

The Stories of Our Faith



The Patience of Job

“The world, full of beauty and creativity and danger, seems not to have been constructed merely for human consumption. The story is bigger than us, and none of us are the main characters. God does not so much answer Job’s questions as re-frame them and offer Job a new way to see the world in which his grief and his experiences are not the end or the entirety of the story.”

—Brennan Breed, Professor, Columbia Theological Seminary

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 18, 2024

Creative Worship

10:00 a.m.

The Patience of Job

GATHERING CHIMES

Let us be gathered in silence so that we may prepare to worship.

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

*Chorale Prelude on "Heinlein"
(Forty Days and Forty Nights)*

Beatrice A. Miller

INTROIT

*GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

One: We come before God as we are in this moment.

Many: We come before God as our true, authentic selves.

One: Come, all who are joyous.

Many: Come, all who are content.

One: Come, all who are struggling.

Many: Come, all who are despairing.

One: Come to worship a God who heals.

Many: Come to worship a God who comforts.

One: Come to worship a God who forgives.

Many: Come to worship a God who rejoices in us.

All: We come to worship You, O God, as you meet us wherever we are!

*HYMN

Gather Us In

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LENTEN LITANY OF CONFESSION and WORDS OF ASSURANCE (inspired by Psalm 51)
The congregation may be seated.

One: On this first Sunday of Lent,
we pause and look within,
to examine our hearts.

**Many: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

One: Where we have neglected prayer,
found reasons to avoid generosity,
or lacked compassion:

**Many: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

One: Where we have colluded
in the oppression of those
who become invisible in their suffering:

**Many: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

One: Where anxiety has eroded the gift of Your peace,
and where we have cared too much
about what others think:

**Many: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

One: This is the good news: God does not reject us, God redeems us.
God does not withhold love, God pours it into our open hearts.

**Many: Forgiven and filled with hope,
we are a new people.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANTHEM

Ave Verum Corpus
Chancel Choir

William Byrd

Hail, true Body, born of Mary the Virgin;
truly suffering, sacrificed on the cross for man;
from Whose pierced side flowed water and blood.
Be to us a foretaste at death's trial.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

THE STORY OF JOB

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND PRAYERS

All are invited to come forward and place their offerings and prayer cards in the plates in front of the chancel steps.

LENTEN JOURNEY REFLECTION STATIONS

All are invited to visit the reflection stations set up around the sanctuary.

Those who wish to remain seated may follow the printed Lenten Labyrinth in the bulletin.

- Nature: Where do you see God in Creation? Reflect upon images of the natural world.
Light: What prayer do you have for our world? Light a candle to add your prayer to others.
Water: Where are you seeking forgiveness? Write it on dissolving paper and stir it in the cleansing water.
Stone: What burden are you seeking to set down? Place a stone, big or small, in our burden bowl.
Dust: What do you wish to see or do in your limited time in this world?
Write it on a post-it note and add to the wish wall.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Six Canzonetti for Organ

Noel Goemanne

SHARING OUR COMMUNAL PRAYERS

PRAYER RESPONSE—THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

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.

*HYMN

*When Peace, Like a River
(It Is Well with My Soul)*

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*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*BLESSING OUR COMMUNITY

One: People of God, our Lenten journey leads us into the world.

Many: To offer good news to all who long to hear it.

One: In the midst of a brokenness and division,

Many: We proclaim the God of Healing.

One: In the midst of despair and sorrow,

Many: We proclaim the God of Hope.

One: In the midst of indifference and apathy,

Many: We proclaim the God of Love and Compassion.

All: We go now, knowing that God is with us on this journey! Amen!

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Postlude on "The Glory of These Forty Days"

Matthew McConnell

*(*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.*

Our Church Calendar

February 18—24, 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
	11:30 a.m.	Preliminary Budget Meeting
	4:30 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Lenten Study Series

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
 Bruce and Susan Manchester
 Patricia Bodan

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

PRELIMINARY BUDGET MEETING TODAY:

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. All members are encouraged to attend; childcare will be available. This meeting is for informational purposes only, we will not be voting on anything.

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.

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!

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 January 31, 2024)

	YTD	YTD	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$280,781	\$282,003	\$(1,223)
Expenses	\$270,232	\$279,808	\$(9,576)
Net Income	\$ 10,549	\$ 2,196	\$ 8,354

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.

Lenten Series

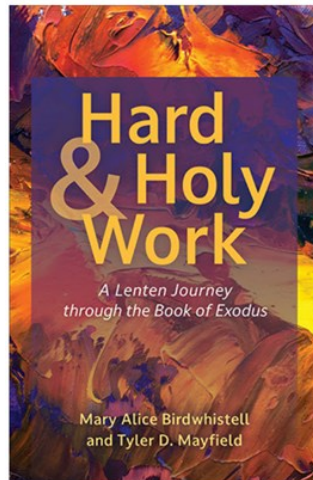
Wednesday Evenings on ZOOM

February 21 and 28

March 6, 13, 20, 27

6:30-8:00 p.m.

On six Wednesday evenings during Lent, we'll gather on Zoom to explore a wonderful and unique guide for our Lenten journey: ***Hard and Holy Work***, by Mary Alice Birdwhistell and Tyler D. Mayfield. While the "work" of Lent often has us looking inward, to enact change in our hearts, this book also encourages us to look outward, to enact change in our world.



Framed as a journey through the book of Exodus and the story of the Hebrew people wandering in the wilderness, the authors encourage us to reflect on our own wilderness moments and our search for God in the troubling times of our lives and our everyday joys and uncertainties. At the same time, we're encouraged to pay attention to the stories and needs of the people whose journeys are much different than our own – the marginalized, the oppressed, the underserved and overlooked; the people Jesus calls us to walk alongside and serve in his name.

The book is available for order online and we'll have copies in the church office for purchase for \$15. The book takes us from Ash Wednesday to Holy Week and offers opportunities for reflection, discussion, and action, depending on what you're seeking from your Lenten journey. If you don't have the time or space to add a weekly reading to your plate join us anyway! We'll pull out passages to seed our discussion, and there's a weekly video to guide us as well. All are welcome to participate! RSVP to pastormaureen@ccamherst.org to receive the Zoom link, or find it on our church website in the Member's Section.

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

Prayer for the World



Prayer
for a
Loved One

Release
a Burden
to God

LENTEN LABYRINTH

Follow the path with your finger
When you reach a bend, pause
and follow the reflection prompt

Lift up a Hope
to God