

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



New beginnings are often disguised as painful endings.

—Lao Tzu

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

November 28, 2021

First Sunday of Advent

10:00 a.m.

GATHERING CHIMES

Let us be gathered in silence so that we may prepare to worship.

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

*Prelude on "Genevan 42"
(Comfort, Comfort, You My People)*

David Lasky

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

The Curtis Family

The Gospel of John speaks of Jesus as the true light coming into the world.

We light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas in anticipation of the coming of the light of Christ.

One: Today we light the first candle of Advent, the candle of Hope.

Many: We light this candle in hope that God's light will show us the way.

One: We light this candle in hope that God's peace will calm our fears.

Many: We light this candle in hope that God's joy will lift us out of sadness.

One: We light this candle in hope that God's love will fill our hearts.

All: We light this candle in hope that God's light will shine through us – as we bring hope, peace, joy and love to our world.

(Light one purple candle)

Please join us as we pray the words that Jesus taught us in The Lord's Prayer:

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.

SONG OF PRAISE

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

CHILDREN'S TIME

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 21:25-36

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

Then he told them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

‘Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.’

SERMON

“Bombs and Butterflies”

ANTHEM

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Sara Phelps, soprano

Michael Havay, piano

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew and place it in the “Joys and Concerns” plate at the back of the sanctuary. Ushers will bring the cards forward to the pastor during the Anthem.

ORGAN PRAYER RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

God who makes all things new, we believe in the power of hope to dispel our fear, to uplift the downtrodden, and to change the world. We give this offering with faith that a new day is coming. May it be used to bring about your hope for justice and peace throughout creation. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

People, Look East

Robert Lau

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

(*Indicates that those who are able may stand.)

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST, NH, UCC



**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.

Worship Notes:

- Church school is available for children Pre-K through grade 7.
- The nursery is not currently staffed. Parents with very young children are welcome to use it during worship.
- Joys and Concerns may be written on the cards found on the small table as you entered the sanctuary. You are also welcome to submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the worship service.
- Offering plates can be found at the front and the rear of the sanctuary.
- Please join us in the memorial garden for fellowship after the worship service, weather permitting.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given. An emergency plan is in place for the children in the church school.

The church office is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 1:00 p.m., and available Monday through Friday by telephone 673-3231 and by email info@ccamherst.org. 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.com/ccamherst and Instagram.com/ccamherstnh.

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
 John Swanson
 Doug Topliffe

Ministers to the World
 Senior Pastor
 Associate Pastor
 Director of Music
 Organist/Accompanist
 Deacon in Charge
 Videographer

Wendy Valeri
 Gretchen Davis

Bell Choir Director
 Interim Children's Coordinator

THE CHURCH OFFICE is closed through November 30 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

GREAT NEWS: Fellowship time has moved back inside to the community room. Coffee and juice will be offered, and masks are required when not consuming beverages.

Our Fellowship team is excited to get back in the swing of things. If anyone is interested in volunteering to help with coffee hour, a sign up sheet will be available; or call, text or email Meredith Dart (cell: 603-305-9065, email: m.getler@hotmail.com).

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for November include pancake mix and syrup, condiments, cooking sauces and seasonings, cooking oil, jelly, and cold cereal. 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!

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

Financial Summary			
(as of October 31, 2021)			
	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$172,012	\$189,613	\$(17,601)
Expenses	\$169,591	\$166,379	\$ 3,212
Net Income	\$ 2,421	\$ 23,235	\$(20,814)

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).



THE SYMBOLISM OF OUR CHRISMON TREE



Chrismons proclaim our Lord Jesus Christ through the use of symbols. These symbols are interdenominational and the heritage of all Christians. They tell the story of God's plan for our salvation that, through faith in Jesus Christ, we might be restored to God in a community of love, the Christian church.

All of the Chrismons used to decorate the tree are in white and gold to symbolize the purity, perfection, majesty and glory of the Son of God, and the pearls symbolize the Word of God. The tiny white lights that adorn the tree represent Christ, the light of the world.

