

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



*"How to open your heart? Step one: listen."*

—Nancy Schoellkopf

# 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."*

September 8, 2024

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 a.m.

## *Rally Sunday*

GATHERING CHIMES

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

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE

*Praise God!*

Hugh S. Livingston Jr.

INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

*Please rise in body or spirit.*

One: Where two or three gather,

**Many: Christ is present.**

One: Where two or three gather,

**Many: the Spirit moves.**

One: Where two or three gather,

**Many: God rejoices.**

One: Where two or three gather in community,

**Many: songs are lifted, bread is broken, stories are shared,**

One: Where two or three gather to serve God's creation,

**Many: Peace is nurtured, Grace is offered, Hope is found.**

**Let us gather and worship together!**

\*HYMN

*All Creatures of Our God and King*  
verses 1, 2, 3 & 4 only

No. 455

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

**Loving God, we gather in your presence,  
and call on your Spirit to move among us.  
We bring our excitement, our energy, our joy,  
for a new season and a renewed opportunity  
to serve, to sing, to celebrate as your people.**

**Be with us now in our worship,  
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.**

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

BLESSING OF OUR LEADERS AND TEACHERS

CONGREGATION:

**We praise God for calling you as leaders and teachers, and we celebrate the gifts and  
guidance God joyfully provides to you in this ministry. As this Community of Christ, we  
promise to love and support you through our prayers, our presence, and our grace.**

LEADERS AND TEACHERS:

**To our children, youth, and fellow adult sojourners in Christ, we promise to love you, to  
walk with you, to wonder with you, and to model for you what it means to live in faith  
every day. We commit ourselves to lead you and to learn from you, as you learn from us.**

CHILDREN AND YOUTH (repeat after me prayer):

**Thank you, teachers!**

**Thank you, leaders!**

**We promise: to listen, to learn, to ask questions,  
to grow as Children of God!**

ALL:

**Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM

*The Gift of Love*  
Chancel Choir

arr. Hal Hopson

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 7:24-37

From there Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon toward the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

SERMON

"Be Opened"

\*HYMN

*This Is My Song*

inside back pages 10 & 11

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

*Healer of Our Every Ill*

Franklin D. Ashdown

\*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)

**We give because you have been generous with us, gracious God. We give to feed those who hunger in body and soul. We give because we are all connected, and we are lifted as others are lifted. May the ministries of this church meet the needs of our congregation, our community, and our world. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Live Into Hope*

No. 332

\*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

\*COMMISSION AND BLESSING

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

\*POSTLUDE

*Jesus Shall Reign*

John Hatton/  
Raymond H. Haan

*(\*Please rise in body or spirit.)*

*Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service  
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# 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](mailto: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](http://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

Shellie Brook

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Russ Demarest

Kathleen Bouchard, Sally Hooper

Hamilton Stewart and Liz MacMillan

Tom, Sarah and Nora Pyle

Doug Topliffe

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Student Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Deacons

Ushers

Greeters

Videographer

\*\*\*\*\*

## LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley

Sue Werst, Kelly Isaacs

Larissa Riley, Sheryl Gottwald

Dave Hagerstrom

Director of Youth Ministries

Teachers, Preschool /Kindergarten

Teachers, Grades 1 to 4

Teacher, Grades 5 to 7

**THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR** are given by Liz and Hamilton Stewart, in memory of loved ones.

**TODAY IS RALLY DAY!** We are so glad you are with us as we celebrate the start of our new church program year.

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 a donation of \$5/adult, \$10 /family to help with costs will be gratefully accepted. This year we are happy to have face painting and a clown making balloon animals. This is a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships and make new ones while enjoying good food and fun games.

**CHOIR NOTES:** The Bell Choir and the Chancel Choir have resumed rehearsals on Thursday evenings. The Youth Choir resumes Sept. 15 and meets in the vestry after worship on Sundays. If you are interested in singing or ringing, please contact Sara Phelps, kalben1@comcast.net.

**CHURCH SCHOOL RESUMES** and we are excited for a new program year of church school. All children in preschool through grade 7 are invited to join us each Sunday. The 2024-2025 Church School Registration Form must be completed for each child.

If you have any questions, please contact Larissa Riley, Director of Youth Ministries, at [churchschool@ccamherst.org](mailto:churchschool@ccamherst.org).

**THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE:** It has been two years since we printed *The Church in the Village: Stories About Its People and Its History* and it was a sellout! The book is a compilation of 55 articles that Anne Krantz wrote and were printed monthly in the *Spire* over several years.

Several people have indicated interest in purchasing a copy so we are considering a reprint. If you are interested, please contact Sue Spiess ([susan.spiess@gmail.com](mailto:susan.spiess@gmail.com)) so we can gauge the number to order.

**WEDNESDAY MORNING ADULT ED:** *Banned, Burned, and Buried: The Books NOT in the Bible* begins Wednesday, September 18, 10:00-11:30 a.m. on Zoom

This fall, we'll begin a year-long video lecture series delving into the "lost" books of the Bible. We'll look at the books of the Old Testament that are in some Bibles but not in others – including stories of giants, dragons, and fallen angels. We'll explore the "Gnostic" gospels and other writings NOT in our New Testament – that offer alternative understandings of who Jesus was, who and what God is, and what our spiritual purpose is as created beings.

