

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



*“Laughter is an escape, not from truth but from despair:  
a narrow escape into faith.”*

—Christopher Fry

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

June 18, 2023

Third Sunday after Pentecost

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

*Let All Things Their Creator Bless*

Alfred V. Fedak

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

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

One: People of God  
our journey has brought us here once again.

Many: **To this day of Sabbath.  
To this hour of worship.  
To this place of sanctuary.**

One: As Abraham and Sarah welcomed  
weary travelers, so God welcomes us.

Many: **God greets us with joy  
and says, "rest here for awhile."**

One: God brings out water  
to quench our thirsty souls.

Many: **God prepares a meal  
to nourish our tired spirits.**

One: So let us receive the gracious hospitality of our God.  
Let us rest in this holy place,

Many: **where there is shade and water,  
food and laughter,  
love and grace.**

\*HYMN

*God of Our Life*

No. 275

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

*The congregation may be seated.*

Healing and comforting God,  
you are always present in our lives,  
bringing hope out of despair,  
growth out of difficulty,  
new life out of loss.

We thank you that you do not leave us alone  
but labor to make us whole.

Help us to see your unseen hand  
in the unfolding of our lives.

May we feel the gentle guidance of your Spirit,  
and know the joy you give to us all.

We lift up this prayer in the name of the one who taught us to pray, saying.

**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.**

\*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.

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

*The Call*  
Sara Phelps, soloist

Ralph Vaughn Williams

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent." Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son." But Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh."

The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Now Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." And she said, "Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

SERMON

"Laughter in the Rain"

\*HYMN

*In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

inside back pages

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 the pastor during the hymn after the sermon, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.*

ORGAN RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*Father, Most Holy*

David Cherwien

\*DOXOLOGY (Tune: *From All That Dwell Below the Skies*)

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

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Where the broken are, may we bring them healing. Where the lonely are, may we be their family. Where the hungry are, may we offer them hope. Wherever, and however, we find your people, O God, may we go to share the gifts you have given to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

\*HYMN

*This Is My Father's World*

inside back pages

\*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

\*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

\*ORGAN RESPONSE

\*POSTLUDE

*A Pompous March*

Gordon Young

*(\*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 on break for the summer, and will resume on Rally Day, September 10, 2023.
- 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 memorial garden for a time of fellowship after the worship service. (In case of rain, we gather in the community room.) Refreshments are offered.
- In the event of an emergency, please remain seated until instructions have been given.

The church office is open Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 1:00 p.m., and available Monday through Friday by telephone 673-3231 and email [info@ccamherst.org](mailto: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](http://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

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Mark and Fran Baddeley

Becky Bolin

Andrea Cyr

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacons in Charge

Liturgist

Videographer

**JULY 4 HELP WANTED:** The Fellowship Team is looking for volunteers to donate unfrosted cookies, 2 per baggie. We especially need volunteers on July 4, 9:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. to pass out cookies and brochures. Anyone who could assist with face painting and tattoos, especially youth, would be welcome! Please email Carol Landon at [carollandon@gmail.com](mailto:carollandon@gmail.com) or text or call at 603-494-7734, or Sue Werst at [sue.w.0323@gmail.com](mailto:sue.w.0323@gmail.com).

**GARDEN FLOWERS:** Fresh cut garden flowers are lovely for simple altar arrangements during the summer. If you can provide a bouquet of cut flowers, or can simply contribute flowers for a bouquet, please contact Sue Stout or Andrea in the church office to schedule a Sunday. Thank you for sharing your flower gardens!

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for June include canned fruit, flour, sugar, boxed cake mixes and baking supplies, coffee and tea, juice, granola. 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!

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is August 14th-18th!** For more information regarding registration, volunteering, or donating with our Amazon Wish List, see the Church School Website: [www.ccamherst.org/church-school](http://www.ccamherst.org/church-school)

### Financial Summary

(as of May 31, 2023)

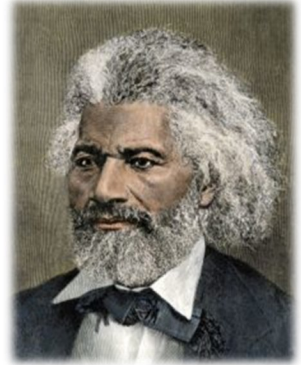
	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$405,646	\$390,627	\$15,019
Expenses	\$414,614	\$416,339	\$(1,725)
Net Income	\$ (8,968)	\$ (25,712)	\$16,743

*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: Ken Bell, Don Lyon, Paul Spiess (Treasurer), Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney.*

# Frederick Douglass Speech Event

**Saturday, July 1 at 12:00 p.m.**



On July 5, 1852, Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and heroic orator for liberty, delivered one of his most famous speeches in which he asked, “What to the slave is your Fourth of July?” In addressing an Independence Day observance in Rochester, New York, his speech was an 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.

On Saturday, July 1, 2023 CCA’s Racial Justice Group is hosting a reading of Douglass’ historic protest speech. The reading will take place on the steps of the church opposite the Village Green. Come and listen to part or all of the speech and then join us for refreshments and discussion in the Memorial Garden. The reading will begin at 12:00 noon.