

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



*“Money is not the only commodity that we have to give.
We can give time, we can give our expertise, we can give our love
or simply give a smile. What does that cost? The point is,
none of us can ever run out of something worthwhile to give.”*

— Steve Goodier

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

March 19, 2023

Creative Worship & Faith Promise Sunday

10:00 a.m.

“Giving”

GATHERING CHIMES

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

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

Offertorio

D. Canestrari

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP and PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: God gives us all that we have,

Many: Life, love, grace, hope.

One: God gives us all that we can see,

Many: Trees, mountains, oceans, all the creatures of the earth.

One: God gives us all that we treasure,

Many: Family, friends, and time to be with those we love.

One: God gives us all that we need,

Many: Food, shelter, clothing, and the things that bring us joy.

One: God gives us the opportunity to share all that has been given to us.

Many: We give back to God by giving to others.

One: We give back to God by giving of ourselves.

Many: We give back to God with gratitude and with joy!

**All: Always giving God, we welcome your Spirit as we gather here in your name.
Be with us as we lift our voices up in song and praise!**

*HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

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LENTEN LITANY OF CONFESSION and WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The congregation may be seated.

One: Gracious God, we are not perfect beings.

Many: We confess that often we are resistant to the new thing that you are doing.

One: So often we are not looking, and sometimes we choose not to see.

Many: We are comfortable with the way things are—we grow weary of the call to change.

One: Sometimes we see, but our hearts are hardened and we look away, making excuses.

Many: But you call us to respond, to live in your world now.

One: Forgive our status-quo caution, our focus on self-preservation.

Many: Forgive our narrow vision and insistence that you fit into our plans.

One: Open us to the movement of your Spirit,

Many: and give us hearts ready to be generous in response to your call. Amen.

One: Our ever merciful God leads us into new life,
where we are restored to grace, to hope, and to peace.

**Many: We are grateful for what God has done for us and for what God is doing in us.
This is good news for everyone. Thanks be to God!**

CHILDREN'S TIME and CHILDREN'S OFFERING

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

ANTHEM

Be Thou My Vision
Bell Choir

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Deuteronomy 15:7-8

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.

1 Chronicles 29:12-14

Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name. "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you."

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 6:37-39

Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Now this I say: the one who sows very little will also reap very little, and the one who sows abundantly will also reap abundantly. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

SERMON

“Our Offering to God”

ANTHEM

The Gift to Be Simple
Chancel Choir

arr. Bob Chilcott

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 Prayers of the People.

PRAYER RESPONSE - 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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

FAITH PROMISE INVITATION

Our monetary offerings and pledge cards will be brought forward and collected at this time.

***BLESSING OF THE OFFERING (TUNE: AR HYD Y NOS)**

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,

Future needs in earth's safe-keeping, thanks be to God!

***FAITH PROMISE LITANY OF DEDICATION**

One: Generous God, we give you thanks this day as we gather our offerings along with our pledges of support for this faith community for the coming year.
We bring them before you with anticipation and hope.

Many: **Hear us, O God, as we give you our thanks and praise.**

One: For those whose lives have been touched by your Spirit and who have given of themselves generously,

Many: **We give you thanks and praise.**

One: For those who are responding to your creative grace with a financial pledge towards our mission,

Many: **We give you thanks and praise.**

One: For those whose lives are in transition or turmoil or who are unable to pledge, but who continue to be a vital part of our community,

Many: **We give thanks and pray for comfort and peace.**

One: That each one of us, and your whole Church, become more faithful to the call of service through Jesus,

Many: **We ask your continuing guidance and care.**

One: That these pledges may emerge as real gifts, enabling the mission and ministry of this church to come to life as we serve others,

Many: **In the name of Jesus Christ, we commit our time, talent, and treasure to you, O God. Amen.**

HYMNGod, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*

No. 422

***THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD**

*BENEDICTION

One: The Spirit of God is upon us
and has anointed each of us
to bring our gifts to the world.

**Many: To bring good news,
to give a helping hand,
to share abundantly,
through the gifts we have been given.**

One: The God in whose image we are made
will walk with us and guide us today,
tomorrow, and every day.

Many: Amen!

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Recessional on "Deo gracias"

Douglas E. Wagner

*(*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 WORSHIP SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church
 Rev. Maureen R. Frescott
 Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy
 Sara L. Phelps
 Michael Havay
 Wendy Valeri
 Russ Demarest
 Linda Lannin, Doug Topliffe
 Andrea Cyr

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

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
 Gretchen Davis, Vicky Leknes
 Dave Hagerstrom

Church School Coordinator
 Teachers, Preschool to Grade 4
 Teacher, Grades 5 to 7

DEACON'S FRIENDSHIP BASKETS: On behalf of the congregation, your Diaconate is planning to deliver grocery gift cards to families in our community who need a little help putting food on the table for the Easter holiday. We will be passing our Friendship Baskets during the services on March 19 and 26 to gather donations to support the gift card purchases. If you would like to help, but are participating in the service from home, you can also donate through the church website, and direct your donation to the Friendship Basket collection. If you'd like to help out by purchasing grocery gift cards which we can use, you may also do that on your own. Gift cards should be identified to be used for the Easter gifts and either placed in the Friendship Baskets or dropped off in the office. Thank you very much for your generosity!

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!

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.

Financial Summary

(as of January 31, 2023)

	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<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.

ANNUAL REPORTS are due to the church office April 15.

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/>

COMMUNITY SUPPER—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 our website's Community Supper webpage. For more information contact Anita Swanson.

LENTEN STUDY SERIES CONTINUES

MARCH 22: For four Wednesday evenings during Lent, we are gathering on Zoom to discuss a wonderful new Lenten study: ***Meeting Jesus at the Table***, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr. 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.

Our Church Calendar

March 19—25, 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.	Christian Ed
	2:00 p.m.	Middle High Youth Group
	4:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
	6:30 p.m.	Lenten Study Series
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	6:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir
Friday	12:00 p.m.	Racial Justice Group

Sunday, March 19, 2023