BE THE CHURCH – using the bold statements issued by the United Church of Christ to inspire us to live our faith in the world.

In November, our focus statement is "Care for the Poor." Throughout the Old and New Testaments in our Bible, caring for those who have the least among us is a primary teaching. Yet, when we think of the hot button issues that preoccupy people of faith in our modern times, caring for the poor and addressing the underlying issues that create poverty don't seem to garner much attention. Should addressing issues of poverty be part of every church's mission? Does care for the poor go beyond serving meals and donating clothing? What could we be doing to care for the poor that we're not already doing?

### November Meeting Schedule:

First Tuesday Group,  
Nov. 5, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.  
Sunday Group,  
Nov. 17, 11:30 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

### Upcoming Group Discussion Topics:

December: Embrace Diversity  
January: Reject Racism  
February: Forgive Often  
March: Love God  
April: Fight For the Powerless  
May: Share Earthly and Spiritual Resources  
June: Enjoy this Life

If you're interested in joining one of our groups please contact Pastor Maureen at 673-3231 x14 - [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org).

## Church School Mission Project News

October's mission project was Heifer International. Through offerings and donations we raised \$500 to provide a heifer to a family in need. A heifer is a gift that keeps on giving. Thank you to all who supported the church school mission project.

Thank you to all who generously donated to the church school's mini CROP Walk. We walked on October 27 in an effort to help end world hunger.

Our November mission project is the Thanksgiving luncheon at the Mill Apartments in Milford, a church school tradition. Since Thanksgiving is November 28, we will begin preparing for it on Sunday, November 24. Children in grades 1-4 will be making table centerpieces, while those in grades Pre-K/K will make placemats. The luncheon is on Sunday, December 1.



## Breakfast With Santa Saturday, December 7, 2019

"Breakfast with Santa" is a special event sponsored by our church community and open to others in local towns to participate. This year's event will be Saturday, December 7 and will include two sittings: 9:00–10:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.–12:00 noon. A hot breakfast with a variety of options will be served, there will be organized games and crafts, and of course the opportunity visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Local photographer, Marsha Vander

Mey will photograph your child with Santa and before you leave the event you can pick up the card size framed photo. You may also take your own photos. Santa's bookshop is open and each child gets to choose a recycled book.

We hope many church families will participate, a great event for grandparents to bring their grandchildren. The money raised goes back into our church. To register go to [ccamherst.org](http://ccamherst.org). Tickets sales open November 1. Tickets are limited and are on a first come basis. Tickets are \$10.00 per person; children 12-months & younger are free. Don't wait until the last minute, we usually sell out way before the event.

We are looking for volunteers to help with this event, let us know if you are interested: [martiwarren@comcast.net](mailto:martiwarren@comcast.net).



### ***Our Time, Our Turn***, continued from page 1

basis for the Bedard report. The assessment will give CCA a current view of what needs to be done now and in the future.

- We hope to apply for an LCHIP grant next June (the next available opportunity), with the hope and expectation that such a grant could cover up to the 50% of the cost of the meetinghouse exterior painting and window restoration.
- The LCHIP grant will not cover retroactive work; therefore, we have decided to postpone such work until we know if our proposal has been accepted.
- Upgrading the kitchen is the next large project on our original plan. Planning for this project is underway. To ensure that we select the most efficient, practical, and economical choice, we are asking for input from those who use the kitchen and are soliciting bids from three local kitchen designers/contractors. We anticipate presenting the kitchen proposal to the congregation in the November timeframe.

Our success to date is because you, as members of the congregation, stepped up and supported this capital campaign. You believed that it is *Our Turn, Our Time* to maintain our historic meetinghouse and parsonage for now and for the future. As the campaign committee, we are keenly aware that you have entrusted us to be transparent and careful stewards of your gifts. Thank you for your continuing support and enthusiasm!

