

VILLAGE SPIRE

June 2024



Vacation Bible School News



Registration

This summer's program will be held August 12-16, 2024 from 9-12 each morning. Children and youth can be registered on our website: www.ccamherst.org/church-school

Registration closes on July 31st and space is limited, so sign up today!

Art Prep Days

We will be making decorations for VBS in the community room on July 16 & 17 from 10-2. All are welcome to help us make coral reefs, jellyfish, and more. Come for a few hours, a full day, or both days; any time you can help is appreciated. Bring a bag lunch if you plan on staying all day.

Seeking Supplies

We are looking for donations of **new or gently used pool noodles and plastic easter eggs** to be used on our Art Prep Days. Please leave any donations in the labeled box on the stage.

We have created an Amazon wishlist with additional supplies that are needed for VBS. Check it out at: <https://a.co/9vXGSgG>

Please direct any questions regarding Vacation Bible School to Larissa Riley: churchschool@ccamherst.org

Summer Sanctuary

Rev. Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor
June 2024

What do you most look forward to in the summer? Is it the increased hours of sunlight that offers more time and space to enjoy the day? Is it the warmer weather that invites you to sit in your yard, or take a walk in the woods, or dig in your garden? Is it the easing in your schedule as school ends, church activities wind down, and communal and familial commitments take a hiatus, as people travel or just take a break from the hectic pace of the fall, winter, and spring?

Of course, there is no summer easing for some. Work may be just as busy, family activities may take the place of school activities (and require more creativity and planning!), and caregiving demands and duties may still have you feeling overwhelmed. Likewise, here at CCA, there is no shuttering of our doors for the summer. Sunday worship continues (now at 10:00 a.m. year-round!), our Home Starter folks are still hard at work, and pastoral care concerns arise regardless of what it says on the calendar. Pastors here in New England are fond of saying, "We never stop being the Church, even in the summer," but the reality is, everyone needs time to take a step back. Which is why our ministry teams have fewer meetings, our church school takes the summer off, and our choirs take a much-needed break as well.

Continued on page 2

Our Church Ministries

The Outreach & Communications Ministry

This is the last in a series of articles about the four ministries of our church, which were created when the church leadership organization was restructured in 2016. The Resource, Worship & Spiritual Life, and Christian Formation Ministries have been profiled over the past several months. This article describes the Outreach & Communications Ministry, which according to the church by-laws, *witnesses to the Spirit of Jesus Christ by reaching out to the wider community. It assists The Church in proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed.* In practical terms, this ministry's purpose is carried out by two separate teams: the World Service Team and the Communications Team.

The World Service Team carries out our church's mission "Serving Neighbors Near and Far" in numerous ways. It proposes monetary distributions be made that come from the church's Mission Fund. All donations from the Mission Fund require Church Council approval. Over the past year a wide variety of donations have been made from this fund to both local non-profits such as SHARE, Families in Transition, and Stepping Stones, and to organizations which serve those outside NH, such as Vermont flood and Hawaiian wildfire victims and OXFAM America.

Continued on page 4

VILLAGE SPIRE

A Parish Newsletter

The Congregational Church of
Amherst, NH, United Church of Christ
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

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

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Church school available.

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

The church office is open
Monday, 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. Prescott
Senior Pastor
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Kevin G. S. Marsh
Acting Associate Pastor
pastorkevin@ccamherst.org

Andrea Cyr
Church Office Administrator
andrea@ccamherst.org

Sara L. Phelps
Director of Music
kalben1@comcast.net

Michael Havay
Organist
michaelh117@gmail.com

Larissa Riley
Church School Coordinator
churchschool@ccamherst.org

Summer Sanctuary, continued from page 1

The challenge of the work we do in God's name is that as joyful and as rewarding as it may be, it requires time to rest, recharge, and renew our energy levels in order to be our best selves - or even our "best that we can be right now" selves. Sometimes all that we have to give is our presence. Sitting in the sanctuary on Sunday morning, or watching worship from home, may be all the connecting that we need, desire, or can handle, during the summer or at any time of the year. And that's okay. On Sunday morning, when we say, "No matter who you are, or where you are on your journey, you are welcome here," we mean it. Conversely, if you spend three seasons of the year teaching church school, or attending choir rehearsals, or carrying furniture up and down stairs for Home Starter, take the time you need to step away for the summer, guilt-free. You've earned it! As always, you're welcome to join us on Sunday mornings, as you can, for summer worship - with its special music, more informal pace, and time to catch up as we gather for lemonade on the lawn.

Summer is almost here. We still have a few end of year events to celebrate: Confirmation on June 2nd and Children's Sunday on June 9th, which will be followed by an Ice Cream Social. And the summer won't be completely low-key as planning continues for our Vacation Bible School (August 12-16) and a return of our summer "Back Porch Gatherings" in July and August (stay tuned for more info!), and with Pastor Kevin's departure as our Acting Associate Pastor, we'll be working behind the scenes to ensure we'll have leadership for our youth programs in place for the fall.

Yes, we are the Church, year-round. But even God took time for sabbath after the creation of the universe. And here in New Hampshire, summer doesn't stick around for very long. Take advantage of this time to feel the sun on your face, to smell the sea, to sit on your back deck and listen to worship as you sip your morning coffee. Regardless of what your summer looks like - whether your pace eases, or increases, or stays the same - we invite you to find sanctuary - in our sanctuary, and beyond.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Maureen



Creative Worship Sunday, June 16 at 10:00 a.m. **"Peter the Rock"**

All year long we've celebrated the "Stories of Our Faith" in our monthly Creative Worship. In **June** we'll wrap up the series with story of **"Peter the Rock"** - the disciple that Jesus turned to and said, "On this rock I will build my church." Peter is the one disciple that most of us can relate to, as he consistently questioned or misunderstood Jesus' teachings and struggled in his faith in very visible ways. Yet despite Peter's confusion and questioning, Jesus saw in him the future of the faith. Peter was human, as are we, and we too are the foundation on which the church is built. We hope you can join us for our last Creative Worship of the program year, whether in-person or on online!

