

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

# VILLAGE SPIRE

November 2022



## Levi Sunday is November 6 after worship

We have planned a number of outdoor activities, including raking and general lawn and grounds clean up. Please bring your own rakes and tools to help accomplish the jobs you would like to help with.

**Many hands  
make light work!**



## New Members and Visitors Info Session November 3 at 7:00 p.m.

Are you NEW (or not-so-new) to our church and interested in learning more about our congregation? Are you interested in learning more about becoming a member? Do you want to know more about the UCC? If so, please join us for our INFO SESSION on Thursday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m. to learn more about all of the above!

For those who've already joined our mailing list and/or inquired about becoming a member, you'll be hearing from us soon! If you've joined us for our in-person or online worship over the last year and are interested in attending the info session, please reach out to Andrea in our church office at [andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org) or 673-3231, or contact Pastor Maureen at [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org)

## Communing

Rev. Maureen R. Prescott, Senior Pastor  
November 2022

In November, many of us will gather around a table to share a meal that is steeped in tradition and meaning. The meal is a "remembering" or "reenacting" of a meal served long ago, where people of different backgrounds and beliefs came together, put their differences aside, and gave thanks for what they had been given while celebrating the new community they were just beginning to form.

No, I'm not talking about Thanksgiving - the holiday that harkens back to a mythical meal shared by the Pilgrims and the Native Americans. I'm talking about Communion. The meal that Jesus shared with his disciples on the last night he lived on earth. The two meals are similar. Both are rituals that are steeped in symbolism and meaning. Both are intended to recreate a past event, while giving thanks in the present moment and looking forward to a hopeful and joyful future for all. Both also take some liberties with the past that we're remembering, as we imagine the original meal to be much more harmonious and joyous than it likely was.

In many ways our own tables reflect the historical table that we're remembering and reenacting - in both our Communion and Thanksgiving meal. Not everyone at the table agrees or even likes one another. There may be arguments over who sits where, who is taking too much, or who is talking too much. And as the hours roll by, tensions rise, and patience is tried, and someone inevitably is sent running from the table - in tears, in anger, in frustration. Leaving the rest feeling perplexed, embarrassed, or betrayed.

*continued on page 3*

## 2022 Holiday Fair Saturday, November 19

Mark your calendar for the return of the traditional Holiday Fair on November 19! Replaced for two pandemic years by an online auction, this year's fair marks the return of the in-person event, complete with popular traditions: exquisite crafts, holiday decorations, gifts and treasures, decorated wreaths, fresh cheese and pecans, a shop full of delicious baked goods, a raffle featuring exciting holiday baskets, and a silent auction. The fair will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and admission is free.

Organized by the Woman's Association (WA), the fair will fill the lower level of the church building. Proceeds from the fair enable the WA to make a substantial contribution to the church budget and to offer support to a number of non-profit organizations in the area.

More information about the Holiday Fair can be found on the [WA website](#). See the [SOS page](#) for opportunities to help before the fair, assist at the event itself or clean up after the fair.



## 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](http://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.

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### OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott  
*Senior Pastor*  
[pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org)

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy  
*Associate Pastor*  
[pastorkate@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastorkate@ccamherst.org)

Andrea Cyr  
*Church Office Administrator*  
[andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org)

Sara L. Phelps  
*Director of Music*  
[kalben1@comcast.net](mailto:kalben1@comcast.net)

Michael Havay  
*Organist*  
[michaelh117@gmail.com](mailto:michaelh117@gmail.com)

Wendy Valeri  
*Bell Choir Director*  
[wendylazott@tds.net](mailto:wendylazott@tds.net)

Larissa Riley  
*Church School Coordinator*  
[churchschool@ccamherst.org](mailto:churchschool@ccamherst.org)



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

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

## **Communing**, continued from page 1

But still we gather – around Thanksgiving tables and Communion tables, breaking bread together and sharing the cup. Remembering those who came before us, lifting up prayers of gratitude, hoping for a more harmonious future to come.

In November, we'll continue to explore our church-wide theme of "Why We Worship" in our Sunday Creative Worship, our Church School, and our Small Group Ministry gatherings. This month the part of worship that we're focusing on is Communion. For this reason, we are moving our celebration of Communion in the month of November from the first Sunday to the **THIRD SUNDAY** (November 20<sup>th</sup>) to coincide with our monthly Creative Worship. Our church school children will be serving and receiving communion with us as we participate in the ritual as a community. In October, Pastor Kate offered a "Communion Education" class in our church school to prepare the children to participate at the discretion of their parents.

