

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



“It is always hard to believe that the courageous step is so close to us, that it is closer than we ever could imagine, that in fact, we already know what it is, and that the step is simpler, more radical than we had thought: which is why we so often prefer the story to be more elaborate, our identities clouded by fear, the horizon safely in the distance, the essay longer than it needs to be and the answer safely in the realm of impossibility.”

— David Whyte

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

April 5, 2020

Palm Sunday

10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

Grand Chorus

Alexandre Guilmant

CALL TO WORSHIP

adapted from Psalm 118

One: This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Many: God's steadfast love endures forever.

One: Love is the path to God and righteousness is the gate of the Lord. God's steadfast love endures forever, even now, even here.

Many: God's steadfast love endures forever.

One: The stone that the builders rejected becomes the chief corner stone. We know God is doing marvelous things, even before we can see it.

Many: God's steadfast love endures forever.

One: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

All: As Christ enters our homes, our worship, our hearts, we cry "Hosanna! Hosanna in the Highest Heaven!"

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

We welcome you, Lord Jesus, Holy One, with great joy and deep yearning. The road has been long and winding. The journey to this day, to this time, has been tumultuous and unpredictable. So, we, like the people of Jerusalem, lay down our palms and call out: "Hosanna! God save us!" For you are the one in our hearts and our lives that gracefully, patiently, encourages us to learn and grow, to embark on journeys of hope and healing. Open our hearts today to hear your words, open our spirits to receive your unending peace. Fill us with the spirit of worship as we pray: **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.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of God be with you. AND ALSO WITH YOU.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

'Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

SERMON

"Palm-Focused"

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Lord, today we honor you with our faithful gifts and offerings, laying them before you as the crowds who laid down palms and coats centuries ago. Thank you for walking with us as we try to walk in the path of Christ, and for meeting our needs on the journey. Trusting you, we can share what we have with others. We do this joyfully in Jesus' name, Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

We welcome all people to join in receiving this sacrament. Children may participate at the discretion of their parents.

CALL TO COMMUNION

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

COMMUNION PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION and CONSECRATING PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

Spirit of Christ, you have blessed our tables and our lives. May the eating of this Bread and the drinking of this Cup give us courage to speak faith and act love, not only in church sanctuaries, but out in your precious world. Wrap your hopeful presence around all whose bodies, spirits and hearts need healing, and let us become your compassion and safe refuge. Amen.

COMMUNION AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Fanfare, Hymn, and Variation
on "All Glory, Laud, and Honor"*

P. Cattaneo/
M. Teschner/
D. L. Simpson

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.



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.

Here’s how to reach us: by telephone 673-3231 or 673-6848, or by email andrea@ccamherst.org. If we are unavailable by phone, please feel free to leave a message 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

Maureen R. Frescott

Katherine R. Kennedy

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

FRIENDSHIP BASKETS: On behalf of the congregation, your Diaconate is still hoping to support families in our community who need a little help, now more than ever. We will be reaching out to local families with grocery gift cards to allow them to shop for their Easter dinner. We will be unable to pass our Friendship Baskets as planned today. If you are comfortable in doing so, please consider making a donation online through the church website, noting it as a "Special Offering" under the category of "Other," and indicating "Friendship Baskets" on the memo line. As always, direct donations may be mailed to the church. Thank you very much for your generosity as we continue our mission through these challenging times!

NO MORE GOOD STUFF (FOR NOW): 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. The April sale has been cancelled, but there will be a large **Good Stuff Sale** on October 3 and 4.

ANNUAL REPORTS: A reminder to all church officers and team chairs that annual reports are due in to the church office by April 15.

Our Church Calendar	
April 5—11, 2020	
Today	10:00 a.m. Worship—Facebook 10:30 a.m. Fellowship—Zoom 6:00 p.m. Senior High Youth Group—Zoom
Monday	10:00 a.m. WA Fellowship—Zoom
Tuesday	1:30 p.m. Small Group Ministry—Zoom
Wednesday	6:30 p.m. Lenten Study Series—Zoom
Thursday	1:30 p.m. Prayerful Playgroup—Zoom 7:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service—Facebook

Join us for a
Virtual Coffee Hour
 via Zoom
Every Sunday,
10:30—11:30 a.m.
 Following our online worship.



No need to sign up!
 We will send out a Zoom link via email beforehand and post it on Facebook as well. You may join us via video or audio.

Stay for just a few minutes to check-in, or stay for the whole hour to catch up with old and new friends. The coffee will be virtual, but the conversation and connection will be real!

LAST CALL FOR 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: by email at andrea@ccamherst.org, or by telephone: 673-3231, ext. 10. 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!

OUR LENTEN SERIES will conclude "virtually" via Zoom on Wednesday, April 8, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Pastor Maureen and Pastor Kate will lead the gathering, and we encourage you to join us with your favorite soup and bread on hand as we discuss Rachel Held Evans book "Inspired." If you haven't read the book you're still invited to join us for a great conversation about where we find guidance in our sacred stories during times like these. Contact Pastor Maureen if you'd like to participate and we'll send you a link to the session. Just click on the link and join us via video or audio!

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS with Pastor Kate and Friends! Drop into Zoom from 11:00 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! Follow this link: <https://zoom.us/j/439459628> or call this number: +16465588656,,439459628# to connect by computer or phone.



Greetings from Church School!

Church School is In Session!

Zoom is our format for presentation of our lesson on Sunday, April 5 at 9:00 a.m. An email was sent to the parent, grandparents, or guardian of each registered church school child. There are documents for family and children to support the lesson, also emailed.

Today's lesson is Holy Week, a timely lesson as Jesus walks into Jerusalem greeted by crowds shouting Hosanna. The Hebrew people are waiting for a savior, a religious leader. Jesus knows that he is being asked to travel this road. The story can be related to our own lives, especially today. We are being asked to make sacrifices in our daily lives to ensure the health of all.

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 Friday, April 3, we have received pledges from 51 families, totaling \$139,349. 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/>.

Financial Summary

(as of February 29, 2020)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$309,508	\$289,793	\$19,715
Expenses	\$294,626	\$297,216	\$(2,590)
Net Income	\$ 14,882	\$(7,423)	\$22,305

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).

Sunday, April 5, 2020

The Poet Thinks about the Donkey

by Mary Oliver

On the outskirts of Jerusalem
the donkey waited.
Not especially brave, or filled with understanding,
He stood and waited.

How horses, turned out into the meadow,
leap with delight!
How doves, released from their cages,
clatter away, splashed with sunlight.

But the donkey, tied to a tree, as usual, waited.
Then he let himself be led away.
Then he let the stranger mount.

Never had he seen such crowds!
And I wonder if he at all imagined what was to happen.
Still, he was what he had always been: small, dark, obedient.

I hope, finally, he felt brave.
I hope, finally, he loved the man who rode so lightly upon him,
as he lifted one dusty hoof and stepped, as he had to, forward.