

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



“We’ve lost the plot if we use religion as the place where we escape from difficult realities instead of as the place where those difficult realities are given meaning.”

— Nadia Bolz-Weber

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

March 5, 2023

Second Sunday in Lent

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

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: People of God, believe this –
God loves the world,
we are beloved!

**Many: May the truth of this great love story,
shine through our worship today,
and renew our sense of calling.**

One: We come, as we are
with our tiredness and our vitality,
our despairing and our hope;

**Many: We come, as we are
with our doubt and our faith,
our hesitations and our longings.**

One: We come, to discover yet again
how Jesus reveals
God's love and mercy.

**Many: We come to listen for God's Word to us,
to offer our prayers,
and to renew our calling.**

All: Let us worship as we are!

*HYMN

God Is Here!

No. 461

PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

The congregation may be seated.

Welcoming God, we give thanks that you have called us to be your people.

When we've lost our way, you have sent your light.

When we are weary and discouraged, you lift us up.

On this journey of Lent, lead us to the joy of discovery
and a vision of future possibilities.

Unite us in relationship with one another,

and be with us and in us now,

as we pray in the words that 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.

LENTEN LITANY OF CONFESSION

One: Reconciling God,

Many: Creator of all.

One: In this Lenten season, we look deeply into our hearts,

Many: To better understand the ways we fall short of your call.

One: We admit that we too often focus on our own needs
rather than on the well-being of all your children.

**Many: We're quick to judge others and name their failings
but often struggle to see our own shortcomings.**

One: We dehumanize those we don't understand,
making it easier to dismiss them.

**Many: We distance ourselves from those who disappoint us
or remind us of our own frailty.**

One: Forgive us, O God, lift us to a higher, holier purpose.

Many: Help us to draw as close to each other as you drew to us in Christ.

**All: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*GLORIA PATRI

Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and Holy Spirit, One;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

ANTHEM

Precious Lord
Chancel Choir

Roy Ringwald

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 3:1-17

Page 860

SERMON

"God So Loved the World"

*HYMN

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

insert

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew. Cards will be collected by one of the pastors during the hymn after the sermon, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

CHORAL RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY (Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH, No. 592)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Collaborative Creator God, you call us to join in your work of love in the world, and you equip us with all we need to follow your lead. Make us generous of hand, heart, and mind, as you are. As we return to you a portion of your gifts, we pray you would receive them as a sign of our gratitude for your unending love, and guide us as we offer our whole selves in your service. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

We welcome all people to join in receiving this sacrament. Children may participate at the discretion of their parents.

CALL TO COMMUNION

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God most high.

Many: It is right to give thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION and CONSECRATING PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Communion at CCA is open to anyone who would like to partake. When you receive the bread, eat at your own pace, symbolizing our individual relationship with God. When you receive the juice, drink with the whole congregation, symbolizing our communion as the Body of Christ. The bread is gluten, egg, and dairy free and the juice is non-alcoholic, so that there may be no barriers to Christ's table.

ORGAN MEDITATION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

We give thanks, loving God, for feeding us at this table. Send us out into the world as your children, full of courage, compassion, and commitment, and eager to be Christ's church in the world. Amen.

*HYMN

O Jesus, I Have Promised
verses 1, 3 & 4 only

No. 388

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

*(*Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.)*

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

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.
- Our church nursery is open, but not currently staffed, and is available when parents with young children feel the need for a quiet, safe space to go to during worship. A monitor is available to watch and listen to the service.
- Joys and Concerns may be written on the cards found in the pews. You are also welcome to submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the worship service.
- Please remember to wear your nametag each Sunday, so that we may all greet our neighbors. If you do not have a permanent nametag, temporary nametags may be found inside the friendship registers. If you are in need of a new, permanent nametag, please see one of the deacons.
- Please join us in the community room for a time of fellowship after the worship service. Coffee and beverages are offered.
- 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
 Peter Labombarde
 Sally Hooper
 Dick Stout
 Andrea Cyr

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor
 Associate Pastor
 Director of Music
 Guest Organist
 Deacon in Charge
 Liturgist
 Videographer

Michael Havay
 Wendy Valeri
 Larissa Riley

Organist/Accompanist
 Bell Choir Director
 Church School Coordinator

BLANKETS FOR BRUCE: Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, homelessness and poverty are always with us. When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the **CWS Blankets+** program was created—to give a loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.

