

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

VILLAGE SPIRE

September 2022



Why We Worship

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott, Senior Pastor
September 2022

Rally Sunday is September 11th, and we're kicking off our 2022-23 program year with a new church-wide theme – WHY WE WORSHIP! We'll take a closer look at the parts that make up our Sunday service and explore how each element serves as a distinct expression of our communal worship – and our faith as it's lived out in the world:

WELCOMING - Call to Worship
SINGING - Hymns and Music
NURTURING - Children's Time
LISTENING - Scripture
DISCERNING - Sermon
HEALING - Confessional Prayer
PRAYING - Joys and Concerns
GIVING - Offering
COMMUNING - Communion
SENDING - Benediction

We'll explore these themes in our monthly Creative Worship, our adult Small Group Ministry program, our Youth Groups, and our children's Church School. If you've ever wondered why particular elements of our

Continued on page 3

Good Stuff Sale to be Held on September 16 & 17



The Good Stuff Sale, formerly the Fall Rummage Sale, sponsored by the Woman's Association, is back after a two-year pandemic hiatus! It will be held in the community room and the vestry on Friday, September 16 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, September 17 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The sale this fall will feature clothing, jewelry, handbags and linens, but not household goods. Please put the date on your calendar and spread the word about this always-popular event.

The WA is still accepting donations of the items included in the sale which can be dropped off in the designated area in the Vestry on Sunday or Monday mornings, or by arrangement with Sally Bowkett (smm46@hotmail.com or 603-801-267) or Alicia Wright (wightalicia@gmail.com or 603-345-0155). Clothing should be clean and in good condition. Please sort items and label bags to indicate whether they contain clothing for men, women, teens or children, linens, etc.

Volunteers will be needed the week preceding the sale to help with set-up and on the days of the sale. Watch News from the Pews and the Sunday bulletin announcements for details on volunteering!

VILLAGE SPIRE

A Parish Newsletter

The Congregational Church of
Amherst, NH, United Church of Christ
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Church school available.

How to reach us:
Office Phone (603) 673-3231,
(603) 673-6848
www.ccamherst.org
[Facebook.com/ccamherst](https://www.facebook.com/ccamherst)
[Instagram.com/ccamherstnh](https://www.instagram.com/ccamherstnh)

The church office is open
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and
is available by telephone and email
Monday through Friday.

Send in all newsletter articles
by the fifteenth of the month.

Sunday bulletin announcements
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

Andrea Cyr
Church Office Administrator
andrea@ccamherst.org

Sara L. Phelps
Director of Music
kalben1@comcast.net

Michael Havay
Organist
michaelh117@gmail.com

Wendy Valeri
Bell Choir Director
wendylazott@tds.net

Larissa Riley
Church School Coordinator
churchschool@ccamherst.org



“Understanding the New Testament”

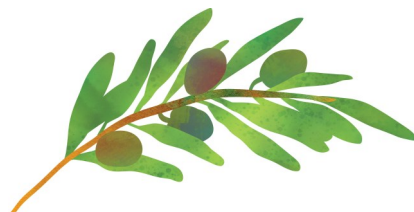
**Wednesday Morning Adult Ed
Begins September 21
10:00-11:30 a.m. on Zoom**

Why do we have four Gospels? Why do they contradict each other at times? What was the purpose of Paul's letters? What is the Book of Revelation really about? Beginning this fall, we'll take a year-long look at the New Testament through this 24-part video lecture series produced by the Great Courses. These dynamic lectures, given by Professor David Brakke, Chair of Christian History at Ohio State University, start with the earliest writings of the NT - the letters of Paul, and then move on to the Gospels and Revelation. We'll examine the original contexts of these writings and the people who wrote them, giving us a new perspective on these ancient texts.

We'll watch the video together as a group and then have a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. The class will meet every first and third Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. from September through May. We'll meet on Zoom because we've found this to be a more inclusive way to be together! 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"

Understanding the New Testament - Series Schedule

September 21 - The Paradox of the New Testament
October 5 - The Jewish Origins of Christian Faith
October 19 - Thessalonians and Paul's Ministry
November 2 - Galatians: Salvation for Gentiles
November 16 - Romans: God, Faith, and Israel
December 7 - 1 and 2 Corinthians: Community Conflicts
December 21 - Paul's Congregations
January 4 - Paul's Theology on Slavery
January 18 - Adapting Paul's Teachings to New Situations
February 1 - Gospel of Mark: Jesus as the Suffering Son of Man
February 15 - Gospel of Matthew: Jesus as the New Moses
March 1 - Gospel of Matthew: The Church
March 15 - Gospel of Luke: God's Salvation
April 5 - Luke and Acts: Luke's Inclusive Message
April 19 - Acts: The Apostles and the Church
May 3 - Gospel of John: Jesus as the Divine Word
May 17 - Gospel of John: Jesus and the Jews



Pastor's Paragraph, continued from page 1

service are included - the offering, the confessional prayer, a time for children - or if you've questioned why we've come to do the things we do during worship, we hope taking this closer look will answer some of your wonderings!

