



# VILLAGE SPIRE

October 2025



**Shine Sunday**  
**October 19, 10:00 a.m.**

## “Caring For Others”

Our monthly themed worship returns on the third Sunday in October! This year our theme is *SHINE: Living in God's Light*. Each month we'll focus on the ways we are the presence of God for one another in matters of mercy, compassion, and justice.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, our worship theme is “Caring for Others,” as we also celebrate our annual Mission Sunday where we lift up the many ways that we serve our neighbors near and far. Our children will participate in the beginning of the service before heading off to church school to engage the theme and scripture in their class time.

We hope you can join us, either in-person or online!



## “Finding Our WHY”

Rev. Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor  
October 2025

In October 2024, our Widening Our Welcome (WOW) Team hosted a Second Hour discussion where we raised the question “Why Church?” Those who participated were asked to think about the reasons why they've made space in their lives for being a part of this faith community. In sharing our varied responses, we learned that there are things that we all value - connection, belonging, serving, growing in our relationship with God. We also learned that we seek and find what we value in a variety of ways - singing in the choir, participating in adult education, volunteering in our Church School, delivering furniture for our Home Starter program, addressing issues of social justice, or by simply attending worship, in the hope that we'll be comforted, challenged, or changed by what we hear, and welcomed as we are. Given the divisive times we live in, some said they valued being around “like minded” people, who share a common goal, while others valued being around “unlike” minded people, as our churches are one of the few “third places” left in our culture where people of different generations, interests, and beliefs interact, work, or share common experiences together.

On Saturday, November 1st, we're hoping to expand and build on the “Why Church?” conversation, as we host a workshop called “Finding Your Why.” Our goal is to gather a variety of people from our congregation - newcomers and long-time attendees alike, to participate in discussions and exercises that will help us discern our communal “Why” - Why are we a

*Continued on page 3*

## New Member Info Sessions

October 23 and 29  
7:00 p.m. on ZOOM

Are you NEW (or not-so-new) to our church and interested in learning more about our congregation? Are you interested in learning more about becoming a member? Do you want to know more about the United Church of Christ? If so, please join us for one of our INFO SESSIONS on either Thursday, October 23 or Wednesday, October 29 at 7:00 p.m. to learn more about all of the above! The sessions will be held on ZOOM to make it easier for all to attend. For those who've already joined our mailing list and/or inquired about becoming a member, you'll be hearing from us soon! If you've joined us for our in-person or online worship over the last year and are interested in attending one of our info sessions, please reach out to Andrea in our church office at [andrea@ccamherst.org](mailto:andrea@ccamherst.org) or contact Pastor Maureen at [pastormaureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastormaureen@ccamherst.org).

## 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.

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### OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott  
*Senior Pastor*  
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Rev. Charlotte E. Y. Bell  
*Associate Pastor*  
pastorcharlotte@ccamherst.org

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

Michael Havay  
*Organist*  
michaelh117@gmail.com

Larissa Riley  
*Director of Youth Ministries*  
churchschool@ccamherst.org

Andrea Cyr  
*Church Office Administrator*  
andrea@ccamherst.org

## Adult Confirmation: A Spiritual Journey

### 16 Sessions – October to May

#### Wednesday mornings and evenings on ZOOM

Beginning in October, we're inviting the adults in our congregation to embark on a year-long journey, as we focus on the same big questions our youth ask and seek to answer in their Confirmation class (see topics below). This class is open to all, regardless of what faith tradition you were raised in (or not) or confirmed in (or not). Upon completion of the program, participants may choose to be "confirmed" along with our youth or simply celebrate the journey we'll travel together!

In each session, we'll watch videos and engage in discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. 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."

Sessions will be held twice a month, on Wednesday mornings and evenings, on ZOOM.

Our morning class will meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Our evening class will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Participants are welcome to attend either class as your schedule allows. If you miss the morning session one week, feel free to join us in the evening the following week, or vice versa!

#### SCHEDULE AND TOPICS:

**(first date listed is a.m., second date listed is p.m.)**

- Oct 1, 8 What We Believe: Our Big and Small Questions
- Oct 15, 22 God: How and Where Do We See God?
- Nov 5, 12 Jesus: Teacher, Prophet, or Savior?
- Nov 19, 26 Holy Spirit: Blowing in the Wind
- Dec 3 The Bible: Is the Old Testament Relevant?
- Dec 17 The Bible: Gospels, Letters, and Prophecy, Oh My!
- Jan 7, 14 Christian History: Roots to Reformation
- Jan 21, 28 Christian History: Denominational Differences
- Feb 4, 11 United Church of Christ: Who Are We?
- Feb 18, 25 Worship and The Christian Calendar
- Mar 4, 11 Sacraments: Communion and Baptism
- Mar 18, 25 Spiritual Practices: Prayer and Reflection
- Apr 1, 8 Suffering: Why Bad Things Happen to Good People
- Apr 15, 22 Discipleship: Living Our Faith Every Day
- May 6, 13 World Religions: What Do Others Believe?
- May 20, 27 What We Believe: Our Personal Statement of Faith



