

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



“A person who undertakes to grow a garden at home, by practices that will preserve rather than exploit the economy of the soil, has set his mind decisively against what is wrong with us. He is helping himself in a way that dignifies him and that is rich in meaning and pleasure. But he is doing something else that is more important: he is making vital contact with the soil and the weather on which his life depends. He will no longer look upon rain as an impediment of traffic, or upon the sun as a holiday decoration. And his sense of man’s dependence on the world will have grown precise enough, one would hope, to be clarifying and useful.”

—Wendell Berry

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

April 2, 2023

Palm/Passion Sunday

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

Behold the King

David Paxton

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

adapted from Psalm 118

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever.

Many: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the highest!

One: Let all who fear God say, "God's love endures forever!"

Many: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the highest!

One: With the Lord on our side, what can we fear? What can humankind do?

Many: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the highest!

One: We shall triumph over those who surround us and stand in confidence in the Lord, our God!

Many: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the highest!

One: The Lord is our strength and our might. The Lord has become our salvation!

Many: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the highest!

All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

*HYMN

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

No. 88

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

The congregation may be seated.

With great joy we welcome you, Lord Jesus, singing "Hosanna!" and waving palms. You come into our lives, offering us hope and mercy. You patiently encourage us to grow. You urge us to seek wisdom and healing. Open our hearts this day to hear the meaning of your words, and the power of your story. Today we sing: "Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord." Fill us with the spirit of worship as we pray:

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.

CHILDREN'S TIME

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

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 Passing of the Peace, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

CHORAL RESPONSE

HOMILY

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Senior High Youth Group

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethpage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

'Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

*HYMN

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

No. 89

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.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

The Last Supper

Matthew 26:2-30

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.' And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, 'Surely not I, Lord?' He answered, 'The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.' Judas, who betrayed him, said, 'Surely not I, Rabbi?' He replied, 'You have said so.'

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and the cup, and blessed them. After blessing, he broke the bread, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Communion at CCA is open to anyone who would like to partake. When you receive the bread and the juice, please wait to partake until the pastor indicates for all to take together. 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

O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done

Isaac B. Woodbury/
Robert J. Powell

Cross of Jesus

John Stainer/
Edward Broughton

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

We give thanks, Loving God, for hosting us at this table, and giving us new life. Through this ritual, we remember you across time and space, and draw closer to the holy within and among us. May we take this blessing into this Holy Week, knowing that even in the dimmest moments of our lives, your light shines. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Praying in the Garden

Matthew 26:36-42, 46

Then Jesus went with them to a garden called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.' Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak... Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

The Garden Hymn

Douglas E. Wagner

*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 (in unison)

Lord, take this offering that we give today, and let it be a prayer of hope. Hope that the world can change, that what is wrong can be made right, that resurrection is just around the corner. Take this offering and use it to fulfill not our will, but yours. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Judas Betrays Jesus

Matthew 26: 47-50, 55-56

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.' At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him. Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Jesus said to the crowds, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Peter Denies Jesus

Matthew 26:57, 69-75

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.' But he denied it before all of them, saying, 'I do not know what you are talking about.' When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.' Again he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.' After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.' Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know the man!' At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: 'Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Holy One, our Judge and our Redeemer,
When Jesus asks us
To protect children,
To visit prisoners,
To welcome lepers,
To turn over money tables,

Many: **We give him a kiss, and walk away.**

Continued next page.

One: When Jesus says things like:
"Blessed are the poor and woe to you who are rich."
Or "all who take the sword will perish by the sword."
Or "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."
Or "For God, all things are possible." We say:

Many: "I do not know what you are talking about."

One: In so many ways, on so many days,
We are closer to Judas and Peter than we are to Jesus.

Many: Forgive us, God.

One: When we are stressed, we try to take control.
When we are afraid, we try to fight or hide.

Many: Forgive us, God.

One: When it's time to trust you, we find reasons, good reasons, to betray you.
When it's time to follow you, we find reasons, good reasons, to deny you.

Many: Forgive us, God. Forgive us for our failings, and give us courage and hope. Remind us that just like you loved Judas and Peter, you love us, shortcomings and all. Strengthen us as we walk with you to the cross, through the night, and into the dawning resurrection that you promise us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

SCRIPTURE LESSION

Jesus or Barabbas

Matthew 27: 15-23

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

ANTHEM

Verleih uns Frieden
Chancel Choir

Felix Mendelssohn

German translation:

Mercifully grant us peace,
Lord God, in our times.
For there is no other
Who could fight for us
But you alone, our God.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they... crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.' Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

*HYMN

Throned Upon the Awful Tree
verses 1, 2 & 3 only

No. 99

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

One: They call it Good Friday

Many: but what could make that day good?

One: If you have ever believed that love inevitably leads to betrayal

Many: this day says it doesn't.

One: If you have ever believed that some people are unlovable, irredeemable

Many: this day says they aren't.

One: If you have ever believed that there is a limit to forgiveness

Many: this day says there isn't.

One: If you have ever believed you aren't worth saving

Many: this day says you are.

One: If you have ever believed that you don't deserve freedom

Many: this day says you do.

One: If you have ever believed that fear, anger, hate and despair will always win

Many: this day says it won't.

One: This day is good for you. Go now in peace, for God is with you. Amen.

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*POSTLUDE

*Crucifixus*Antonio Lotti/
James Mansfield

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

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
 Gail Wiegand
 Senior High Youth Group Members
 Anita Swanson
 Chris and Gretchen Pyles
 Patricia Bodan

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

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
 Gretchen Davis
 Dave Hagerstrom

Church School Coordinator
 Teacher, Preschool to Elementary
 Teacher, Grades 5 to 7

A REMINDER to all committees and ministry coordinators—**annual reports** are due in to the church office by April 15. Thank you!

