

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



*"A man should never be ashamed to own that he has been in the wrong,  
which is but saying in other words that he is wiser today  
than he was yesterday."*

—Alexander Pope, 18th century

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

September 27, 2020

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 a.m.

## Confirmation Sunday

PRELUDE

*O God Beyond All Praising*

tune by Gustav Holst,  
setting by Anna Laura Page  
(©2011 Lorenz Publishing Co.)

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

CALL TO WORSHIP and PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER

By becoming human like us,  
Christ transformed all of us into his siblings.  
By appearing in the stories of our ancestors,  
God helps us to walk the path of love and mercy and grace.  
By prodding us to become foolish in the world's eyes,  
the Spirit teaches us all we need to find our way in God's world.

**Let us pray:**

Creating God,  
When we think your job  
is to listen to our petty quarrels,  
you lean over,  
put your finger to our lips,  
whispering,  
'let me tell you a story.'

When we want to ask you  
all sorts of questions,  
and demand to see  
your resume,  
you put your arms around us,  
gently saying,  
'i want you to meet  
some friends of mine.'

When we are burned out  
by our chronic anger,  
when our throats are parched  
by our litany of laments,  
you take us by the hand,  
inviting,  
'let's go get a cold drink  
down at the well of grace.'

God in Community, Holy in One,  
you are God, to whom we pray, as 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.**

#### CHILDREN'S TIME

#### THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

##### INVITATION

##### Confirmand

Abigail Green  
Lillian Handwerk  
Emma Kennedy  
Taylee Normandin  
Amelia Wysor

##### Mentor

Kathy Johnson  
Sharon Rohlfs  
Ali Wysor  
Vicky Leknes  
Katy Kennedy

#### QUESTIONS OF COMMITMENT

##### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (compiled from the reflections of the confirmands 2019-2020)

We believe in you, O God,  
you are everywhere,  
you are endless,  
you are constantly creating,  
you gift us with so much.

Through your Spirit,  
you are our guide and our strength,  
you bring balance to our lives,  
you challenge us to change and grow.

Still, we wonder:

How you made such a beautiful and complicated world so quickly?  
If you had taken more time would the world have turned out better?  
Why you love us even when we push you away, or do things wrong?  
How you can have so much love for everything and everyone?

You sent us Jesus,

so that you might experience life as we do,  
so that we might learn to follow your way,  
and do things for others rather than focus on ourselves.

Through the church,

we learn that we are creators as well,  
that we have the power to make our world better,  
that OUR God loves us no matter what.  
Because God is Love.  
And God's love never runs out.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT AND WELCOME (in unison)

We welcome you with joy in the common mission and life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as together we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of Jesus' ministry in the world.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION and THANKSGIVING

GREETING AND PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

HYMN

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

SERMON

“On Whose Authority?”

ANTHEM

*I'll Walk with God*  
Sara Phelps, soloist  
Michael Havay, piano

(Alfred Publishing)

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Holy One, you have given yourself to us in Creator, in Christ, in Spirit. We now give back to you. Receive what we offer and transform it by the power of your Spirit into a means of spreading your peace, justice, and love in the world. May many lives be touched by this offering, and may we see the signs of your presence so that we may be inspired to follow you all the days of our lives. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

POSTLUDE

*Chant Héroïque*

George Blake  
(©2016 Lorenz Publishing Co.)



**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 by email [info@ccamherst.org](mailto:info@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](http://www.ccamherst.org), and follow us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/ccamherst](https://www.facebook.com/ccamherst).

***Grounded in God’s Love—Serving Neighbors Near and Far—Welcoming to All***

***Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service  
obtained from One License with license #A-731944.***

***Portions of our liturgy are adapted from  
Thom M. Shuman from [lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com](http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com)***

## PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Mark Baddeley

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Liturgist

**WHAT WAS THE LINK?** Many of our programs are taking place virtually these days. To help you keep track, the **members section** of our website now has a list of recurring meetings with their Zoom links and passwords. Meetings scheduled as one-time are not found here, but recurring group meetings such as virtual coffee hour, Woman's Association, Church Council, Prayerful Playgroup, etc. are all here.

*Please note* that at the end of September Zoom will be requiring passwords for all meetings. If you are no longer able to access a meeting, please check this list for an updated link or password.

If you haven't yet signed up for access to the members section, it's easy to do and you'll have access to our other interesting "clicks," like our church school blog, our photo galleries, our SOS needs, and more. Sign up today at [ccamherst.org](http://ccamherst.org).