## ***Finding Our WHY***, continued from page 1

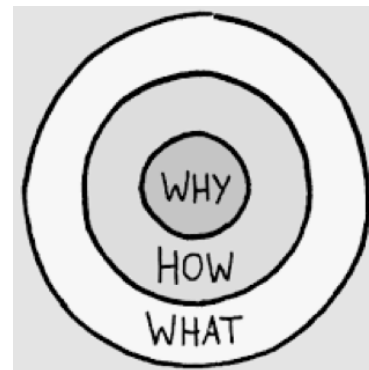
church together? What is it that we value as a faith community and how do we see ourselves living into those values as we serve God here in Amherst and in the world? Our individual reasons for wanting to be a part of this faith community may vary, but when we discern and share those reasons, and distill them into a common “Why we’re a church together” statement, we’ll have a much clearer understanding of our mission, and how we’re called to live into that mission. Ultimately, knowing our “Why” will help us to discern where we devote our time, energy, money, and other resources as a church now, while also creating space for the church we hope to become.

Those of you who were with us pre-COVID may remember that the “Finding Your Why” workshop was scheduled to take place back in March of 2020, on the same weekend when our world essentially shut down. Then, we had just completed a pastoral transition, with a new Senior Pastor (myself) and Associate Pastor (Kate Kennedy). We’d also just completed a church-wide CAT survey, that identified our congregation as a “High Energy, High Satisfaction, Adaptable, Transformational” church that was prepared to focus on what the survey identified as our “Top Priorities.” Those priorities included: making necessary changes to attract families with children and youth, incorporating new people into the life of the church, developing our spiritual generosity to support the ministry of the church, expanding outreach ministries to provide direct service to those living on the margins (i.e. homeless, immigrants, LGBTQ+), and adding to the vitality of the community around the church by building relationships with partners who share this vision and commitment.

Five years on, are these still our priorities? If so, how are we living into them? Are we a different church than we were in March of 2020? In some ways we are. Looking over the list of names in our current directory versus those included five years ago, there are some notable absences. Some have died, some have moved away, some discerned that their path was taking them elsewhere, to a different church, to no church. While many congregations have experienced a similar shift since 2020, we have much to celebrate here at CCA. We’ve added 75 people to our community in those same five years. People who are actively participating in the life of our congregation in a multitude of ways. People who weren’t here when our congregational survey revealed our “top priorities.” People who bring their own answers to the question, “Why do you make space for a faith community in your life?” What do you value? How do you see us being church together?

If you’ve been here more than five years, or ten years, or twenty, forty, fifty years, your answers to these questions are also vital. We are building a church of the future that will hopefully outlive us all, but we’re also a church in the here and now. Our collective “Why” is a reflection of all of us: those of you who’ve been sitting in our pews for decades and those of you who are just beginning to find a home here. I hope you can join us as we seek to “Find Our Why” together, as we continue to serve our God of abundance.

Peace and blessings,  
*Pastor Maureen*



**Finding Your Why**  
**Saturday, November 1**  
**9:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
in the Community Room  
Lunch will be Provided

Join us for a special workshop designed to help us “Find Your Why” - the reason WHY we come to church as individuals and the reason WHY we are church together. Our WHY is our motivation for all that we do. It’s where we find meaning, purpose, and joy. A church that knows its collective WHY has a clearer understanding of its mission, is better able to articulate and live into that mission, and connect with others who believe in that mission.

If you’re interested in participating please contact the church office or Pastor Maureen at [pastормаureen@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastормаureen@ccamherst.org)  
**RSVP’s are required** as we need to determine the group size for the exercises.



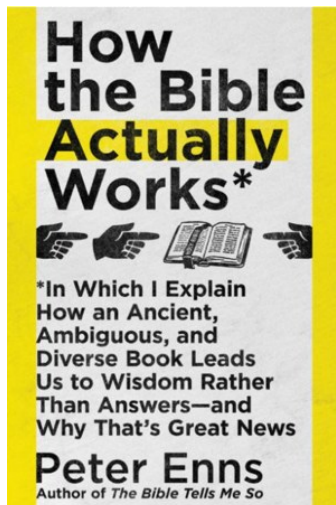
## Book Nook



### Monthly Book Recommendation

Is the Bible a rule book? A how-to manual? A source of spiritual guidance? Author and biblical scholar Pete Enns shows us how shifting our expectations can open up the ancient texts contained in our Bible. Rather than providing us with clear answers or "information to be downloaded," the Bible invites us into the story of a people as they come to know God. The wisdom we find in that story may be different for each one of us, as we bring our own stories into the mix. *"How the Bible Actually Works"* is an easy-to-read, humorous, and relevant-for-our-time invitation for those seeking to understand the Bible in a new way.