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

VBS REGISTRATION IS OPEN! Stellar VBS 2023 will be held at CCA from August 14 to 18, 9:00 a.m. to noon each day. Children will have a blast learning Bible stories and participating in games, crafts, science, music, and more. Online registration information is available at: ccamherst.org/church-school. Contact Gretchen Davis or Larissa Riley if you have any questions or are interested in volunteering.

The Commission and Benediction litany is by Cheryl Lawrie.

BELL CHOIR NEWS: Wendy Valeri will be stepping down as our Bell Choir Director at the end of May. Her dedication, talent and commitment to this ministry will be missed. Our Bell Choir has grown under her leadership and we are so grateful. It has been so wonderful to have her on the music staff these past several years. **Thank you Wendy!**

Financial Summary (as of February 28, 2023)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$322,746	\$299,779	\$22,967
Expenses	\$314,551	\$320,661	\$ (6,110)
Net Income	\$ 8,196	\$ (20,882)	\$29,078

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.



Holy Week Schedule

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 2, 10:00 a.m.

We begin with the traditional waving of the palms and end with a new interactive presentation of the Passion story.

Maundy Thursday, April 6, 7:00 p.m.

A prayerful reflective service with Communion and Tenebrae—a commemoration of Jesus’ last night with his disciples

Easter Sunday, April 9

7:00 a.m. Sunrise service on the Amherst village green. Celebrate the Resurrection at daybreak followed by coffee and donuts on the green.

10:00 a.m. Easter celebration service in our sanctuary with our Chancel and Bell Choirs. Join us as we praise God with a joyful noise!

All services will be in-person and available to watch online (except for the Easter Sunrise Service).

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for April include toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorants, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap, feminine hygiene products, diapers and wipes. 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!

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God’s message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHs also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. You can donate online on our church website (please put OGHs in the memo line) or use the pew envelopes, or send a check to Andrea with OGHs in the memo line. Thank you for your caring and generous donations!

Our Church Calendar

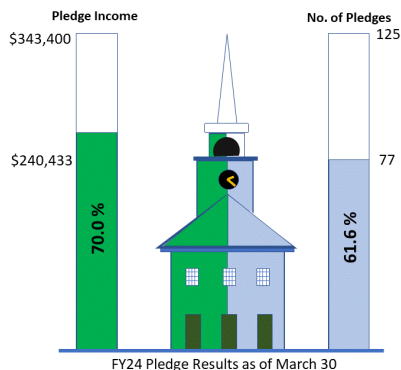
April 2—8, 2023

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
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Tuesday	1:30 p.m.	Small Group Ministry
	4:30 p.m.	Church Council
	7:00 p.m.	Diaconate Rehearsal
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Wednesday AM Adult Ed
Thursday	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Service
Friday	12:00 p.m.	Racial Justice Group

Updated Results of Our Faith Promise Stewardship Campaign

Our 2023-2024 fiscal year **Stewardship Campaign** is underway. Thank you to all that have responded so far. To those who are still considering your pledge, you can email your intents to Andrea at andrea@ccamherst.org, mail in your pledge intentions, call Andrea (673-3231) or go to the church website <https://www.ccamherst.org/stewardship-pledge/>.



Mark & Fran Baddeley

Alison Batey

Steve & Deb Boczenowski

Patricia Bodan

Sally Bowkett

Jack & Pat Buben

Carole Byatt

Claire Choiniere

Robert & Sydney Conti

Colleen Cushing

Camille Davis

Tyler & Gretchen Davis

Russell & Sandra Demarest

Susan Deschenes & Fred Dyke

Cynthia Dokmo

William & Joan Dunn

Stephen Egbertson

Joan Egbertson

Alvin & Heidi Fortune

Maureen Frescott

Andre & Nancy Gagnon

Edith Gамbee

Sheryl Gottwald

Patricia Harris

Michael Havay

Leona Hendrickson

John & Linda Herrin

Scott & Sally Hewett

Susan & Don Holden

Roger & Sally Hooper

Kathy Johnson

Rosmarie Krosch

Peter & Irene Labombarde

Keith & Gail Lammers

Linda Lannin

Arthur & Victoria Leknes

Elizabeth Levesque

Donald & Carol Lyon

Heather MacDonald &

William Dallas

Elizabeth MacMillan &

Hamilton Stewart

Bruce & Susan Manchester

Ingrid Michaelis

Gail Miller and Lee Bowley

Howell Mitchell

Avis Moller

Mary Moore

Judy Peterson

David & Sara Phelps

David & Joan Poltack

Nancy & Daniel Protzmann

Chris & Gretchen Pyles

Craig & Katherine Richardson

Anne Riehl

Travis & Larissa Riley

Robert Rowe

Carol St. Jean

Vic & Carolin Sanchez

Paul & Maggie Schellenberg

Kelly & Casey Schmidt

Beth Secor

Emil & Kathryn Skoglund

Paul & Susan Spiess

Richard & Kathleen Steeves

Sean & Ann Stevenson

Richard & Susan Stout

Audrey & Marshall Strickland

John & Anita Swanson

William Swift

Kate & Keith Thompson

Holly Tonnesen

Jean Tonnesen

Douglas & Adrienne Topliffe

Charles & Rolinda Vars

Martha Warren

Thomas & Susan Werst

Todd & Jennifer Whitney

Tim & Gail Wiegand

Alicia Wight

Ken & Barbara Wolfe