

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



*"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."
The life is in the speaking words. God's word in the Bible can have power
only because it corresponds to God's word in the universe."*

— A.W. Tozer, "God Still Speaks: Are We Listening?"

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

September 3, 2023

Fourteenth 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

Praise Him!

Hugh S. Livingston Jr.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: Come to this sacred place to see what God has done.

Many: We have come seeking burning bushes and holy ground.

One: Come to find God in the extremes of your lives,
In your rejoicing and your mourning,
In your celebrating and your broken heartedness.

**Many: We seek the God of our ancestors in the highs and lows,
Knowing we may be called to new places.**

One: Come to find God in the mundane and the unexpected,
In the grocery store trips and dog walks,
In your morning commute and in your evening dishes.

**Many: We will look for God
In the quiet, in the whispers, in the ordinary.**

One: Listen for God's voice calling out in all moments,
And know that you are never alone.

**Many: Spirit of our still speaking God,
We are ready to worship you and hear your voice!**

*HYMN

The God of Abraham Praise

No. 488

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

The congregation may be seated.

God of light,
Your glory shines in all places and spaces,
Your light casts out all the fears of night,
Your love casts out all hatred,
Your presence makes evil flee.

Jesus, light of the world,
Your example shows us the beauty of what life can be.
Your heart shone the light and love of God,
And it was through this light that the world was forever changed.

Spirit of God,
You are the divine light in us,
We ask that you make yourself known in this hour.
Illuminate this place and our souls,
As we seek the intervention of the holy into our lives.

Divine light, Godhead three in one,
We ask that you will be in our midst this morning,
Lingering in the aisles, shining through the windows,
Inspiring us in our words and thoughts,
And we ask all of this, using the words that you 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.

ANTHEM

Siciliano and Allegro from Recorder Sonata in F Major, HWV 369
Sue Werst, flutist

G.F. Handel

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Exodus 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness and came to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. Now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I am who I am." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I am has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you':

This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

SERMON

"The Divine Spark"

*HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

No. 138

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

Holy Ground

Geron Davis

*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)

As we bring our offerings, O God, we commit our lives to serving all your children - to feed the hungry, to liberate the oppressed, to bring justice and mercy to those in need of both, to bring healing, to preach the good news to those who long to hear it. Always giving God, receive our gifts and our renewed commitment to serve you in all ways. 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 God thanks and praise.

COMMUNION PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

BREAKING OF THE BREAD and POURING OF THE CUP

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

In His Love

Scott Ressman

Meditation for Worship

Franklin Ritter

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

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

*HYMN

God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak

side page

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*ORGAN RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Thomas Bliss

*(*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.*

*Portions of today's liturgy have been adapted from
lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com*

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 Monday, 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. 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

Kevin G. S. Marsh

Michael Havay

John Swanson

Mark Baddeley

Doug Topliffe

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Acting Associate Pastor

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Liturgist

Videographer

Sara L. Phelps

Larissa Riley

Director of Music

Church School Coordinator

RALLY DAY IS SEPTEMBER 10! We hope you will be with us as we celebrate the start of our new church program year. Church school resumes and the Chancel Choir will be back singing in worship.

Everyone is invited to **bring your school backpacks or work bags** for a special Back to School blessing offered by our pastors during the service.

After worship, please join us for our annual **all-church picnic**. Our Fellowship Team will be cooking up hamburgers and hot dogs, and we ask that folks who are able to contribute to please bring a side, salad or dessert to share. All ages welcome, and donations to help with costs will be gratefully accepted. This is a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships and make new ones while enjoying good food and fun games.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for September 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!

CHOIR NOTES: The Bell Choir and the Chancel Choir resume rehearsals on Thursday, Sept. 7. The Youth Choir resumes Sept. 17 and meets in the vestry after worship on Sundays. If you are interested in singing or ringing, please contact Sara Phelps, kalben1@concast.net.

Our Church Calendar

September 3—9, 2023

Some events take 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
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship
Tuesday	4:30 p.m.	Church Council
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir

WEDNESDAY MORNING ADULT ED RETURNS September 20 with *Understanding the New Testament*: Why do we have four Gospels? Why do they contradict each other at times? What is the Book of Revelation really about? This fall we’re continuing our year-long look at the New Testament through this video lecture series produced by the Great Courses. We’ll watch the video together as a group and then have a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. All are welcome, and more information can be found on our website and in the September *Spire*.

NO FALL GOOD STUFF SALE: The Woman’s Association will not be holding a Good Stuff Sale this Fall. The next sale will be held on April 26 and 27, 2024. Unfortunately, due to storage limitations, we will not be able to accept any donations for that sale until sometime after the new year. Details about what, when and where to donate items to next spring’s Good Stuff Sale will appear in church publications in early 2024.

CHURCH SCHOOL RESUMES: We are excited for a new year of church school beginning next Sunday, September 10. All children in preschool through grade 7 are invited to join us each Sunday. The 2023-2024 Church School Registration Form must be completed for each child. Forms will be available on Rally Sunday, or you can download one from the church website. If you have any questions, please contact Church School Coordinator Larissa Riley at churchschool@ccamherst.org.

FELLOWSHIP TEAM NEEDS YOUR HELP: Our Fellowship Team works together throughout the year to put on the many fun church activities we enjoy: the Rally Day Picnic, Game Night, the Kentucky Derby Party, to name a few. They also put the kettle on every Sunday so that after worship we can enjoy coffee and tea while greeting friends. This small, but mighty group could use a few more members to help balance the work load and to bring fresh ideas to the group. If you’re interested, please contact Meredith Dart, meredith.dart@astellas.com.

Financial Summary			
(as of July 31, 2023)			
	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$93,753	\$97,854	\$(4,101)
Expenses	\$63,085	\$66,013	\$(2,928)
Net Income	\$30,668	\$31,841	\$(1,173)
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, and Todd Whitney.			



Sunday, September 3, 2023



What is Small Group Ministry?

Small Group Ministry is where 8-10 people meet with the intention of establishing deeper connections with each other and with God.

Allows for deeper conversations that we can't always have in committee meetings or during coffee hour.

The groups meet once a month from October to June, and are led by lay members of the congregation.

The group meetings run 1.5 hours and include a check-in, a short topic reading, discussion of the topic, and closing prayer.

Choose a Group!

First Tuesday 1:30-3:00 p.m.

First Sunday 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

All groups will meet in-person or on Zoom as needed.

How To Get Involved

You may join a group at any time of the year as long as your choice is still open. Each group is limited to ten members.

Sign up online at ccamherst.org or contact Pastor Maureen at 603-673-3231 x11, pastormaureen@ccamherst.org.



This year our Small Groups will focus on the STORIES OF OUR FAITH theme that is guiding our Creative Worship and other church programs. Each month we'll focus on a different beloved Bible story and how it connects with our faith journey!

Schedule for 2023-2024

October:	The Garden of Eden
November:	Noah and the Ark
December:	Abraham and Sarah
January:	Moses and the Mountain
February:	The Patience of Job
March:	David and Goliath
April:	Mary of Magdala
May:	Saul Becomes Paul
June:	Peter the Rock