★★★★☆ 4.28 on Goodreads



## The Underground Railroad in New Hampshire Brought Many Enslaved People to Freedom



### Slavery in New Hampshire

Slavery in New Hampshire was in full force prior to and through the 1800's, with many opportunities in the Granite State to buy and sell enslaved people. Although the slave population was less numerous than in states in the south, New Hampshire families may have owned one or two enslaved people who were engaged in household and farm tasks. Some communities only registered one or two enslaved people in the entire town. Imagine how isolating that must have been for those few Black or Brown people without support from the comradeship of their peers. Other communities such as Portsmouth listed many more, such as 26 enslaved people in a 1790 census.

Following the American Revolution, some enslaved people were manumitted or received their freedom papers after fighting in the revolutionary war. David Woodmen, an enslaved man in Durham, NH, received his manumission papers in June of 1777. The papers instructed him to reach age 28 and pay 60 pounds, which he did. Daniel changed his last name to Martin, worked on freight boats sent to Portsmouth, had a family and owned property.

Although a small number of enslaved people in New Hampshire were eventually freed, most were not. This provided contrasting experiences for Black people throughout the state. While some were under the direction of their white masters, others were able to live freely on the fringes of society. A third group of Black people were those who had fled slavery in another state. They could be captured and returned to their former owners for a hefty prize.

### Abolitionist Movement in New Hampshire

The abolitionist movement was an organized attempt to end slavery in the United States. Supporters of the abolition movement initially called on the church's teachings to support the call for freedom of all enslaved people. However, the majority of churches in the north took a pro-slavery stand because a good portion of their church bodies were located in the South. Those wishing to speak in support of abolition were not allowed to do so in places of worship and these abolitionists faced violence by church members if they persisted in their efforts.

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## ***The Underground Railroad...***, continued from page 4

Local New Hampshire antislavery societies saw their membership rapidly increasing by the 1830's, with the first two being established in Plymouth and Portsmouth in 1833. By 1837 there were sixty-two anti-slavery societies in the Granite State. These groups were active in attempting to change laws in the state and the country regarding the rights of enslaved people. Members wrote numerous petitions calling for the abolition of slavery. By 1938 Concord residents alone sent fifty petitions to the New Hampshire Statehouse seeking to end slavery (Sherburne, 2016).

### **Establishment of the Underground Railroad in NH**

The Underground Railroad was a secret network of people and safe houses that helped thousands of enslaved African Americans escape to free states, Canada, and Mexico. It operated from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the Civil War, using code words like 'conductor' for a helper and 'depot' for a safe place but it was not a literal train line. Instead it involved various clandestine routes, including rivers, trails, and roads, culminating in destinations such as Canada, Mexico, and some free states where enslaved people could live unencumbered by slavery. Key figures such as Harriet Tubman became legendary 'conductors', guiding many to safety. The Underground Railroad is a testament to the courage and determination of both the freedom seekers and their allies in the fight for liberty.

*Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom* by Ilyon Woo is the true story of two enslaved people who fell in love and sought their freedom through the intricate network of the Underground Railroad. They traveled secretly from Macon, Georgia, through Philadelphia, PA, and on to Boston and Canada by rail, coach and steamship, encountering many hardships and risks along the way. It was through their determination and the love and commitment of many abolitionists who kept the underground railway working that this couple were eventually able to live freely.

### **A Local Family and their Role as 'Conductors'**

Luther and Lucina Melendy of Amherst, NH, were active members of the Congregational Church and were known to be strong supporters of the abolitionist cause. They hosted many lectures in their home on Chestnut Hill, inviting abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass to spread the word about antislavery. At one point, a fugitive slave being secretly housed at the home of the Chase Family in Milford, NH, was being relentlessly pursued by proslavery groups. Mr. Chase felt that this person would be safer housed elsewhere and there is strong evidence that the Melendys took this person into their home until it was safe for him to move on. Both Melendys died in 1883 and are buried in the town cemetery in Amherst, NH. The inscription on their gravestone reads, "The Slaves friend and the Colored Peoples benefactor."

### **Submitted by: The CCA Racial Justice Team**

#### **Resources used for this narrative:**

Sherburne, Michell Arnosky. *Slavery and the Underground Railroad in New Hampshire*. The History Press: 2016.

Woo, Ilyon. *Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey From Slavery to Freedom*. Simon & Schuster: 2023.

## **Neighbors In Need**

Our congregation participates yearly through our church's wider mission in the Neighbors in Need annual appeal.

