

VILLAGE SPIRE

June 2023



Creative Worship

Sunday, June 4 at 10:00 a.m.

"Nurturing"

Our final "Creative Worship" of our program year is **Children's Sunday**! Each month we've focused on a different part of our worship service and explored how it connects with our faith. In June, our theme is "Nurturing" and this month our focus is on the ways we engage children and youth in our worship. Normally, we have a "Children's Time" and then send the kids off to church school. On this special Sunday, our children will be with us for the entire service, leading us in worship. We will have "Adult's Time" (instead of Children's Time) that is going to be teacher appreciation, and then Pastor Kate's sermon will be a children's sermon. We're also celebrating our Confirmation class.

We hope you can join us for this very special Sunday, in-person or on online, and join us for our Ice Cream Social after worship!

Nurturing

Rev. Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor
June 2023

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them." - Matthew 19:14

Making space for children in church can be a challenge. Children below a certain age often have trouble sitting still and keeping quiet while in worship, and can, at times, seem "out of control." They stand on the pews, run up and down the aisles, talk during the sermon, drop hymnals during the time for silent prayer, and impolitely stare at those sitting behind them.

These unruly progenies often need to be bribed into behaving - with snacks, coloring pages, and favorite toys brought from home. But these intended distractions may only encourage more mayhem. As our littlest worshippers scribble on the pew Bibles, make bullhorns out of the bulletins, leave Goldfish crumbs on the carpet, and wrestle with their siblings over who gets to play with what.

Even the intentional "Children's Time" we have during worship can be a challenge. As the kids run back and forth to their parents, wrestle with their siblings (again), interrupt the pastor with unrelated questions or comments, or show no interest in participating in whatever "lesson" they're supposed to be learning.

Yes, having children in church can be a challenge.

Yet children in church are not nearly as challenging as the adults can sometimes be.

I've never heard a child say:

"You're new here, your opinion doesn't matter."

"We tried that before and it didn't work."

"We don't have enough money to do that."

I've never heard a child complain:

"Why are the younger members always too busy to help? They don't value what we do."

"Why do we have that rainbow on our building? It's too divisive."

"Why are we talking about racism, economic disparities, or other so-called injustices in church? Can't we just hear the gospel?"

I've never heard a child question why we talk about, listen to, reach out to, or welcome someone not like us. I've never heard a child claim that someone was too new, or too young, or too marginalized to matter. I've never heard a child say our hopes and dreams and missions as a church were too big, or too hard, or too costly to even try.

Yes, children, like adults, can be overly cautious, fearful and pessimistic when faced with something new or different. And children are just as capable of engaging in bullying, exclusionary, or mean-girl/boy behavior with others. But with children, we're more likely to notice, call out, and attempt to correct these limiting mindsets and harmful behaviors when we

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.
July and August 9:00 a.m.

Church school available
September-June.

How to reach us:
Office Phone (603) 673-3231,
(603) 673-6848
www.ccamherst.org
Facebook.com/ccamherst
Instagram.com/ccamherstnh

During the summer months, the church
office is open 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.

Items for the Sunday bulletin
are due Thursday morning.

OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott
Senior Pastor
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy
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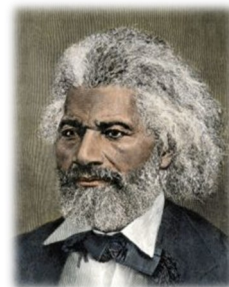
Larissa Riley
Church School Coordinator
churchschool@ccamherst.org

Fredrick Douglass Statewide Readings July 1st

Sponsored by the Black Heritage Trail
Hosted by the CCA Racial Justice Group

Returning this year! The Fredrick Douglass
Statewide Readings event, sponsored by the
Black Heritage Trail of NH, is a re-enactment of a
speech that Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist
and heroic orator for liberty, delivered on July 5,
1852. It is 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 a blistering 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.

This year's event will take place on Saturday,
July 1st at 12:00 Noon on the front steps of the
Congregational Church of Amherst which
overlooks the historic Amherst Village Green.



The Racial Justice Group wishes to invite the congregation to attend the
reciting of the stately speech by Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is
the Fourth of July?"

Saturday, July 1st 12:00 noon in front of our church

Many of the Racial Justice Group and members of the community will
be reciting. If you would like to take part in the reading, please contact any
member of the RJ: Steve Boczenowski, Sally Bowkett, Lee Bowley, Stuart
Coon, Joan Egbertson, Sheryl Gottwald, Linda Lannin, Gail Miller.

