

VILLAGE SPIRE

April 2020



Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday
April 5, 10:00 a.m.



Maundy Thursday
April 9, 7:30 p.m.

A prayerful reflective service with Tenebrae, a commemoration of Jesus' last night with his disciples.



Easter Sunday
April 12, 10:00 a.m.
Easter celebration

All of our worship services are streaming via Facebook Live.

Seeking Resurrection

Rev. Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor
April 2020

Easter is upon us.

I don't know about you, but I could sure use a good old-fashioned resurrection right about now. As I write this I am attempting to upload our Palm Sunday worship video to YouTube and Facebook, and with the added traffic on the internet it's taking forever. So many of you had gathered in your homes this morning, with your bread and juice ready for communion, with your home-made or home-gathered "palms" ready to wave. But the 10:00 worship hour came and went, with no worship to tune in to. Technological bugs aside, this seems to be the way of the world and the time we're living in. Our expectations have been upended, our plans thwarted, a giant "pause" button has been pushed in our lives with no clear prediction of when we'll be able to hit "resume" once again.

Many of you have told us that our Sunday morning online worship has been a source of comfort for you. As you watch Pastor Kate and myself preach and pray in the familiar surroundings of our sanctuary, with its creaky floors, its loudly ticking clock, and the sunlight streaming in the windows and falling across the chancel steps. And despite a few hiccups with our livestream, it has been

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Easter Lilies



During our live-streamed Easter worship service, we want to celebrate by decorating our chancel with some lily plants. We welcome your donation of an Easter lily in memory or in honor of a loved one, or in celebration of Easter. Your dedication message will be printed in the bulletin posted online and in the May Spire.

Orders can be placed by contacting Andrea in the church office. Please indicate if you want a double plant for \$19 or a single plant for \$12, and what your dedication message is.

Checks can be mailed to the church office (11 Church St., Amherst) or pay online through our church website (www.ccamherst.org) by following the "Giving" link and selecting "Donate." Please use "Other" under the "Special Offerings" category and indicate on the memo line that it is for Easter lilies. Orders for lily plants are due no later than Friday, April 10. Thank you for your support!

Rev. J. G. Davis's Family

Historian, Anne Krantz

The Rev. Josiah Gardner Davis was a 29-year-old bachelor in 1844 when he, as described in his obituary in the *Farmer's Cabinet*, 3/22/94, "came to Amherst as his first settlement, where for a half century, he lived; for thirty-five years the honored minister of the Cong'l church." His future wife, Abigail Atherton Spalding, was born in Amherst on December 3, 1809, the second child of Dr. Matthias Spalding and Rebecca Atherton. Abigail's father was a 1789 Harvard graduate who went on to study medicine. He continued his medical education in England in 1800 where he learned about the smallpox vaccine. He returned in 1802 with a silver snuff-box full of the vaccine, that up to then had been available only in England. [*Amherst Historical Moments*, pgs. 20-23.] In 1809 Dr. Spalding moved his growing family to the mansion, now called the Spalding House, at the west end of Carriage Lane. Former owner Judge Samuel Dana, a father of ten, doubled its size by building a two-story addition on the left toward Amherst St. The renovation included the new hip roof covering the old and new house sections, and the new center front entry that now faced the common. Abba lived there "all the days of her life."



Portrait photograph of Abigail Atherton Spalding Davis (Mrs. Josiah G. Davis). House at 19 Main Street, Amherst, NH. Writing on back: "Mrs. J. D. (sic?) Davis" Typed label on front: "Mrs. Josiah Davis" Studio: F. GLenton, Nashua, NH. 1875-1883

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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,
(603) 673-6848
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 Thursday morning.

OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott
Senior Pastor
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy
Associate Pastor
pastorkate@ccamherst.org

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Sara L. Phelps
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Organist
michaelh117@gmail.com

Wendy Valeri
Bell Choir Director
wendylazott@tds.net

Marilyn Gibson
Church School Coordinator
mgibson@ccamherst.org

Our Time, Our Turn— Groundwork Continues: Building Studies and Kitchen Plans

You may have seen Anne Krantz and Barbara Williams touring the church with a man taking notes on a clipboard. The gentleman is Steve Bedard, of Bedard Preservation and Restoration, who is in the process of conducting a Baseline Assessment Study (BAS) of our historic building. The study is a critical element in the grant proposal we will present to the Land and Community Investment Program (LCHIP). The study, completely paid for by grants and donations, will also be valuable for identifying and planning work to be done in the future (there is always something with a building as old as ours). Mr. Bedard noted that the Hill Engineering report done 20 years ago provides a substantial baseline source of information—it is gratifying to know that such undertakings pay dividends now and in the future! The final report should be available by mid-April, and lays the groundwork for future projects such as the window restoration and exterior painting.

Progress on the kitchen plans continues. The building team interviewed three architects proficient in kitchen design and decided to engage SMP Architects of Concord. Jason LaCombe, principal in the firm, will provide a baseline plan and a package used to get competitive cost estimates, plus a list of add on options. A special review board of 6-7 members of church teams who use the kitchen will review and critique the overall design information before the kitchen design options and recommendations are presented to the church community for consideration.

As always, the capital campaign committee is so grateful to the church community for its support. 62% of the pledges have been received in the 14 months since the 3-year campaign began!

Thank you all!!!



Would you like to receive printed copies of Sunday's sermons via US Mail? If you're unable to access our online worship services and would like to receive a weekly packet of our printed Sunday bulletin, scripture, sermon, and prayer concerns let us know! Contact Andrea in the church office and we'll add you to our weekly mailing list!



If you have a prayer request that you would like to submit to our pastors we have several ways you can do so! Email or leave a phone message for Pastor Maureen at 603-673-3231 x11, or go to our church website and submit a "Prayer Request" by clicking on the link.

Let us know if you'd like your prayer request to be read during our Sunday online worship (with or without full names mentioned). You may also choose to share your request with our internal email prayer chain only, or with just the pastors.

Seeking Resurrection, continued from page 1

something you looked forward to and relied upon, as it brought many of us together once again in that hour on Sunday morning. But today even that was not possible.

What are we to do with this daily sense of disappointment and uncertainty? Many of us have had to adapt to working from home, having our kids homeschooled, ordering groceries online, or having to rely on the kindness of others as we hunker down in our homes, some of us with nothing more than a telephone and the wave of a neighbor across the way to help us feel connected.

This is not what any of us intended to be doing this Lenten and Easter season. When we gathered for Ash Wednesday back in late February and had ash and oil placed upon our foreheads to remind us of how fleeting and finite life is, we had no idea that we were about to be continually reminded of this as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in our world. Many have lost their lives or been close to it. Many have endured the virus and recovered. Many have hidden themselves away in fear of being infected, or having their loved ones infected. We've also been continually reminded that our livelihood is fleeting and finite as well. As many have lost their jobs, homes, or businesses, while others whose work has been deemed essential are on the front lines – in hospitals, in grocery stores, in EMT ambulances and police cruisers.

Beyond the daily sense of disappointment and uncertainty, what are we to do with the fear, the grief, the sense of hopelessness?

The Easter season is said to be the most joyous season on the Christian calendar, as we celebrate the Resurrection – the rising up of new life from the ashes. We celebrate the moment when the women came to the tomb early on that first Easter morning carrying their spice jars and their grief and dropped all of it when they saw that the tomb was empty. What had seemed so hopeless just minutes before suddenly became bursting with hope. Jesus had lived. Death did not win. Fear did not win. Love overcame it all. What was broken and lifeless was now whole and alive.

That moment is coming.

Not just this Sunday, when we come together “virtually” to celebrate Easter, wherever we are.