*The Capital Campaign Team*

### **Financial Summary** (as of September 30, 2019)

	YTD <u>Budget</u>	YTD <u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$142,799	\$154,227	\$11,428
Expenses	\$136,741	\$125,920	\$10,821
Net Income	\$ 6,058	\$ 28,307	\$22,249

*Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar; as such, some columns may not appear to total correctly.*

*We hope you are finding this information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Finance Team: Gail Agans (chair), Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand (Treasurer).*



## Mr. Towne Redecorates Sanctuary in 1902

Anne Krantz, Historian

Benefactor James W. Towne, who was born in Amherst, but moved to East Orange, New Jersey, maintained ties and affection for his hometown. In 1902 he offered to remodel the interior of the church:

"Mr. Towne made overtures to the church suggesting these changes, offering to bear the total expense of the same, if the pew holders would co-operate with this, so far as to take measures looking to the ultimate surrendering of the individual ownership of the pews. This being accomplished, he sent from New York an architect who had made plans and suggestions for a complete remodeling of the interior of the church without in any way disturbing its general style and shape...Towne has a committee to co-operate with him to bring this result about."

"The extensive changes involved a new steel ceiling, redecoration of interior throughout, oak wainscoting and heavy oak doors, solid oak pews upholstered in Egyptian red plush; red body Brussels carpet; oak pulpit furniture upholstered in red, vestibule and Sunday school rooms remodeled and hall fitted with Florentine glass; hall and stairs re-carpeted; and all thoroughly painted and finished to match."

This extensive remodeling was completed in a just a few months and the building was reopened on November 9, 1902, with a special service that included ministers from all over the region. "The result of this (renovation) has been to give the people an elegant appearing place of worship to compare to any newly constructed church in the state." [Cabinet, Nov.13, 1902]

Although he did not reveal his personal cost, estimates were from \$4,000—\$5,000, which would be in the \$125,000—\$150,000 range in today's money. Mr. Towne made several visits to supervise the work and order changes as necessary to assure the completion in the fashion he desired. [A Sleeping Town Awakens, 1881 - 1882, Amherst Historical Society, pg. 38.]

Note in the photo the improvements mentioned, especially the painted design on the border of the steel ceiling. The postcard photos of the church from 1874—1902 show a white metal ceiling with the lowered ceiling edge similar to the way it looks now. The photo shows that the former Gothic Revival style pulpit furniture with sharply pointed backs of the chairs, was replaced with rounded chair backs, and grooved fluting decoration on the furniture wherever possible. According to the period post cards, the gas chandelier that was shown in the 1874—1902 postcard was left as is by Mr. Towne. The curious 'flying' cross seems to have literally flown away. It does not appear in some the photos of this Towne décor. This sanctuary look remained until 1950, "when members, whose tastes then differed from Towne's "modern" ones of 1902, had it restored to a Colonial motif." [A Sleeping Town Awakens, Pg. 39.]

Tastes changed so much that not one piece of the Towne furniture survived. This suggests that the postwar congregation of 1950s was able to sell all the sturdy oak furniture and pews. Perhaps it is serving in another NH church today.



James W. Towne



Pulpit 1902–1916

## Levi Sunday November 3



Many hands make light work!

## Are You Ready to Join?

Anyone interested in becoming, or just thinking about becoming a member of the Congregational Church of Amherst, UCC, is cordially invited to attend an orientation session scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, at 7:00 p.m. in the parlor. New members will be formally received on Sunday, November 17. For more information or to sign up for the orientation session, please contact Andrea in the church office at [andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org) or 673-3231. Also, feel free to talk with either pastor or any deacon (green name tag folks). We look forward to hearing from you.

## Woman's Association's Church Holiday Fair November 23, 2019

### *Treasures, Silent Auction & Country Store Items Needed!*

The Treasures and the Silent Auction tables are highlights of the Holiday Fair, contributing significantly to our profits, and offering great gift items for customers.

'Thrifting' is in vogue, and secondhand or pre-owned merchandise, vintage clothing and accessories are prized finds. So recycle the 'dead' stuff in your closets and drawers, attics and basements and become a sustainable closet and household manager!

We are looking for like-new or re-giftable items suitable for both men and women, young and old: forgotten gifts, wrong sized clothing, and unwanted home décor.

Let someone else enjoy your like-new stuff. Ideas include:

- Fine art, antiques and collectables – church & Amherst memorabilia,
- Never-used wedding or other gifts: handbags, scarves, sweaters, etc.,
- Quality jewelry, silver, glass, china, framed graphics ,
- Handmade items – quilts, woodwork; nice holiday decorations

You will be thrilled to eliminate clutter, so be generous!!!!

We can also assist with disposing of unwanted valuables by selling used merchandise on E-Bay, Craig's List, at local jewelers or through other secondhand dealers. Tax receipts from the church are available when appropriate.