After the recitation, please join us for refreshments in the Memorial
Garden.

Nurturing, continued from page 1

see them. With children, we're also more hopeful that they'll eventually grow out of it and learn to see the world in a broader, more loving, compassionate, and grace-filled way.

Thankfully, I've rarely heard any of the adults in our congregation complain about the challenges of having children in church. Instead, I've heard the opposite, as we lift up a prayer of gratitude that we have children – to run in the aisles, to ask unexpected questions, to add their voices to our worship. Also, thankfully, only on the rare occasion have I heard of someone in our congregation treating another unkindly or dismissively, and even rarer still, is it done intentionally. It does happen, however, as all churches are places where we learn how to live in community.

On June 4th, Children's Sunday, we're celebrating the youngest, younger, and young at heart members of our faith community: our Church School Children, our Confirmands, and our Christian Education leaders, teachers, and volunteers. Pastor Kate, and our wonderful Church School Coordinator, Larissa, have put together a service that welcomes the participation of our children throughout, as this year we've made a concerted effort to include our children in all parts of worship.

Throughout the year, we've been focusing on the many parts of our worship and the function they serve – *Welcoming, Praying, Singing, Sending, Healing, Communing, Giving, Listening, Discerning* – and on Children's Sunday, we'll celebrate our final theme: *Nurturing*. The Children's Time is the time we set aside during worship for a child's-eye-view of the lesson of the day. It might be connected to scripture, or an outreach effort, or a ritual happening in worship. The time and the message is meant for our kids, but there are adults who say they regularly get more out of the Children's Time than the sermon. Simply because it's more memorable, more engaging, or more understandable than the message designed for adults. And that's something to celebrate. Part of our goal in worship is to nurture the faith of all ages. If we walk out of worship feeling like we've learned something, felt something, or been reminded yet again that God loves us, then it doesn't matter which part of worship got us there.

June 4th is also Pastor Kate's last Sunday with our congregation. As we celebrate the many gifts she brings to ministry in her pastoral presence, her preaching, and her leadership, we also celebrate the legacy she is leaving behind: Two thriving youth groups, for our middle schoolers and high schoolers, that she nurtured through the pandemic and resurrected on the other side. Our Confirmation class, which she co-led, nurturing the faith of teens who are choosing to say "yes" to becoming members of our community, walking in the way of Jesus. And the Parent's Group, which Kate started five years ago and nurtured through a natural life cycle with those who asked for it and needed it when their children were young. We are grateful for all that Kate has given us and we send our blessings with her, to wherever God calls her.

I encourage you to join us for worship on June 4th. Even if you're among those who see children in church as a challenge. There will likely be running in the aisles, wiggling in the pews, and a chorus of little voices being raised at unexpected times. And who knows, as adults we may just learn something from our children, and allow God's Spirit to move in us in the same welcoming and joyful way.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Maureen

Sunday Worship July and August



Begins at 9:00 a.m.

Congratulations Confirmands!

This year, our confirmands—Ori Dart, Adelia Curtis, Maya Gascoyne and Libby Kennedy—have met twice a month to explore Christianity and their own spirituality. They have thought deeply, prayed openly, and exhibited curiosity and faithfulness throughout this journey. Join us on June 4th to celebrate the end of their confirmation program, and welcome them as new members of our church family!



Sunday, June 4

Join us after the Children's Sunday worship on June 4 for our annual ice cream social, when we'll celebrate the end of the church school year. The Fellowship Team welcomes donations to offset costs, \$3 for individuals / \$10 for families.



The Woman's Association wishes to thank all the people who helped make the Good Stuff Sale a success. In addition to those people who donated and shopped are all those people who helped set up, work the sale, clean up, take clothes to the Ecosmith recycling container and the stuff to Goodwill. We personally would like to identify all the non-WA members who gave so we could serve:

Diane Alberts
Danielle Batey
Jen Batey
Steve Boczenowski
Barbara Burns
Colleen Cushing
Scott Cushing
Susan Deschenes
Leona Hendrickson
Roger Hooper
Sally Hooper
Carol Landon
Vicki Leknes
Don Lyon
Heather MacDonald
Hannah MacDonald
Liz MacMillan
Dave Poltack
Carolyn Sanchez
Dick Stout
Anita Swanson
Kate Thompson
Doug Topcliffe
Tom Werst
Lydia Wight
Barbara Wolfe

It takes many hands to create a successful event and we thank you all. We apologize, if we forgot someone.