But at some moment in the future. When the virus begins to recede. The number of cases go down. The stress on our health care workers is lessened. And it's safe to come out of our homes and be together in body once again.

Easter is coming.

The story we tell on Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday and Good Friday always ends in a resurrection.

And thankfully, Easter is not one day.

It's a season.

It's a season that lasts SEVEN Sunday's and this year takes us all the way to the end of May, when we'll celebrate the Day of Pentecost – the day the first Christians came streaming out of their locked rooms where they had hidden away, to celebrate the coming of God's Spirit into the world.

As a church community, we may not have Easter together – in body – but we will be together in spirit – on Zoom, on Facebook, in phone calls, in cards and letters, and offers to run errands and do grocery shopping.

And by Pentecost Sunday we may just come streaming into the streets to celebrate the coming of the Spirit and love of God that in reality has always been with us.

We are seeking a resurrection.

And we will experience it, just as we always do.

Be safe and be well,

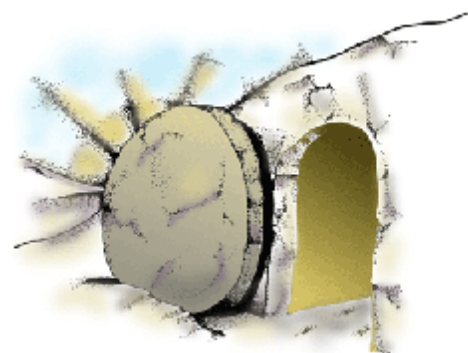
Pastor Maureen



Every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
on Facebook and
our CCA Website

Our 280-year-old congregation is slowly but surely entering the 21st century! On March 15 in light of the COVID-19 concerns, we suspended our in-person worship and began live streaming our service via Facebook on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. We did so with just our pastors, music team, and tech team present, but as the weeks go on we continue to adapt. With the NH “Stay at Home” order in place, Pastor Maureen and Pastor Kate are now the only ones present in the sanctuary, as our music team provides recorded music from afar. We've now moved to recording our service early on Sunday and uploading it at 10:00 a.m. Gather with us on Facebook at that time to leave your comments and then join us at 10:45 a.m. for our ZOOM Coffee Hour! Watch for the link in our weekly email. You may watch the recorded services at anytime on our CCA website. The weekly bulletin and scripture readings are also available there!

After Easter, our pastors will likely move out of our sanctuary and record a simpler weekly service in their homes, with scripture, reflection, prayer, and music. No matter how we worship or where we worship we do so together. We will continue to be the church from afar until we can gather once again!



Zoom Office Hours with Pastor Kate and Friends

Wednesdays and Thursdays, 11-1

Drop into Zoom from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every Wednesday and Thursday to have a chat with Pastor Kate and other CCAmherst friends. Feel free to bring your lunch, just stop in for a few minutes, or stay the whole two hours! Come take some time to check in with your church family and share how you're doing with this "new normal," or whatever else is on your hearts! Contact Pastor Kate or Andrea in the church office for the Zoom link.



We continue to be an active church as many of our in-person meetings, groups, and gatherings have now moved online! ZOOM is a virtual meeting place that can be accessed with a computer, a tablet, a cell phone, or a regular house phone/landline! You may choose to participate with video or just audio. No computer access or ability is needed! Here are just a few of our programs and ministries that have begun meeting via ZOOM:

Church School, Council, World Service Team, Small Group Ministry groups, Lenten Study, Confirmation classes, Middle and Senior High Youth Groups, Parent's Group, Choir chats, Sunday Coffee Hour, even our Woman's Association is now holding their weekly meetings on Zoom! Pastor Kate is also doing weekly check-ins with our Church School kids and holding weekly office hours via Zoom.

If you would like to schedule a Zoom meeting or gathering with your ministry team or group, contact Andrea in the church office and she'll put you on the schedule and send you a link for your group members.