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for September include canned ham, canned meats, side dishes (seasoned pasta mix, Hamburger Helper, etc.), ravioli and Beef-a-Roni. Donations should be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford; if you are unsure where, please call their office at 673-9898. Many thanks for your continuing support!

**CHURCH SCHOOL:** *Joseph Helps His Family* is our current church school lesson. Listen and see the story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRkcBJmOByQ>

**Brown Bag Lessons** have been created for each family that has requested one. To request a lesson visit our church website, go to Learn, PreK-Grade7, and record your family name in SignUpGenius.

Parents, this year's **Backpack Tag** is available for download through our website: <https://www.ccamherst.org/church-school/>. Attach one to all your children's bags. This year's theme, *Be The Church*, is on there, along with a special blessing.

### Financial Summary

(as of August 31, 2020)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$151,913	\$108,707	\$ 43,206
Expenses	\$ 87,391	\$ 97,817	\$(10,426)
Net Income	\$ 64,522	\$ 10,889	\$ 53,632

*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: Keith Lammers, Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand (Treasurer).*



## What is Small Group Ministry?

Small Group Ministry is where 8-10 people meet with the intention of establishing deeper connections with each other and with God.

The groups meet once a month from October to June, and are led by lay members of the congregation.

The group meetings run 1.5 hours and include a check-in, a short topic reading, discussion of the topic, and closing prayer.

We have a weekday group, an evening group, and a weekend group to allow members to pick a time that best fits their schedule.

This year we're focusing on

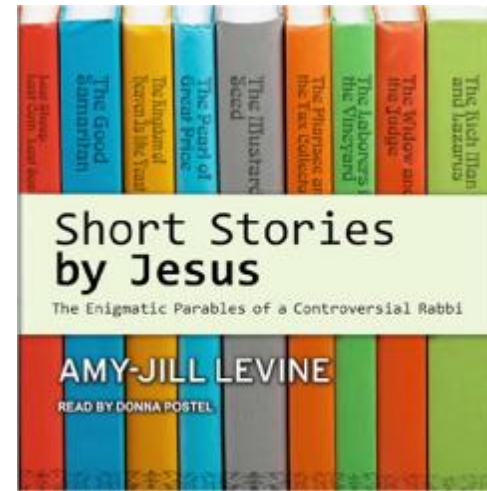
### ***Short Stories by Jesus***

Using the book by Amy-Jill Levine as a guide, we'll explore the parables of Jesus and the many ways they have to guide, comfort, inspire, provoke, and change us!

There's no need to purchase the book and no prep-time is needed! The readings and discussion questions for each month will be emailed ahead of time and are short enough to be read when the group is gathered.

### **Schedule for 2020-2021**

October:	The Good Samaritan
November:	The Rich Man
December:	The Persistent Widow
January:	The Laborers in the Vineyard
February:	The Talents
March:	The Prodigal Son
April:	The Sower
May:	The Mustard Seed
June:	The Lost Sheep



## Choose a Group!

First Tuesday	1:30–3:00 p.m.
Second Wednesday	6:30-8:00 p.m.
First Sunday	12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

All groups will meet on Zoom in October. Plans for in-person meetings may be arranged after that point if possible!

## How To Get Involved

You may join a group at any time of the year as long as your choice is still open. Each group is limited to ten members.

Sign up online at [ccamherst.org](http://ccamherst.org) or contact Pastor Maureen at 603-673-3231 x11, [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org)



*Sunday, September 27, 2020*

**Our Church Calendar**

**September 27—October 3, 2020**

Most events are taking place virtually,  
please check your email for the links.

Today	10:00 a.m.	Worship—Facebook
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship
	3:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting of the Hillsborough Association, NH Conference, UCC
Monday	10:00 a.m.	Woman's Association
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	Men's Fellowship
	7:00 p.m.	World Service Team
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
	5:00 p.m.	Reopening Taskforce
Thursday	2:30 p.m.	Prayerful Playgroup
	6:00 p.m.	Waking Up 2.0

***The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:***



October 4: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20  
Psalm 19

*Or*  
Isaiah 5:1-7  
Psalm 80:7-15  
Philippians 3:4b-14  
Matthew 21:33-46

October 11: Exodus 32:1-14  
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

*Or*  
Isaiah 25:1-9  
Psalm 23  
Philippians 4:1-9  
Matthew 22:1-14