This program was very near and dear to Bruce Beckley's heart. As a congregation, our heart for mission remains strong. This is an opportunity to help make a difference, change lives, and honor Bruce's passion for mission work.

As a church family, let's join together as we take up a **Blankets for Bruce** offering. You can donate using the Blankets pew envelopes, mail a check to the church office with 'blankets' in the memo line, or donate online at our custom CWS Blankets secure donation page:

<https://cwsblankets.org/virtual/ccamherst/>

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SING in our Youth Choir? This group, led by Mrs. Phelps, meets in the vestry after church school on Sundays. Open to all ages! Grab a snack in the community room and come join us!

Financial Summary

(as of January 31, 2023)

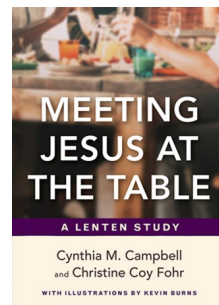
| | YTD <u>Actual</u> | YTD <u>Budget</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Income | \$300,879 | \$270,877 | \$30,003 |
| Expenses | \$281,282 | \$288,046 | \$ (6,764) |
| Net Income | \$ 19,598 | \$ (17,169) | \$36,767 |

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, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand.

Lenten Study Series

Wednesday Evenings on ZOOM
March 8, 15, 22, and 29, 6:30-8:00 p.m.



For four Wednesday evenings during Lent, we will gather on Zoom to discuss a wonderful new Lenten study: *Meeting Jesus at the Table*, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr.

With passionate words, evocative illustrations, and engaging discussion questions, the book invites us to move through this Lenten season using the familiar table stories from the Gospels. Like moving from house to house in a progressive dinner, at each stop we gather at a different table with Jesus, learning how to love, serve, and expand the hospitality of God's grace to others.

Pastor Maureen and Pastor Kate will alternate as facilitators of the sessions. The book is available for order online and we have copies in the church office available for purchase for \$15. Each session will focus on two of the eight chapters in the book. If you don't have the time or the space to add a weekly reading to your plate join us anyway! We'll pull out quotes and passages to seed our discussion and all are welcome to participate! RSVP to pastormaureen@ccamherst.org to receive the Zoom link, or find it on our church website in the Member's section.

NEXT SUNDAY, March 12 will be celebrated as **Woman's Association Sunday**. WA members will take part in the service, and everyone is invited to enjoy special refreshments at Fellowship Time, which will also include a "Pop-Up Art Sale" in the Community Room.

BEWARE OF FALLING SNOW AND ICE: During the winter months, we want to remind everyone that snow and ice may fall from our roof at any time. Please use caution when in our driveway, and do not walk too close to the building.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for March include pancake mix and syrup, condiments, cooking sauces and seasonings, cooking oils, 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!

SAVE THE DATE! Vacation Bible School will be held August 14-18,

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED on Sunday mornings to help run the livestream camera and computer 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 (dtopliff@rcn.com) if you'd like to learn.

DONATED 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 and bring it on Sunday. 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.



Community Suppers - ALL ARE WELCOME!

We are THRILLED to announce that we are again hosting a Community Supper, for the first time since COVID! Our Community Spaghetti Supper will take place at our church on Tuesday, March 28 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Our mission is to provide healthy food and friendship for all in the local community. Meet new friends and enjoy a tasty meal! Fun, food, and fellowship are guaranteed!

We will need many volunteers to host this event, so please consider signing up to volunteer. Full details can be found on the [Community Supper](#) webpage, the [SOS](#) page, or by clicking the links below.

[Community Supper Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities](#)
[Community Supper Volunteer Signup Form](#)

For more information contact [Anita Swanson](#) or [Nancy Protzmann](#).

Our Church Calendar

March 5—11, 2023

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 |
| | 11:15 a.m. | Fellowship |
| | 11:15 a.m. | Youth Choir |
| | 11:30 a.m. | Small Group Ministry |
| | 2:00 p.m. | Middle High Youth Group |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Senior High Youth Group |
| Monday | 10:00 a.m. | WA Workshop |
| Tuesday | 1:30 p.m. | Small Group Ministry |
| | 4:30 p.m. | Church Council |
| Wednesday | 9:30 a.m. | Staff Meeting |
| | 6:30 p.m. | Lenten Study Series |
| Thursday | 9:30 a.m. | Congregational Care |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Communications |
| | 6:00 p.m. | Bell Choir |
| | 6:30 p.m. | Confirmation Class |
| | 7:30 p.m. | Chancel Choir |

Sunday, March 5, 2023