

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



"The hardest spiritual work in the world is to love the neighbor as the self – to encounter another human being not as someone you can use, change, fix, help, save, enroll, convince or control, but simply as someone who can spring you from the prison of yourself, if you will allow it."

—Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

*"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here."*

February 4, 2024

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

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

This is the Day the Lord Has Made

Lucius Chapin/
Anthony Giamanco

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: What does our Creator ask of us?

**Many: To do justice, love kindness,
and walk humbly with God.**

One: What does Jesus ask of us?

**Many: To put down our nets—our own agendas and biases—
and take up the call to follow him.**

One: What does the Spirit ask of us?

Many: To nurture the fruit of the Spirit within our hearts:

One: Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience,

Many: Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, and Gentleness.

One: This is how we know we are being guided by God:

Many: When we can see the fruit of our service in our lives.

All: Let us worship our God, who teaches us how to live fully and faithfully.

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)
The congregation may be seated.

**Holy and loving God,
help us to center our hearts and minds for worship this morning.
We come together as people who want to love and serve you
with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength.
But there are other things that clamor for our attention.
We can be distracted by our worries,
and swayed by jealousy or anger.
We can be weighed down by bitterness,
and vulnerable to the things that numb our pain.
We yearn to hear your voice above all others.
We long to live with clarity and focus.
We ask that you make yourself known to us.
Help us to recognize the presence of the Holy,
here in worship and in every moment of our lives.
May your Spirit move among us now,
as we pray the words that Jesus taught us:**

**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.**

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANTHEM

Ain-a That Good News
Chancel Choir

William Dawson

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

Brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom;
do not use your freedom as an opportunity for selfishness,
but through love become servants to one another.
For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not be distracted by your selfish desires,
which lead to jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, and things like these.
By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.
Let us not be selfish, competing against one another, and envying one another.
Whenever we have the opportunity let us work for the good of all.

SERMON

“Spirit of Gentleness”

*HYMN

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

No. 316

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

CHORAL RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Adagio from Voluntary VI

John Stanley

*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)

Loving God, may these gifts we offer today be seeds that grow the fruit of your Spirit. Take them and plant them in the fertile soil of your vision for a healthy, thriving world. May their roots grow deep in our community and produce a great harvest to nourish us all. We pray this in Jesus’s name. 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

Folk Song

Gilbert M. Martin

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Gerhard Krapf

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison)

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

*HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

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*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Epilogue on "Lobe den Herren"

Lani Smith

*(*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 staffed and available for parents with young children.
- 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
Kevin G. S. Marsh
Sara L. Phelps
Michael Havay
Roger Hooper
Tim Wiegand

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

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
Sue Werst
Dave Hagerstrom
Gretchen Davis

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

TODAY IS SCOUT SUNDAY! The Scouts BSA (Boy Scouts of America) designates the Sunday that falls before Scouting Anniversary Day (Feb. 8) as Scout Sunday: a day to recognize the contributions of young people and adults to Scouting. The Girl Scouts of the USA, celebrate their Scouting Sunday on the second Sunday in March. This year we've combined the two to celebrate all of our scouts and their commitment to their individual faith journeys! The scouting programs are more than just an activity for our youth to learn about the outdoors. Scouting provides fun, friendship, and guidance for our youth. Both programs teach leadership skills and emphasize honesty, self-reliance, respect, and character. Today, we also salute and celebrate the adult volunteers who serve as leaders and advisors in the BSA and GSA scouting programs!

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

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 December 31, 2023)

	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$255,071	\$249,633	\$ 5,438
Expenses	\$236,466	\$244,668	\$(8,202)
Net Income	\$ 18,604	\$ 4,965	\$13,639

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.



Ash Wednesday Service

February 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Join us in the sanctuary as we begin the season of Lent with our traditional Ash Wednesday service. We will come together for a time of contemplative prayer, readings, special music, communion, and the distribution of ashes.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit." ~ Psalm 51

AUSCHWITZ—Not long ago. Not far away.

Our Racial Justice Group encourages all to visit this event opening soon in Boston for a limited engagement. Tickets and more information are available at theauschwitzexhibition.com.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS EVENT: The first graders of Clark and Wilkins schools in Amherst extend an invitation to any members of the senior community to join them for a shared activity and light lunch. The event will be at the Wilkins Elementary School on Friday, **February 9** from 9:45 to 11:00 a.m.

Please RSVP by Feb. 5 to ensure your spot and to let them know if you need transportation; they have partnered with the Amherst Recreation Dept. RSVP by calling 603-673-4411 or visit <https://forms.gle/qE35agM9ifTVoSuu7>

PRELIMINARY BUDGET MEETING: On Sunday, February 18 the Budget and Finance Team will provide an update on the current financial status of the church, as well as a preliminary budget overview for the next fiscal year (FY25). This meeting will be held in the community room after worship, and a Zoom link will be available for those unable to join us in person. All members are encouraged to attend; childcare will be available. The Zoom link and password for online participation will be emailed to members next week. This meeting is for informational purposes only, we will not be voting on anything.

THE WOMAN'S ASSOCIATION Valentine Luncheon will take place on **Monday, February 12**. WA members **and** non-members are invited to join in this event. The event will kick off at 10:30 with time to socialize. Lunch will begin about 11:30, and potluck items will be provided by attendees. If you would like to attend and have not registered, please contact Carol St. Jean at clstjean27@gmail.com or 919-605-7067.

PREPARED TO SERVE is a fun learning event for everyone in our church, sponsored by the New Hampshire Conference, UCC. With over 50 workshops, this promises to be a very special time for those who gather. Prepared to Serve takes place on Saturday, **February 24** at Pembroke Academy in Pembroke, NH. Information is available through the church office, and online at www.nhcucc.org.

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for February include canned ham, canned meats, side dishes (seasoned pasta mix, hamburger helper, etc.), ravioli & beefaroni. 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!



CCA's Annual
**Family Game Night
and Potluck Supper**
Saturday, February 17 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.



All ages, friends and family are welcome.

We will have Bingo, cards, board games and trivia, and attendees are encouraged to bring their own favorite game to share with others. Prizes will be awarded too!

Pizza and beverages will be provided, and it is potluck style for salads/sides/desserts.
A-M please bring salad/side N-Z please bring dessert

A voluntary donation is welcome: \$5 for individuals/\$10 for families.

RSVP to [Meredith Dart](#).

Our Church Calendar
February 4—10, 2024

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
	4:30 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Tuesday	1:30 p.m.	Small Group Ministry
	4:30 p.m.	Church Council
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Wednesday AM Adult Ed
	4:00 p.m.	Stewardship Team
Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Congregational Care
	4:00 p.m.	Communications Team
	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT



SAVE THE DATE!

*Vacation Bible School
will be August 12–16, 2024*

SCUBA
diving into friendship with god

Sunday, February 4, 2024

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 former long-time member 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 Andrea with 'blankets' in the memo line, or donate online at our custom CWS Blankets secure donation page: <https://cwsblankets.org/virtual/ccamherst/>

Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations, and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters.

When our neighbors are in need, even \$10 for a single blanket goes a long way.

*"And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three:
and the greatest of these is love."*

—1 Corinthians 13:13