A Note from Pastor Kate

Dear Congregational Church of Amherst,

I can hardly believe this is my last *Spire* article! These past months have flown right by. I have just loved being your pastor, but I didn't completely realize how much this place means to me until this last month. Thank you so much for your endless support and care. This church is such a healthy, thriving, kind community, and it has been such a joy to be here as your pastor, teacher, and friend.

I want to offer a brief word about departing boundaries. When I was ordained in our beautiful sanctuary, I promised to uphold our UCC Ministerial Code. This code of personal and communal standards leads to healthy relationships for pastors and churches alike. Within that code are boundaries for the pastor's leave-taking, specifically: "Not perform pastoral services within a congregation, or for a member of a congregation, without the invitation of the current pastor of that congregation." And: "Neither interfere with nor intrude upon the ministry of my successor, upon my departure from a ministry setting."

Here's what this means to me: After June, I'll be stepping away from the Congregational Church of Amherst. I won't come back for worship or events, I won't pop in online, and I won't follow the goings on from afar, at least for a while. (Trust me, it would be wayyy too hard to stay away if I knew when the Good Stuff Sale was happening, for just one example of many.) I also won't reach out directly to folks from our congregation. Before I leave, I will pass all of the information I hold to Pastor Maureen, Larissa, Andrea, or Sara, so that as few things fall through the cracks as possible. And, of course, I will be thinking of you often and praying for you as you search for the next Associate Pastor. This makes me sad, but I would be even more sad if I was to interfere with the next AP's thriving!

However, if we see each other out and about, at Target or at a NHCUCC gathering or the like, please do say hi. I will be so glad to say hello and see how life is treating you. Please know that I will miss you all very, very much. You will always be in my heart, as my home church and my first call, and I am so sure that God has wonderful things in store for you.

With gratitude,
Pastor Kate Kennedy

Garden Flowers Wanted



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

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

June Pantry Requests:

canned fruit, flour, sugar, boxed cake mixes, baking supplies, coffee and tea, juice, granola



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

Senior High Youth Group Mission Trip – June 19-24

On June 19th-24nd, our SHYG, along with Mission Trip Chaperones Kathy Johnson, Ali Wysor and Obi Dart, will be traveling to New Orleans, LA to live into the last part of our Congregational Church of Amherst Mission Statement, "Serving Neighbors Near and Far." Throughout the week, the SHYG and their advisors will be serving God's people and planet in the city of New Orleans, and learning about the face of God as they do it.



What YOU can do to support the SHYG from Amherst:

Pray! Pray for the mission trip—pray for good group dynamics, safety, meaningful connections with the community, and for our youth's eyes and hearts to be impacted for the better.

Engage! Watch our Facebook page for posts from the SHYG, and see what we are doing from afar.

Serve! Have a parallel experience that you can share with the SHYGers when they return—volunteer for SHARE, or another food bank or homeless shelter in the area. Help out CCAmherst's Home Starter program moving furniture. Read to some kids at the library—however you feel called to serve, pick an activity to do this week, and let your SHYG team know how it went!



June Church School News

June 4th is Children's Sunday! To wrap up the end of our church school year, the children will be staying in worship for a special service. The children and youth will be assisting the pastors and deacons with many roles during

worship. After worship we will gather to celebrate with an ice cream social during fellowship time.

No church school during summer worship. We will take a break from church school classes over the summer, but children are always welcome to attend worship with their families.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is in August. This is a special summer program that takes place at our church each morning during the week of August 14th – 18th. Each day will include a Bible story, music, games, and other activities. All children and youth are invited to attend, so spread the word. For more information on registering, volunteering, or donating supplies, check out our website: ccamherst.org/church-school, or email churchschool@ccamherst.org.



Thank You for all who contributed to 144 Envelope Fundraiser!

THANK YOU to all who contributed to the Senior High Youth Group's annual 144 Envelope fundraiser. This year, you helped us raise \$3,300 towards our mission trip to New Orleans, LA! If you gave to the 144 Envelope fundraiser, look for a newsletter from the mission trip sometime during the week of June 19-24th.

The SHYG program and annual mission trip would not be possible without your support!



The MHYG has their last meeting of the year on Sunday, June 4 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. All of our middle schoolers are welcome to join us for treats, games, and a spiritual conversation about how to say good goodbyes.

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 Alison Batey or Dave Hagerstrom for more information.

Meet Our New Members!