A Message from Pastor Kate

*Below is the reprinted transcript from
Pastor Kate's Message on Friday, March 27*

Hi Friends! The sun is shining, the birds are singing, and even though we are apart, Maureen and I have been hearing from so many of you that are finding moments of gratitude to lift up in this strange time of social distancing.

I don't know about you, but I am coming down from the adrenaline rush that came when I was first responding to this new pandemic. There's this adrenaline rush that comes at the beginning of crisis— this surge of energy that helps you get through the funeral, or the natural disaster, or whatever crisis is going on. During this initial rush of adrenaline we are fueled by whatever needs to happen next. You see everyone come together, folks reach out and ask how they can help, and there is a sense of community rising to the occasion. This time is great and important, because it protects us for a little while from the step that comes next, when the rush runs out and we have to acknowledge the fact that this is a **new normal.** Brene Brown, a researcher and author who writes about empathy and shame, talks about this. When the rush is over, we slow down, and realize that we are going to have to create the new normal and grieve the normal that is gone.

And this is good in some ways. Adrenaline is tough on the body; we can't hold that position of tension forever. But maybe now you're noticing a new itchiness inside—new feelings that are coming up now that the adrenaline is gone, and you have a little more space. This space can show up in a lot of ways—whether it's the space of more time, or the space that we find after we've created a new welcome or unwelcome routine at work or at home, or physical space from treasured colleagues or at-risk family members or friends, or whatever. Right now I hope you are being gentle with yourselves and whatever loved ones you are staying home with, because as the arch of this pandemic evolves, I bet we are going to find that we have a lot of feelings that we're not used to sitting with. And I bet we are going to find that we feel exhausted, even if we've been sitting at home all day wishing we had places to go or more to do.

We, my friends, are in the Holy Saturday of this experience, metaphorically. The rush—the immediate urgency of Good Friday, the immediate crisis has worn off (or is about to wear off) and now we are in the waiting time. We don't know what or when the resurrection will come or what it will look like, all we know is that we are in our upper rooms, holding space for the grieving, and waiting for the promised light.

And so, we need to create some order. I encourage you to have a family meeting and talk about what your family is going to do when you all feel exhausted or new feelings bubble up. One thing I'm doing to create some order and connection during this time is that starting next week, I will be holding zoom office hours on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11 to one—we will share that invitation out on our email list. Feel free to drop in, say hi, check in, talk to me and anyone else that shows up. We can process what this waiting time is feeling like for us on that particular day, or just joke around or share cute cat videos or whatever is on our hearts.

I am holding each of you in prayer, my friends. May God's light shine on you, resourcing you for whatever new hill you are climbing today. Thanks be to God, and Amen.

Pastor Kate

Church School is Connecting with You

Through our uncharted journey at this time, we are all trying to navigate through each day. Church School will continue to send emails to families. Please know that all families are figuring out how to make it work, so participate when you are able to. Church School is also making its way to you in another format; so, updates are coming soon.

Children are familiar with the five-finger prayer. Join them in sharing a prayer. Create a new prayer by a different member of your family each day.



Kid's Check-in with Pastor Kate

Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

If you think your kid could use a chat with a pastor, or would love to see one or two of their friends while chatting with a pastor, reach out to Pastor Kate to sign your kid(s) up for one-on-one or small group video chats during this stay-at-home time.



Each week we will have a theme to start our conversation, and also make some space for sharing feelings and thoughts about what is going on at home or in the world. If your child would like to connect with other church school kids in a small group conversation, please collaborate with other church school parents and pick a time together! Reach out to Pastor Kate with any questions, or to pick a time slot.

Middle High Youth Group Virtual Meeting April 15

The Middle High Youth Group (kids grades 5-7) will be meeting via Zoom on April 15 at 6:00 p.m. We will check in, play some games, and lift up our candle prayers all from the comfort of our homes. Even though we are meeting from afar, it will be so good to reconnect with one another. And just as when we were meeting in person, friends are always welcome to join us at virtual MHYG, too! Check your emails for the MHYG zoom link, and feel free to share it with any families that could use some extra connection.