Call to discuss donation ideas and to make delivery arrangements:

Treasures - Carol Lyon: 672-0100 or [cml750@comcast.net](mailto:cml750@comcast.net)

Silent Auction - Anne Krantz: 673-9684 or [Annekrantz@comcast.net](mailto:Annekrantz@comcast.net)

Country Store– Sally Bowkett: 673-7409 or [sbb446@hotmail.com](mailto:sbb446@hotmail.com)

## Calling All Bakers!

The bakery area of the Holiday Fair needs YOU! Contributions of homemade pies, coffee cakes, special cookies, breads, candies, cakes, candied nuts, preserves or whatever specialty you may have are needed and welcomed. The fair is just before the holidays when baked goods are always wanted. Pies, coffee cakes and giftable items seem to be the most desired. Cute bags, boxes, or other containers always help items fly off the shelves.

There will be a team ready to help dress up the goodies on Friday afternoon before the fair. Please bring your baked items to the Vestry on November 22 between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. if at all possible. A label with the name of the item is also very helpful as is information on whether it contains nuts or is gluten free.

You may receive a phone call before the fair to help you decide what you might contribute. Your participation is crucial in making this a success – thank you in advance!





## Two Daves with One Mission: Dave Poltack and Dave Phelps and Habitat

Two days a week, Dave Poltack and Dave Phelps pull on their Habitat for Humanity tee shirts, grab their tools, and drive to Wilton, ready to work. They are part of a core team of volunteers who show up, in every season in any weather, to build a home for a family they don't know, but whom they know need a decent home at a price they can afford.

What drives them to volunteer? For Dave Poltack, it is an opportunity to share his talents, work together as a team with people of different backgrounds, and to contribute to a good cause. He is one of the "veterans:" this is his eighth house in the last nine years. His first introduction to Habitat was over 30 years ago, when he worked with fellow church members on a home in Amherst. When he retired as an accountant, he knew where he wanted to share his time, his experience in doing numerous home renovations, and his talent.

Dave Phelps first became aware of Habitat over 30 years ago when former President Jimmy Carter became actively involved in the nonprofit, nongovernmental, Christian organization. When Dave retired as an engineer two years ago, he was looking for "something worthwhile to do," and "New Dave" joined "Original Dave" as part of the Greater Nashua Habitat core team. The ten core team members, almost all retired people of varied backgrounds with no professional contracting experience, work and learn together as a team. It is the teamwork that gives both men great satisfaction.

CCA renewed our involvement with Habitat this year when Pastor Maureen asked how the church could connect with a local mission opportunity. Dave Phelps suggested to the World Service team that we recruit volunteers to work on the upcoming Wilton Habitat home. A member of the World Service team, Nancy Protzmann, worked with the "Daves" to engage our members to "Serve Neighbors Near and Far." So far, the CCA has had two "Build Days." Ten volunteers came and helped

raise walls and other construction tasks in the Wilton house, supervised by the core team. Nancy says it was "very rewarding" to work with enthusiastic members and to meet the future owner, who came ready to work and with lunch for all. The Wilton home will be completed in the spring, with the help of the core team, CCA, and many other local organizations and businesses. When they have help, the core team teaches and assists the volunteers; other days, they do the work themselves.

The Habitat affiliate in Nashua selects qualified future homeowners in 14 surrounding communities, fundraises, coordinates volunteers, and operates ReStore, a discount home improvement store. Habitat International provides every homeowner a free stove and refrigerator from Whirlpool, roof shingles from GAF, and 2" Styrofoam insulation from Dow. The homeowner is required to add "sweat equity," and ultimately takes ownership with a no-interest mortgage for approximately half the cost of building the property.

The Habitat website says that the work "forge(s) connections between families seeking decent homes and volunteers seeking a way to share their hearts." Dave Poltack and Dave Phelps have seen that in action. Check out the photos of our crew on our website, <https://www.ccamherst.org/photo-gallery/habitat/> and see if you'd like to join them on the next CCA Build Day in the spring!



*Dave Phelps and Mark Baddeley at a recent Habitat build.*



*Dave Poltack and members of our CCA Habitat building team.*

The Congregational Church  
11 Church Street  
Amherst, NH 03031

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November 2019



Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;  
His love endures forever. Psalm 107:1