Also in November, we'll welcome the newest members of our community, with a CCA Info session on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The session is for anyone who would like to learn more about our church and/or how to become a member – regardless of how long one has been attending. Most come just wanting to know more about our church community and how they might get involved. Those who wish to become official members will have the opportunity to do so on Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>.

November will have us "communing" together at the Woman's Association's annual Holiday Fair – which this year is back fully in person on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Birch bark houses, baked goods, holiday décor, gift baskets and wheels of cheese abound, so be sure to be there, to shop for yourself or those you love, and to support the ongoing mission and good work of our WA.

Finally, the last Sunday in November will usher us into the season of Advent, where we take time to anticipate and prepare for all that this very special season brings as it culminates in the celebration of the birth of Jesus. But before we return to the beginning of the story yet again, we'll remember the end of the story – in the ritual that Jesus handed down to us through the disciples. In the bread and cup that they shared together as a community with all of them present – the believers, the deniers, the betrayers – bringing their broken selves to the table, to be made whole in the presence of the community and in the presence of God. Come to be renewed, come to be refreshed, come not because you must, but because you may. Come to celebrate in this communion of Christ.

Peace and blessings,  
*Pastor Maureen*



## **Friendship Baskets**

On behalf of the congregation, your Diaconate is raising funds to purchase food gift cards for families in need in our local community. Most of the gift cards are passed on to the World Service committee which allocates funds to SHARE and the Amherst Junior Women's Club. These organizations have the natural processes in place to ensure that needy families are the ultimate beneficiaries. The deacons also provide gift cards to recipients who are connected to our church whom we know have special current needs.

During the first two Sundays in November, the Diaconate will invite donations to this traditional Friendship Basket collection. For those listening online or unable to join us in person, donations may be made through the church's website under the donations tab.

Your generosity in the past has been greatly appreciated, and the Diaconate thanks you in advance for any contribution for this Thanksgiving collection.

### **SHARE Food Pantry**

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

#### **November Pantry Requests:**

pancake mix and syrup,  
condiments, cooking  
sauces and seasonings,  
cooking oil, jelly,  
cold cereal



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



**Creative Worship**  
Sunday, November 20  
at 10:00 a.m.

### *Communing*

Mark your calendars! "Creative Worship" and COMMUNION are on the third Sunday this month! The theme for our church year is WHY WE WORSHIP - each month we'll focus on a different part of our worship and explore why it's a part of our service and how it connects with our faith journey. On these Sundays, our children will participate in the part of worship that we're focusing on before heading off to church school.

In November, our worship theme is "Communing" and the part of worship we're celebrating is Communion. Why did Jesus tell his disciples to continue to share this meal in memory of him? What meaning does Communion have for you? We hope you can join us in-person or online!

### Adult Ed Series

## Understanding the New Testament

**Wednesdays, November 2 and 16**  
**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 meets 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](mailto: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

- 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



## Avis Moller, Artist and Animal Lover

Avis Moller joined our church about five years ago after moving to Amherst from Frankestown, where she had lived for over thirty years. She found the Woman's Association a welcoming and comfortable group to join for someone new to the community. The WA members' friendship and support were especially helpful to her during her late husband's illness. And as an artist and craftsperson, Avis's talents were a perfect fit for the WA.

Avis is a self-taught artist who never enjoyed art classes in school. She assumes that she got her artistic talent from her grandmother, who painted murals on the walls of her house. Avis works in a variety of mediums: oil painting, wood carving, painting egg shells, making greeting cards and felted items, and crocheting.

Avis's other passion is animals, which are featured in many of her art works and crafts. She has always had pets, and as a youngster she volunteered at the Humane Society. Though now retired, Avis held several animal-related jobs over the years, including veterinary technician, dog officer, wildlife rehabilitator, and working in a pet store. She currently lives with her two pit bull mixes, Penny and Safya, whom she describes as "very sweet," and with Ruffles, a 28 year old parrot.

In addition to being an active member of the WA, Avis serves on the Fellowship Committee. She is also a member of the Amherst Garden Club, and volunteers as a mentor at the Nashua Children's Home.