On the third Sunday of every month, during our Creative Worship service, we'll invite our children to participate in the part of the service that we're focusing on that month, so they'll have a better understanding of what we adults do in worship while they're off in Church School. And it's hoped our adult participants will have a better understanding as well. One thing we learned from the congregational survey we participated in a few years ago is that we are a diverse worshipping group with each of us having particular parts of the service that resonate with us, and other parts that we can do without. The latter is usually the first thing we suggest eliminating when the discussion about shortening our worship arises. The problem is - the part we might suggest cutting may be the reason why the person sitting next to us is there. All are necessary parts of the whole.

September's theme is WELCOMING where we'll focus on our Call to Worship - the gathering of our community; and the Prayer of Invocation - welcoming God's presence in our gathering.

September and the new church year bring us multiple reasons to say WELCOME:

WELCOME to all of you finding your way back to church after a summer away!

WELCOME to all of you who've found us online and who continue to watch from afar!

WELCOME to our visitors and new families, whether you're new to town or new to our church!

WELCOME to our Chancel and Bell Choirs - we look forward to having you back singing and ringing this fall!

WELCOME to our new Church School Coordinator, Larissa Riley, as she and our Christian Ed Team kick off our new Church School year!

WELCOME to our Church School Children and Teachers - fresh from summer Vacation Bible School and ready for a fun school year!

WELCOME to our Middle and Senior High Youth - who will kick off the year with our wonderful adult advisors and await Pastor Kate's return in October!

WELCOME to our Adult Education and Small Group Ministry participants, as you gather to grow in your faith and your connections to one another!

WELCOME to our Council, Deacons, World Service, Trustees, Communications, Fundraising and Fellowship Teams as you gather to continue your good work after a much-needed break!

WELCOME to our Woman's Association members as you have all-hands -on-deck preparing for your September "Good Stuff Sale!"

WELCOME to any of you not mentioned above. No matter how often you attend worship, or how you choose to participate in the life of our church - no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

WELCOME to our new church year!

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Maureen



Sunday, September 11

Church school begins on September 11! All children ages 3 years old through seventh grade are invited to join the fun.

Beginning at 9:45 a.m. on Rally Sunday, parents can register their children and meet church school teachers. Once registered, children can sit with their parents for the first part of worship. After the children's message, teachers will lead the children to their classrooms. Parents can meet their children in the community room after worship, where the Rally Day celebration will continue with a picnic hosted by the Fellowship Team.

For more information regarding our church school program, please contact Larissa Riley at churchschool@ccamherst.org.

Rally Day Church Picnic!



After the worship service on September 11, we hope you will join us for an all-church picnic!

Immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service, head to the

community room to enjoy good food, games, renew friendships and make new ones. The Fellowship Team will provide hamburgers, hot dogs and cold drinks. If your last name begins A-N please bring a side or salad; O-Z a desert.

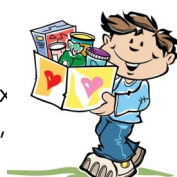
All ages are welcome and donations to help with costs are appreciated.

SHARE Food Pantry

The SHARE Food Pantry continues to be busy. Please know your donations are needed and truly appreciated.

September Pantry Requests:

Canned Ham,
Canned Meats,
Side Dishes
(seasoned pasta mix
hamburger helper,
etc.), Ravioli &
Beefaroni



Donations should be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford. Thank you for your continuous support!

Choirs, Choirs, Choirs!

We are looking forward to resuming our choir rehearsals on Thursday, September 8.

Are you interested in singing or ringing? We welcome new folks any time!

The Bell Choir, under the direction of Wendy Valeri, rehearses Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

The Chancel Choir, directed by Sara Phelps and accompanied by Michael Havay rehearses Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the vestry.

The Youth Choir will gather Sundays after church in the vestry beginning on Sunday, September 18!