Email pastorkate@ccamherst.org for more information.



Prayerful Playgroup Every Thursday at 1:30 p.m.

During this time, when we are all facing new challenges, anxiety, and routines, parents group is a place for YOU to land. Join us every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom to chat, vent, and connect with other parents who are all in the same new boat.

Reasons Why Sunday School is Important

"The goal of Christian formation is not to create churchgoers; the goal of Christian formation is to raise up disciples of Jesus Christ."

Reason #5: Have Fun

Don't forget the importance of play and fun. With talented teachers, great activities, and friends they enjoy, your little ones will love visiting church school every week on CCA Facebook. This is a great way to show your kids learning about God can be really cool.



Senior High Youth Group: Virtual Meetings, Reframing Our Church Mission

The Senior High Youth Group is still meeting every Sunday night at 6:00 p.m., using the online platform Zoom. The magic of the internet is keeping our teens connected during this time of social distancing as we check in with one another, play some games, and hold ourselves, our families, our congregation, and our communities in prayer.

Even as SHYG is finding new ways to connect, we are grieving the loss of our favorite spring events—The Passion Play, the Cookie Walk, and the launch of our 144 envelopes fundraiser. Each of these events bring the SHYG closer to the rest of the CCAmherst church community, and the SHYG is brainstorming ways to recreate that connection in other ways. Stay tuned!

The SHYG knows that there are many in need of support during this difficult time. Please email pastorkate@ccamherst.org if you have a need that the SHYG can (safely!) help fill!

Rev. J. G. Davis's Family, continued from page 1

From 1847 until 1869, Abba was the secretary for the church Ladies Sewing Circle. We can see Abba's neat cursive penmanship in the many years of minutes she wrote in the secretary's notebook. The minutes for the founding on May 12, 1847, include a list of the officers and she included herself as Miss A. A. Spalding. Abba also kept the list of members, who according to their Constitution, paid 25 cents to join. This is the first example of a woman's handwriting I have found in all the old church documents. Since her father was a well-educated doctor, one wonders where Abba was educated and what grade level she achieved.

At the second meeting held on May 20, "It was voted that Rev. G. Davis, our pastor be requested to select a book for reading in the Sewing Circle." At the June 30 meeting, "Mr. Davis came in and closed the meeting." At the Oct. 1847 meeting they voted to continue meeting during the winter, once every three weeks in the evening. "And the gentlemen are to be invited to join the ladies after 8 o'clock."

Some of the gentlemen made donations to their mission projects including Rev. Mr. Davis - \$1.00. In the minutes of May 1848, Abba lists herself as Miss A. A. Spalding, but by the annual meeting of May 1849, she is Mrs. A. A. Davis.

In 1848, at the age of 39, Abba and Rev. Josiah G. Davis, 33, married. Born in Concord MA, 1815, Davis was an 1837 Yale graduate. He continued his education at Andover Seminary, and then Union Theological Seminary, class of 1841. How he found Amherst, or who found him is a mystery.

He not only loved his bride, he must have hit it off with his renown father-in-law, for he moved into the Spalding house; "... he thenceforward became a member of her father's household." The front left parlor became his study. Here he wrote his sermons, and fought his battles and won his victories of the Spirit." [Anne M. Means, 1921.] When Dr. Spalding died in 1865, Rev. Davis became the owner of the house.