Cross—A reminder of our Lord's redeeming work for the salvation of humankind. Different forms of the cross point to various aspects of our Savior's work.

Stars—Five points, Epiphany; seven points, Gifts of the Spirit; eight points, Holy Baptism.

Circle—Eternity, the eternal love of God and eternal life in God's kingdom.

Daisy—The innocence of the Christ Child.

Fish—An ancient symbol for the Christ. The letters of the Greek word for fish, IXOYC, are the initials for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior."

Greek Cross—All parts of equal length. The balanced form, more adaptable in design, was widely used by early Greeks.

Rose—The nativity of our Lord, his human birth, our Lord's human mother.

Iota Chi—The first two letters of the Greek name *Jesus* in Greek.

Triangle—The Triune God.

Shepherd's Crook with Alpha and Omega—The Alpha and Omega, first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, refer to the beginning and the end, or the eternity of our Lord. The shepherd's staff is the symbol for Jesus the Good Shepherd, and the figure of the cross can also be seen.

Butterfly—Our Lord's resurrection.

Latin Cross with Alpha and Omega—While no one today knows the shape of the cross on which our Lord died, the church uses this form, the Latin cross, most widely. Early Christians often combined the Alpha and Omega with the cross to declare the Savior's divinity.

Crown—King of kings and Lord of lords.

Celebrate the Season of Giving



GIVING TREE

The Christmas season is just around the corner and the World Service team is again partnering with our same organizations to ensure all in our community experience the joy of the holidays. As you can see below, there is a way for everyone to participate, and a wide variety of those to support.

We will again be signing up online, using SignUp Genius. There will still be a 'Giving Tree' at the church, but this year the stars will have instructions on how to use the signup tool. We will also have members of the team available after in-person worship on November 14, 21 and 28 to answer questions and help those that may need assistance.

Important Dates:

- Nov. 14 – Dec. 1: Dates to sign up for gifts – information will be sent out by email.
- Nov. 14, 21, 28: Members of World Service team available to help after in-person worship.
- Dec. 5: Deadline to drop off gifts to church.

Crestwood Nursing Home: We will continue our annual tradition of purchasing gifts for each resident from their specific wish lists. You will be able to view the wish lists and choose a resident that speaks to your heart.

Operation Christmas Joy: We will again participate in Bethany Christian Services' **Operation Christmas Joy** drive, which provides \$25 gift cards to meet the Christmas wish lists of children/teens in emergency foster care statewide.

Family Promise of Southern NH (formerly Anne-Marie House): They have moved to a larger facility and are now housing approximately 39 children and their families, almost double what they used to be able to accommodate. Each child has one special item on their Christmas list. Santa, Mrs. Claus, and members of the World Service team will deliver these gifts in person on December 13.

SHARE: This year, due to COVID procedures, SHARE is again asking only for gift cards. The congregation as a whole will support SHARE – we will use Mission funds to purchase gift cards to support 20 children and 5 adults. We are purchasing the gift cards from the SUCCESS program – a win-win for all!

All gifts are due back to the church no later than end of worship Sunday, Dec. 5

- Crestwood gifts should be returned unwrapped in a gift bag, with the name of the resident clearly visible on the bag, and gift wrap included.
- Family Promise gifts should be wrapped and returned with a tag with the name/age of the child.
- Operation Christmas Joy gift cards should be returned in any type of envelope (we have small gift bags for these) and 'Operation Christmas Joy' on the outside.
- If you are buying gift cards we encourage you to buy those from our SUCCESS program – this benefits the gift recipient AND CCA.



For more information please visit <https://www.ccamherst.org/christmasgifts/>

Sunday, November 28, 2021

Our Church Calendar

November 28—December 4, 2021

Some 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—Sanctuary
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship—Community Room
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	World Service Team
	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	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir—Sanctuary
	6:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class—Vestry
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir—Sanctuary

The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:



December 5:
Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

December 12:
Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18