Avis will be selling her unique creations at the Woman's Association's Holiday Fair on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Delicate painted eggshell ornaments, life-like felted animal pins and framed felted portraits, along with some items new to this year's fair, are just some of Avis's one-of-a-kind items that would make lovely gifts.

*Written by Adrienne Topliffe*



## 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 on 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! Please contact Steve Boczenowski for more information.



## Altar Flowers Welcome

Flowers can be given to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The donor arranges with a local florist to have their chosen flowers delivered, or can create their own arrangement. After the service they may take the flowers home or donate them to someone in need of some cheer. There are many openings in the coming months. Contact Andrea in the church office to schedule a Sunday.



## Church School News

### Confirmation Commissioning



Join us in worship on November 6 to commission our 2022-23 Confirmation Class. Come bless this year's class of three eighth graders as they take on the weighty and wonderful task of exploring their faith. This year's class is Adelia Curtis, Oriannah Dart, and Maya Gascoyne.

On November 20th, communion will be served before the children leave for church school. They have learned about the sacrament during church school in October and are welcome to participate, at the discretion of their parents.

The Church School's November Mission is the "Mill Apartment Luncheon" on November 27th. We are excited to have this special tradition back after putting it on hold for a few years. During church school, we will be preparing soup and sandwiches along with placemats and centerpieces. After worship, all church school families that are able will go to the Mill Apartments in Milford to serve lunch and visit with the seniors.



**It's not too late to join Church School!** New students (from 3 years old through 7th grade) are always welcome in our church school classes. Spread the word to friends and neighbors with children. Registration forms are available before worship each Sunday or on the church's website. Contact [Larissa Riley](#) with any questions.



### Senior High Youth Group

This month, SHYG is focusing on Communion! High School kids grades 9-12 are invited to join us on Sundays as we ask what it means to come to the table, to gather in fellowship, and to serve alongside a community of faithful people of all ages.

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 for high school kids to connect socially and spiritually, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

Get in touch with Pastor Kate by text or at [pastorkate@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastorkate@ccamherst.org) for more information!

### Middle High Youth Group

MHYG meets November 6<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. This month, MHYG is all about Gratitude! Join us to explore the ways in which gratitude improves our mental health, happiness, and relationship with God through games, conversation and prayer!

At a time in life when most tweens are figuring 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 middle schoolers are invited, and bringing friends is strongly encouraged!

Email Pastor Kate for more information.



## Breakfast With Santa Saturday, December 10, 2022

"Breakfast with Santa" is a special event sponsored by our church community and open to others in local towns to participate. This year's event will be Saturday, December 10 and will include two sittings: 9:00–10:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. –12:00 noon. A hot breakfast with a variety of options will be served, there will be organized games and crafts, and of course the opportunity visit with Santa himself. We will not have a photographer this year, but bring your phone or camera and take your own photos of your children with Santa. Santa's bookshop is open and each child gets to choose a recycled book.



We hope many church families will participate, a great event for grandparents to bring their grandchildren. The money raised goes back into our church. To register go to [ccamherst.org](http://ccamherst.org). Tickets sales open November 1 for church members and November 7 for the public. Tickets are limited and are on a first come basis. Tickets are \$12.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children under 14; children 12-months & younger are free. Don't wait until the last minute, we usually sell out way before the event.

We are looking for donations of casseroles and other breakfast food from church members. If you are interested in helping please contact Marti Warren: [martiwarren@comcast.net](mailto:martiwarren@comcast.net).

## Joys and Concerns

The Sunday Joys and Concerns and Pastoral Prayer are emailed to those who want to include them in their daily personal prayers.

If you would like to receive them each week, please let Andrea in the church office know: [andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org).

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed on Sunday mornings to help run the live-stream camera and laptop during worship. It's easy and we are hoping to train a few more folks so the rotation is easy on everyone. Contact Doug Topliffe if you'd like to learn.

## Family Christmas Concert Sunday, December 11 7:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary



Come join us in singing and ringing in the holidays with our Chancel Choir and Bell Choir

Sara Phelps, *Director of Music*

Michael Havay, *Organist/  
Accompanist*

Wendy Valeri, *Bell Choir Director*



## Financial Summary

(as of September 2022)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$142,642	\$150,976	\$ (8,334)
Expenses	\$142,931	\$145,147	\$ (2,216)
Net Income	\$ (289)	\$ 5,829	\$ (6,118)

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 (Treasurer), Doug Topliffe and Todd Whitney.

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

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