Meet Our New Members!

On May 19th, we welcomed four new members into our church family!

Christie Gould grew up on Long Island and moved to NH in her mid 20's. She lives in Merrimack with her Australian Cattle dog, Ogie, and her Sphynx cat, Floyd. She works at Caring Hands Animal Hospital as receptionist and occasional Vet Tech assistant. Christie was raised in the Catholic Church but has found a home here at CCA, often stepping in to help with Deacon duties! She loves hiking, reading, nature, science, animals, and photography.

Avery Morin and Maude Lemaire live in Bedford with their "chatty" two-and half-year-old son, Henri (with a little brother on the way in November!) Both grew up in Canada - Avery in Montreal, Maude in Quebec - and met at McGill University. They worked in San Francisco for several years before moving to NH in 2021. Both work from home as computer programmers and are avid readers of science fiction.

Patty Jillson lives in Amherst with her husband, Michael. They have two children and are now empty nesters. Patty grew up in Brewster, NY and lived in Massachusetts before moving to NH. She has degrees in Animal Science and Science Journalism, and has been a freelance journalist, worked in food service, mucked out horse stalls, scrubbed vet kennels, served in clerical capacities, and spent several decades as an at-home-mom. Patti calls herself a "Jack of all trades and master of one." She's passionate about her family, cooking, bird watching, writing poetry and nonfiction, and her volunteer work as a community network leader for the Hydrocephalus Association.



Christie Gould



Avery, Maude and Henri Morin



Patty Jillson

Milford Rotary 100 Holes of Golf Raffle Tickets

- 10 cash prizes range from \$500–\$5,000. Yes, you could win \$5,000!
- Ticket price is \$20, and \$10 comes straight back to the church.
- Drawing Friday, June 14, 2024 – you do not need to be in attendance to win.
- Bonus: each ticket comes with great local coupons, including Giorgios, Aroma Joes, and more.

Each year this event raises considerable funds that are distributed to local, regional and international community and non-profit organizations, and are used to provide \$30,000 in scholarships to area students.

To purchase tickets, follow this link:

<https://golf100holes.com/product/raffle-ticket?ref=59>



The Fellowship Team is looking for volunteers to donate unfrosted cookies, 2 per baggie. We especially need volunteers on July 4, 9:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. to pass out cookies and brochures on the village green during the town activities.

Please email Carol Landon at carollandon@gmail.com for more information or to sign up to help.

Preschool In the Village Playground Upgrades

Lots of children have grown up playing with friends on the PIV playground, and it was time for a much-needed upgrade! The wooden climbers are being replaced by equipment with a lower deck height and activity options that support the physical development of our young students. The same playground company that designed Joshua's Park on Courthouse Road is doing our small installation too. This project is made possible through federal funding and generous donations from PIV alumni families and the Amherst Community Foundation.

Preschool in the Village has supported families in the Amherst and surrounding towns by leasing space in the Congregational Church since 1996. PIV offers half-day programs and speech-language therapy for children 2.5 to 7-years-old, September to June. If you have any questions or would like a tour of the classrooms, feel free to email Tina Summers at pivamherst@gmail.com.



Sunday, June 9

Join us after the Children's Sunday worship on June 9 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.

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!

The Outreach & Communications Ministry,

continued from page 1

Each year during Advent, the World Service Team organizes a Christmas gift drive for those in need in our area. In 2023 gifts for residents of Crestwood, a local nursing home, and for the children served by Family Promise of NH were purchased by congregation members.

Also, the UCC's 5 for 5 campaign is promoted by the World Service Team throughout the year. Donations to the individual 5 for 5 funds are made by church members.

The Home Starter program is a major hands-on project administered by the World Service Team. Working with local agencies, furniture and household goods are delivered by church members and friends to people who are transitioning to independent living. In 2023 over 50 families were served by this program.

The goal of the other team in this ministry, the Communications Team, is to inform the congregation about church activities and special events. A variety of tools are used by the team in order to reach the largest number of members as possible. The *Spire* monthly newsletter, the bi-weekly *News from the Pews*, the church website, the church's Facebook page and Instagram account, and the bulletin board outside the Community Room all publicize news about church events in different formats.

In addition to all the ongoing news, the team occasionally takes on other projects. To show how our church lives up to the slogan "Serving Neighbors Near and Far," an attractive poster was designed and displayed last summer at the church's 4th of July table, listing all the community non-profits that the church and church groups had donated to over the year. Going forward, the team plans on publishing in the *Spire* several times a year an updated list of church donations to our neighbors near and far.

Mark Baddeley is the Outreach & Communications Team Coordinator.

Written by Adrienne Topliffe

June 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1)
2) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	3) 10:00 WA Workshop 7:00 World Service	4) 4:30 Church Council	5) 9:30 Staff Meeting	6) 10:00 Bell Choir	7)	8)
9) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	10) 	11) 10:00 WA Board 7:00 Diaconate 7:00 Trustees of the Facility	12) 	13) 9:30 Congregational Care 4:00 Communications	14)	15)
16) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Christian Ed	17) 6:00 Budget & Finance Team	18) 	19) 	20) 	21)	22)
23) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	24) 7:00 World Service	25) 	26) 	27) 6:30 Confirmation Dinner and Rehearsal 7:30 Chancel Choir	28)	29)
30) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship						

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

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
P A I D
PERMIT NO. 4
AMHERST, NH

Address Service Requested

June