Come on down after church school - at this point we are open to **ALL** ages. I cannot wait to get singing again with our amazing young people and hearing their voices in church.

See you all soon, please reach out to me with any questions!

Sara Phelps
Director of Music
kalben1@comcast.net
(603) 759-6468



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.

Allows for deeper conversations that we can't always have in committee meetings or during coffee hour.

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.

Choose a Group!

First Tuesday 1:30-3:00 p.m.

First Sunday 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

All groups will meet in-person or on Zoom as needed.

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 or contact Pastor Maureen at 603-673-3231 x11,
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org



This year our Small Groups will focus on the WHY WE WORSHIP theme that is guiding our Creative Worship and other church programs. Each month we'll focus on a different aspect of our worship and how it connects with our faith journey!

Schedule for 2022-2023

October:	Welcoming/Sending
November:	Communing
December:	Listening
January:	Praying
February:	Healing
March:	Giving
April:	Discerning
May:	Singing
June:	Nurturing



Creative Worship Third Sunday of the Month 10:00 a.m.

Mark your calendars! "Creative Worship" returns in the fall on the THIRD SUNDAY of every month. This year our overarching theme is WHY WE WORSHIP! Each month we'll focus on a different part of our Sunday service and explore why we include it in our worship and how it connects with our faith journey as a whole! Our Creative Worship services include special music, interactive liturgy, and a message for all ages. On these Sundays, our children will participate in the part of worship that we're focusing on that month, before heading off to Church School. Here are our Creative Worship Sundays and themes for the year. We hope you can join us!

September 18	WELCOMING - Call to Worship
October 16	SENDING - Benediction
November 20	COMMUNING - Communion
December 18	LISTENING - Scripture
January 15	PRAYING - Joys and Concerns
February 19	HEALING - Confession
March 19	GIVING - Offering
April 16	DISCERNING - Sermon
May 21	SINGING - Music
June 4*	NURTURING - Children's Time

**In June Creative Worship will be on Children's Sunday - date TBD.*

Frederick Douglass Community Reading

On a hot and steamy July morning, members of the Racial Justice Group gathered to prepare for the Frederick Douglass Community Reading. This was a state-wide event, sponsored by the Black Heritage Trail NH. This year, twelve other New Hampshire communities participated in this community reading, which commemorates a speech addressing an Independence Day observance in Rochester, New York on July 5, 1852. On that day, Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and heroic orator for liberty, delivered one of his most famous speeches, "What to the slave is your Fourth of July?", a blistering indictment of an American idealism that ignored and accepted the inhuman treatment of enslaved African Americans as part of the country's identity and economy. Ironically, even though Douglass' words spoke directly to this moment in history, they still ring with an unsettling power today.

The Racial Justice Group recruited sixteen readers for this event who took turns reading Douglass's speech from the front of our church to an audience of twenty-five people who sat under a canopy on Church Street. We hope to make this an annual event in Amherst.

The Racial Justice Group will continue their work this year beginning in September, meeting after the worship service on the second Sunday of each month in the Parlor. For more information, contact Steve Boczenowski.

Racial Justice Group

The Racial Justice Group at CCA is dedicated to learning about the impact of racism on God's world and our own hearts and minds, and taking action to bring about justice and the kin-dom of God in our community. Through reading, discussion, and service, CCA's Racial Justice Group seeks to live more fully into God's call to love our neighbor as ourselves.

The Racial Justice Group meets the second Sunday of the month after worship. All who seek to learn more are welcome to join—you do not need to have participated in past meetings to join the conversation now! If you are interested in participating, please contact Steve Boczenowski for more information.



Parents Group



Are you a parent with young children (infants through second grade)? Do you want to connect with other parents with similar values to talk about raising kind, faithful, resilient children? Do you yearn for some faith formation of your own, but just can't seem to find the time? Then join us on Sunday, September 25 after worship to see if Parents Group might be right for you. We will meet in the nursery at 11:15 a.m. (children are welcome). This will be an informal gathering to talk about possible meeting times, hopes and goals for Parents Group this year.

Any questions, please reach out to Larissa Riley at churchschool@ccamherst.org.

Pastor Kate will be leading Parents Group when she returns in October.

Confirmation is Back!

*Calling All 8th and 9th Graders—
Have you ever wondered what it means to be
"Confirmed?"*



Confirmation is a very special year for eighth and ninth graders at the Congregational Church of Amherst. Our confirmation program invites kids to go deeper into their own spirituality as they transition from childhood to adulthood, and build a deeper relationship with their church and peers along the way!