In 1849, Rev. Davis and Abba's only child, Rebecca Atherton Davis, was born, and 29 years later she married her cousin Dr. George A. Spalding (mother's brother's son) of New York City, where they resided. George and Rebecca's only surviving child, Honora, was born in 1881. A younger daughter, Mary Seaton, was born in 1884 and died suddenly in 1898 at the age of 14. The notice in the *Farmer's Cabinet* is titled "Sad Death." It describes her time in Amherst: "*Having spent her summers at the home of her grandparents since babyhood, she had endeared herself to all who came in contact with her, until standing at the dawn of her sweet young womanhood, so full of promise to her loved ones, and with high hopes for her own bright future, she has been suddenly called to fill some higher place under the father's special care.*"....the precious dust rests in the family lot beside her grandfather, Dr. Davis."

Meadowview Cemetery manager, Perry Day, found the Davis plot and just showed it to me. The entire J. G. Davis family is buried there: Rev. and Abigail; George and Rebecca Spalding, and their daughters Mary and Honora.

Honora, now the only grandchild, never married. She inherited the Spalding/Davis house when Abba died in 1900, and summered there until her death in the 1965. She removed the soapstone stoves, and as there was no heat, the home was a true summer residence. It was a busy summer gathering place for her family. As a girl, Sally Bowkett lived on Carriage Lane during Honora's later years. She remembers being invited by Honora to play tennis with visiting cousins. The new town courts, built in 1954, were just a few houses away from Honora's house on Davis Lane. (I never occurred to me why it is named Davis Lane!)

The Headline from the *Farmer's Cabinet* newspaper article 12/1899 reads: "*Abby's 90th birthday was celebrated by her family and the community on Sunday with family and on Monday with an open house for 3 to 5.*"

Abba's end came just a month later in January 1900, and 6 years after Rev. Davis's death.



Photos from the 1950 church house tour to raise money for the sanctuary renovation. All were dressed in Colonial costumes.

Left photo, Honora is pictured on the left.

Right photo: Honora can be seen in the doorway. For those of you who remember Cele Clough, that's her on the right with her back to the camera.





Please,
No More Good Stuff
 (for now)

The Woman's Association has cancelled the April rummage sale, but there will be a large *Good Stuff Sale* on October 3 and 4.

Please SAVE your rummage but do not deliver it to the church until late August. Please store it in bags or boxes in your home until then.

Thank you!



We are still connected to one another even as we're apart! If you're unable to leave your home and need help with grocery shopping or errands please let us know! We have volunteers standing by who've offered to help. If you'd like to help keep us connected by volunteering to make phone calls or send cards and letters to our members and friends please let us know as well! Contact our Congregational Care Coordinator, Sara Phelps or our Pastors if you're able to help or if you need a helping hand!



A Note about Stewardship

Staying up to date with your pledge is as important as ever these days. Although we have been holding online services and practicing social distancing for the protection of all, our mission work and church operating expenses continue as usual and need your continued financial support. Checks can be mailed to the church office at 11 Church St., or visit our website for electronic giving. Thanks in advance for your continued generosity.


Faith Promise: Our new fiscal year Stewardship Campaign is ongoing during the Covid-19 church building closure. As of Wednesday, April 8, we have received pledges from 53 families, totaling \$151,671. Thanks to all that have responded so far. To those who are still considering your pledge, you can email your intents to Andrea at andrea@ccamherst.org, mail in your pledge intentions, call Andrea (673-3231) or go to the church website <https://www.ccamherst.org/stewardship-pledge/>.



Thank You!

A big THANK YOU from Paul and Sue Spiess, and from Andrea in the church office, to all who donated funds to help with the office upgrade expenses. We received \$4,050 from 46 families, a huge response. The generosity from so many folks is inspiring and truly appreciated.

We now have a new phone and voice mail system in place, with many thanks to Tom Werst, Doug Topliffe, and their helpers for the installation. Soon we will be looking at various software packages to update the database that holds all our membership information.



Financial Summary

(as of March 31, 2020)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$334,836	\$317,592	\$17,244
Expenses	\$327,535	\$329,466	\$(1,931)
Net Income	\$ 7,301	\$(11,873)	\$19,174

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).

The Congregational Church
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

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