

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



*"What a stunning vocation for the church,
to stand free and hope-filled in a world gone fearful –
and to think, imagine, dream, vision a future that God will yet enact."*

—Walter Brueggemann

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

January 31, 2021

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

Anna Laura Page

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

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

God meets us in this world filled with wonder and beauty.
God also meets us in this world filled with uncertainties and despair.
God meets us in our desire to grow and commit in faith.
God also meets us in the voids of our belief and conviction.

God embraces the courageous and the resilient.
God also embraces the wounded and the weary.
God knocks down the walls that separate and divide us.
God also knocks down the walls of our fear and resistance.

Whoever we are, wherever we find ourselves,
whatever we bring with us,
We welcome the presence of the One
Who holds us, heals us, and sends us.

Let us pray:

Giving God,
we thank you for this extraordinary world
and its reminders of joy, grace, hope and life:
when plant shoots break through concrete
when the sun emerges after a storm
when people offer laughter in deep sadness
In these moments we see glimpses of who you are.

Yet if we reduce you to being like the cycle of nature
or the best of humankind,
we diminish your power to make the impossible real:
to cast out the fears that paralyze us
to break apart the evils that oppress us,
to banish the demons that drive and possess us.

Holy One, in this hour, teach us to trust in your power and your presence.
Help us to name the parts of our lives and our world that we believe are too broken to be made whole.
Help us to see your Spirit at work everywhere.

We pray in the name of our brother, Jesus, who taught us these words:

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.

HYMN

O Jesus, I Have Promised
verses 1 and 2

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 1:21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

SERMON

"Possession"

ANTHEM

Balm in Gilead
Sara Phelps, soprano
Michael Havay, piano

arr. H. T. Burleigh

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

O God, you have given us a vision of your will and your purpose, help us to use the resources we dedicate here to accomplish the work you would have us do. With joy, we bring the fruits of our labor, the work of our hands, the days of our lives for your special blessing. Send your Spirit upon us to possess and consecrate us anew in your service. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

POSTLUDE

Recessional on "To God Be the Glory"

William H. Doane/
Douglas E. Wagner

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

*Portions of the liturgy are adapted from Peter K. Perry
(posted on Richard Fairchild's Kir-shalom website)
and Cheryl Lawrie (posted on holdthinspace.org)*

The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:

February 7: Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

February 14: 2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9





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. 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. 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.

Current Reopening Information: Are you wondering where things stand? Through the members section on our website, we have a page dedicated to communicating with our church family on both current policies and procedures for use of the building during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the progress of our ad hoc Reopening Team. Documents will be posted as they are made available. If you have any questions or concerns about any of this information, please reach out to any member of the team: Pastor Maureen Frescott, Jessica Greer, Pastor Kate Kennedy, Keith Lammers, Susan Manchester, Kathy Skoglund, Paul Spiess, Kate Thompson, Doug Topliffe, Sue Werst, Tom Werst.

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

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Shelley Fajans

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Liturgist

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TEAM is excited to present our 2021 project plans to the congregation. We will be going over details of the kitchen remodeling, church exterior painting, and window restoration projects for this third year of the campaign. The online presentation will be held today at 11:30 a.m. We are using the same link and password as our weekly fellowship hour; the link was recently sent by email, and it can also be found in the members section of our website. For those not able to join us today, the presentation will also be posted on our website.

NEXT SUNDAY, February 7, the Budget & Finance Team will provide an update on the current financial status of the church, as well as a preliminary budget overview for the next fiscal year (FY22). The online presentation will start at 11:30 a.m. and we are using the same link and password as our weekly fellowship hour.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for February include canned fruit, flour, boxed cake mixes, baking supplies, sugar, coffee, tea, juice and granola. 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!

WEDNESDAY MORNING ADULT ED continues the series *A New Look at the Old Testament*. Is the Old Testament still relevant today? Who wrote it and why? We'll take a NEW look at the OLD Testament through this video lecture series produced by the Great Courses.

We gather on Zoom to watch the lectures together and have a group discussion afterward facilitated by Pastor Maureen. All are welcome! Please RSVP to pastormaureen@ccamherst.org to receive the Zoom link, or access the link on our church website in the members section under "Wednesday Adult Ed."