NEW for this year - all participants will receive a certificate at the end the program in May, whether they choose to be confirmed or not. Choosing to be confirmed and to join our church is a big decision, but the journey along the way is something we all grow from!

Our **first meeting** and **parent information** session is Thursday, **September 22** from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (We may adjust this time once we reach out to you—stay tuned!) Our Confirmation leaders are Pastor Maureen, Pastor Kate (who will join us in October), and Vicky Leknes.

Reach out to Pastor Maureen (pastormaureen@ccamherst.org) for more information. We hope you can join us!



Vacation Bible School



Discovery on Adventure Island VBS 2022 was a huge success! The program brought joy to many members of our congregation and the surrounding community. We had 43 child/youth participants ranging from 2 years old to 14 years old. Each day of VBS was filled with stories, crafts, music, puppets, snacks, science, games, and more as we learned how to share God's light with the world. The program would not have been possible without the 11 adult leaders who shared their time and talents each day to nurture and inspire the children. We are also grateful for the many members of the congregation that helped with donations, decorating, and clean up. We hope that this will become an annual tradition.





Alison Batey, Middle High Youth Group Leader, Has a Passion for Kids

Alison Batey has served as the church's Middle High Youth Group (MHYG) leader for the past year. She, along with Dave Hagerstrom, will continue to lead this group of fifth through eighth graders when they resume their monthly meetings this fall. The meetings, which are normally attended by five to eight kids, usually consist of both physical activities and mental challenges. Past activities have included an Ugly Christmas Sweater-Making Party with a fashion show, an ice skating outing, and climbing the high ropes at Souhegan High School.

Alison grew up in a Roman Catholic family, but began attending the youth group at the Hampstead NH Congregational Church when a friend invited her to come. Eventually Alison and her family joined the Hampstead church and Alison later served as its Youth Group Advisor. Joining our church in 2010, she has taught church school and chaperoned Senior High Youth Group mission trips. Her son Xander, now a middle schooler, is a member of the MHYG.

Alison's current job is Director of Camping and Programs for the Daniel Webster Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Not just an administrative position, Alison was instructing kayaking at Camp Carpenter the week that she was interviewed for this article. She enjoys outdoor activities, especially running, biking and rock climbing.

Alison has always had a passion for education and working with kids. She likes watching them grow and change, setting goals for themselves, and developing independence. Her background, skills and interests make her superbly qualified to lead the MHYG.

Anyone wanting more information on the program can contact Alison at alsbatey@gmail.com.

Written by Adrienne Topliffe

Middle High Youth Group

Calling all 5-7th graders! September is here, which means a brand-new year of Middle High Youth Group (MHYG)! MHYG is a time of fellowship and faith formation that meets on *the third Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.* This month, we will be talking about new beginnings through the eyes of the boy Samuel, called to be a prophet of God when he was just 12 years old!

At a time in life when most tweens are struggling to figure out who they are, what they like, who to be friends with, and what to believe, MHYG is a sacred space to learn, grow, and have fun. MHYG offers kids a safe place to explore their spirituality, form deep relationships, and let loose through fellowship, games, check-ins and sanctuary time.

ALL 5-7th graders are invited—whether they attend this church, any church, or none at all! MHYG kids are always welcome to bring friends to join in the fun.

Contact Dave Hagerstrom or Alison Batey alsbatey@gmail.com for more information.

Garden Wagon Needed

Do you have a garden cart or wagon you are no longer using? Our gardener could use one in good condition. Please contact Sue Stout.



Senior High Youth Group

Teens grades 9-12 are invited to Senior High Youth Group (SHYG), Sunday evenings from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Our first official SHYG meeting will be Sunday, September 18 at 4:00 p.m. outside in the Memorial Garden. Join us for the first SHYG meeting of the new year! We will play games, check in with highs and lows, have some spiritual time, make ice-cream sundaes, and more!

SHYG is a time of fellowship, fun, and faith exploration. As always, friends are welcome, whether they attend this church, any church, or none at all! SHYG is a place to connect socially and spiritually for teens, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

Get in touch with Kathy Johnson by text or at kjohnsonnh@gmail.com for more information!



The Congregational Church
of Amherst, NH, UCC
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

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*"Rejoice
with me ...
I have found
my sheep that
" was lost."*

Luke 15:6, NRSV