In each session, we'll watch a video together as a group and then have a discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. The class will meet every first and third Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. from September through May on Zoom. All are welcome!

Email [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org) to receive the Zoom link, or access the link on our church website in the Members Section under "Wednesday Adult Ed."

**NO FALL GOOD STUFF SALE, BUT FAIR TREASURES ARE WANTED:** The Woman's Association will not be holding a Good Stuff Sale this Fall. The next sale will tentatively be held on May 2 & 3, 2025. 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 2025.

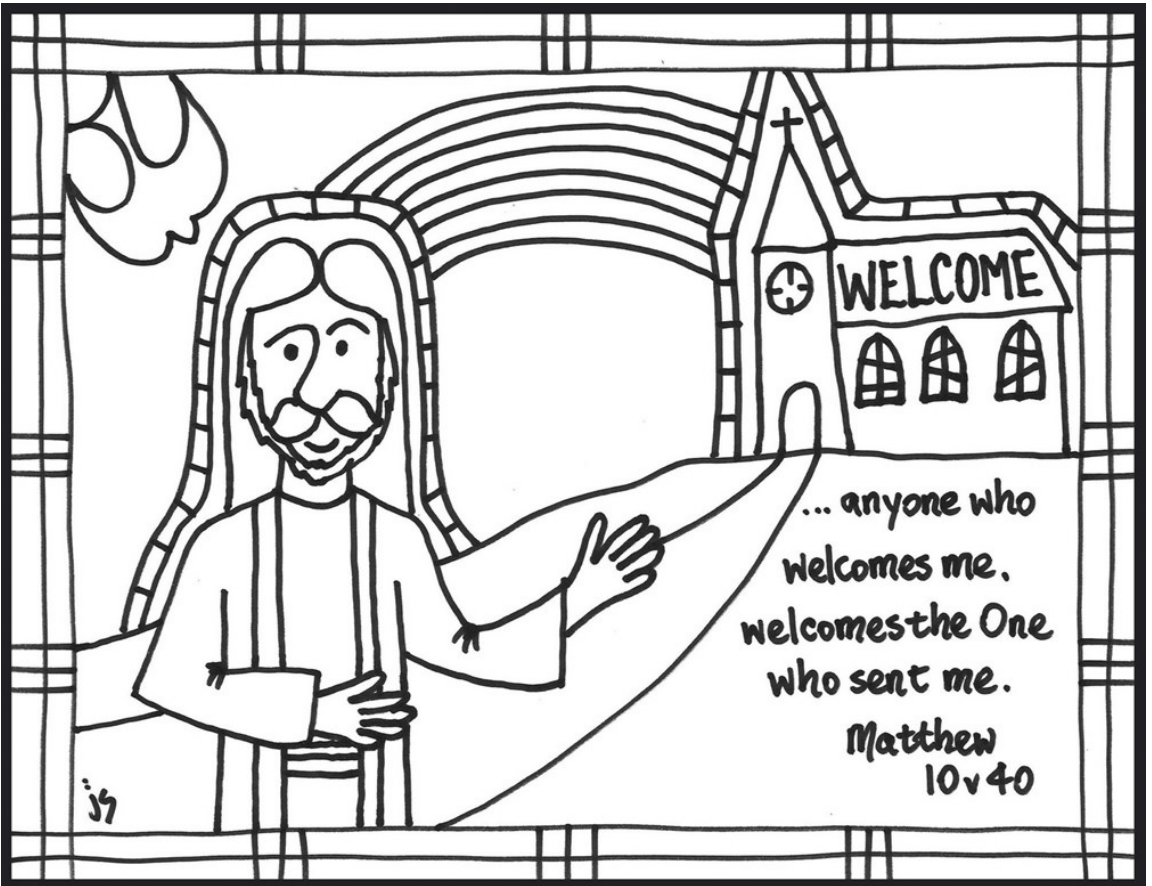
However, we are accepting items suitable for our Holiday Fair's Treasures Table. Treasures items can be dropped off in the church vestry on Sunday or Monday mornings, beginning Sept. 8th. Please call Theresa van Ham at 603-654-6445 with any questions about Treasures donations.

**WA MONDAY MEETINGS RESUME:** The weekly Monday Morning Workshops of the Woman's Association will resume on September 9, beginning at 10:00 in the church vestry. The workshops are informal meetings at which members and friends of the WA gather to plan events, such as the upcoming Holiday Fair, work on projects, or to just enjoy the fellowship of the group. Those who can stay past noon should bring their own lunch. Coffee, tea and dessert are always provided.

All church and community women are welcome to attend on any Monday. Anyone with questions about the Woman's Association or the workshop can contact Adrienne Topliffe at 673-7436 or [abtopliffe@gmail.com](mailto:abtopliffe@gmail.com).

<b>Our Church Calendar</b>		
<b>September 8—14, 2024</b>		
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 /Picnic
	11:15 a.m.	Racial Justice Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Tuesday	10:00 a.m.	WA Board
	7:00 p.m.	Diaconate
	7:00 p.m.	Trustees of the Facility
Thursday	10:00 a.m.	Congregational Care
	4:00 p.m.	Communications Team
	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir





... anyone who  
welcomes me,  
welcomes the One  
who sent me.

Matthew  
10v40

*Sunday, September 8, 2024*