On Sunday, May 21st we welcomed twelve new members into our church family!

Charlotte and Ken Bell are former members of our church who've recently returned to NH to be near family. They lived in Amherst for 23 years before moving to Maine in 2018, and now live in Hookset. Charlotte has worked as a medical social worker and chaplain and is now semi-retired, as an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She enjoys gardening, puzzles, spending time with family, and singing in our church choir and the Manchester Choral Society. Ken served in the US Air Force for 20 years, worked as an Aerospace Engineer for 22 years, and is now an independent consultant to the Air Force. They have four adult children and 11 grandchildren.

Kara Doberstein and Lawrence Spector are engaged to be married, with their wedding taking place in our church in June of 2024. Kara grew up in Illinois and is a nurse practitioner. She enjoys playing with her horses and hosting dinner parties. Lawrence is also a nurse practitioner and recently returned here to his hometown of Amherst, after living in PA. They live with Kara's parents, Robin and Eric, their three dogs (Henry, Adam, Pepper) and their cat (Thunder).

Robin Clark and Eric Doberstein live here in Amherst with their daughter, Kara, and future son-in-law, Lawrence, and their three dogs and a cat. Previously they've lived in Ohio, Illinois, and MA. Robin is an ordained minister in the Unity Church. She enjoys reading, visiting her grandkids, growing in faith, and chocolate. Eric is a retired design engineer and consultant, and now works with community ecology groups. He has a lifelong interest in the sciences and arts and enjoys participating in the Amherst Bookclub and the Souhegan River Conservation. They have three adult children and two grandchildren.

Sheryl Gottwald was born and raised in Massachusetts and now lives in Amherst with her husband Jeffrey. She's a recently retired speech pathologist and has always loved working with children. She loves the outdoors, reading, knitting, and spending time with family. She has 12 nieces and nephews and 4 great-nieces and great-nephews, with one more on the way. She's active in our Woman's Association and our Racial Justice Group.

Katie Henderson lives here in Amherst with her husband Reid, and their 2-year-old son, Jamie. She's a former high-school social studies teacher and now full-time mom. She and her husband moved here from Concord, NH in August 2020. Katie is an active member of our bell choir, and also plays the piano, guitar, tenor saxophone and clarinet. She's an avid reader, loves jigsaw and word puzzles, and enjoys playing pickleball with her husband.

Kelly and Stephen Isaacs are originally from West Virginia. They moved to Nashua in 2009, and to Amherst in 2019. They have two boys, Zeke (age 5) and Eli (age 4), who are active in our church school. Kelly is a 6th grade special education teacher in Westford, MA. She enjoys running, taking long walks in nature with her boys, and going on camping adventures with the family. Stephen is a Loan Underwriting Supervisor for a credit union, and has served as a licensed minister in the Methodist Church. He enjoys golfing, science fiction, and traveling to new places.

Bruce and Regina Kinney have lived here in Amherst for 23 years. They are former members of our church, now returning with Regina's retirement as an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Regina is originally from Texas, and Bruce is from Illinois. They have two adult children, Carly and Alex. Regina has served several churches here in NH and is happy to be returning to our congregation, which was so important to her spiritual journey. Bruce is a retired Electrical, Systems, and Software engineer, and now spends his time volunteering with the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ, where he is currently serving as President of the Board of Directors. They enjoy going on food tours, taking cooking classes, and watching the Boston Red Sox. Regina also enjoys murder mysteries, and Bruce loves singing in the choir.



June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1) 6:30 Confirmation Class Dinner & Rehearsal 7:30 Chancel Choir	2)	3) 3:30 Memorial Garden Service for Leon Pierce
4) Creative Worship Children's Sunday 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship & Ice Cream Social 11:30 Small Group Ministry 2:00 Middle High Youth 4:00 Senior High Youth	5)	6) 1:30 Small Group Ministry 4:30 Church Council	7) 9:30 Staff Meeting	8) 9:30 Congregational Care 4:00 Communications Team 7:30 Chancel Choir	9)	10)
11) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:15 Racial Justice Group 4:00 Senior High Youth	12)	13) 7:00 Diaconate 7:00 Trustees of the Facility	14)	15)	16)	17)
18) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Christian Ed	19)	20)	21)	22)	23)	24)
Senior High Youth Group Mission Trip						
25) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	26) 7:00 World Service Team	27)	28)	29)	30)	

The Congregational Church
of Amherst, NH, UCC
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Amherst, NH 03031

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