Financial Summary

(as of December 31, 2020)

| | YTD <u>Actual</u> | YTD <u>Budget</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Income | \$265,780 | \$226,982 | \$ 38,798 |
| Expenses | \$211,558 | \$229,478 | \$(17,920) |
| Net Income | \$ 54,221 | \$ (2,496) | \$ 56,718 |

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).

CHURCH SCHOOL: Jonah and the Whale (The Big Fish) from Jonah 1-4: Jonah disobeyed God and tried to escape what God asked of him. Jonah, in the belly of the whale and scared, prayed to God for forgiveness. God answered, saving Jonah and tasking him once again. Jonah completed the task, delivering the message from God to the King of Nineveh. As Christians we know what God wants us to do. Praying to God, asking for forgiveness, heals and gives hope.

Brown bag lessons for the month of February will be created. Each month registered families at SignUpGenius will receive a brown bag lesson. If you have not signed up, here is the site: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4caea62ea1f8c25-church1>.

BLANKETS FOR BRUCE: Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, homelessness, and poverty are always with us. Add COVID-19, and the need for help is even more dire. Church World Service has always held a blanket drive in February to deliver to those in need, and this year, it is even more important.

Bruce Beckley, a beloved member of our church for decades, passed away this year. The blanket program was always very near and dear to his heart, and this February we are hosting “Blankets for Bruce” online. More details and the donate opportunity are here: <https://fundraise.cwsglobal.org/ccamherst-blankets>, or mail a check to CCA, 11 Church Street, Amherst and indicate “Blankets for Bruce” in the memo line.

Thank you for your support and for helping neighbors near and far stay warm!

Our Church Calendar

January 31—February 6, 2021

Most events are taking place virtually. Links are sent out directly by email, and a list of recurring meetings with their links can be found in the member section of our website.

| | | |
|-----------|------------|--|
| Today | 10:00 a.m. | Worship |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Fellowship |
| | 11:30 a.m. | Capital Campaign Presentation |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Senior High Youth Group |
| Monday | 10:00 a.m. | Woman’s Association |
| | 6:00 p.m. | Budget & Finance Team |
| Tuesday | 9:00 a.m. | Men’s Fellowship |
| | 1:30 p.m. | Small Group Ministry |
| | 6:00 p.m. | Church Council |
| Wednesday | 10:00 a.m. | <i>A New Look at the Old Testament</i> |
| Thursday | 7:00 p.m. | Saying Their Names |

Sunday, January 31, 2021



Racial Justice Mission Group Presents
**White Nationalism, Contemporary Racism
and the Christian Church**

Rev. Dr. Velda Love

Racial Justice Minister, United Church of Christ

February 20, 2021 – 10 am – 1 pm

Via Zoom Webinar

On January 6, white nationalists stormed the Capitol leaving behind destruction, death, and a shocked country. What is white nationalism? What is the relationship between white nationalism and contemporary racism? What is the role of the Christian Church? How do we address racialized trauma?

Join us on Saturday, February 20 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm by Zoom Webinar for an enlightening discussion of these questions and more facilitated by Dr. Love. The event is free and sponsored by the Racial Justice Mission Group through your OCWM offerings. Register by February 14 in order to receive pre-webinar resources.

Before her call to the national setting of the United Church of Christ to serve as Racial Justice Minister, Dr. Love lived in Chicago. She wrote: "I was a member of Trinity United Church of Christ for more than 20 years. That experience developed my spirituality, theology, biblical understanding and racial justice from an African and African-American perspective. That experience also led to being deeply committed to social justice, gender equality, issues of race and eliminating racism."

Dr. Love was an adjunct professor and conference speaker at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago from 2008 – 2017 and served North Park University as the director of intercultural justice and learning (2000 – 2016).

She earned her bachelor's degree from Roosevelt University in 1990, and a master's degree from North Park Theological Seminary in 2006. She attended Chicago Theological Seminary and obtained her D.Min. in 2016, and served various boards and task forces that address interfaith dialogue, homelessness, and youth incarceration.

"Given this critical juncture in our nation, conversations on race are still a priority," Love said. "Racial justice and racial equality need to be part of our national dialogue. As Christians in the United Church of Christ, we are responsible for changing the narrative of how we engage the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is inclusive, liberating and radical."