This years' theme is "Creating Homes, Building America," focusing on housing opportunities, community strengthening and economic resilience.

The UCC's Neighbors in Need is a special mission offering that supports justice and compassion ministries within the United Church of Christ, with funds directed to the Council for American Indian Ministry and UCC Justice and Witness Ministries. This helps provide grants to UCC churches and organizations, as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives and advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

To donate, visit our online giving or send a check to church office with Neighbors in Need in memo line.

Thank you for your support and generosity



## **BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Come join us on Saturday, October 4 at 10:00 a.m. in our memorial garden for a special outdoor service in celebration of all God's creatures. Bring your feathered, fleecy or furry friends (or photo or stuffed animal) on a leash or in a carrier, to receive a blessing and have their love, loyalty and companionship honored. No reservations necessary. All pets must be able to remain under owner's control.



## Meet Two New Council Members



*Kelly Isaacs*

Annual Meeting attendees last May voted Kelly Isaacs and Sara Phelps onto the Church Council to fill respective positions as Christian Formation Ministry Coordinator and Worship & Spiritual Life Coordinator. Now that Kelly and Sara have gotten their feet wet, here's a bit about them.

"What excites me most about this position is the opportunity to work closely with other dedicated members of our congregation who share a vision for our church's future," said Kelly. The opportunities to collaborate and to learn appeal to her, and she is "particularly passionate" about ensuring program inclusivity and access for all, she said.

Sara concurred that a Council post offers valuable logistical and growth opportunities. "I'm grateful to work here...to hear where I can have input that maybe has some sort of substance behind it that can be helpful. It's nice to have some background on what's coming down the pike, and [to] see where we can help and how we can support," she said. Sara, a former high school music teacher and a hospice volunteer, also serves as the church's Director of Music and as the coordinator of supportive Congregational Care services.

These women bring complementary strengths to their new positions.

Middle school special education teacher Kelly is a mom of two young boys and is relatively new to the CCA; as such she is "well versed in advocating for [her] students' needs and ensuring that every child has the support and resources they need to thrive," she said. She brings a freshness to her position and to the council.

Sara, a member of CCA since 1991, brings the benefit of institutional experience and already-forged relationships to aid her in her Council liaison duties to Music, Diaconate, Woman's Association and Fellowship. "It's sort of an inside look at things and I'm able to understand when somebody comes to me from the various groups. I've known most of these people for many years, so I feel like I bring a familiarity to the overall workings of the church," Sara said.

Both women commended the work of their predecessors, Sue Werst for Kelly, and Sally Bowkett for Sara, and they hope to build upon earlier successes.

Looking toward the future, "My goal is to see the continued and growing success of our youth programs at the church. I want to make sure we're creating meaningful experiences that speak to where kids are on their faith journey," said Kelly.

"I love being in this church because I love the direction it's heading—that we are progressive; we pay attention to current issues, social justice. I think that this church is growing and I think that we have to be prepared to pivot, to adjust to change," Sara said.



*Sara Phelps*



## Bereavement Support Group



Loss is a part of everyone's life at some point, and each person reacts to loss in a personal way. As well as the emotional response, loss also has a physical, intellectual, behavioral, social and philosophical aspect.

People's losses, no matter what, are important and can be devastating to them. They represent the disappearance of something or someone cherished. A loss can consist of a death, divorce, loss of a job, a pet, health, relationships or a treasured possession.

The Bereavement Group will be for anyone over age 18 who is grieving a loss and would like to attend a monthly support session. We will discuss shared insights and grief education, and group conversation. The group will be limited to 8 people. You do not need to be a member of this church to attend and there is no cost involved.

The group will be facilitated by the Rev. Charlotte Bell, MDIV, MSW. Pastor Charlotte holds a Certificate in Spiritual And Pastoral Care from Andover Newton Theological School, and has experience in leading bereavement groups and coping with grief as a medical social worker.

The first Bereavement Group meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. in the church's parlor. Thereafter the meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month. Light refreshments will be available. Please contact Pastor Charlotte if you are interested in attending by reaching her at [pastorcharlotte@ccamherst.org](mailto:pastorcharlotte@ccamherst.org) or call her at 603-673-3231 x14 and leave a message.

## Ringling and Singing at the Congregational Church of Amherst!

The Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the vestry.

The Bell Choir rehearses on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Are you interested in being a part of our music program? Come join us!

Questions? Contact Sara Phelps  
Director of Music  
[kalben1@comcast.net](mailto:kalben1@comcast.net)  
(603) 759-6468

### Youth Choir

We gather on Sundays at 11:30 a.m. in the vestry! Come join us for singing, games and fun. Open to all ages!

## Manchester True Collaborative's Out & Allied Monthly Social!



Sunday, September 7th  
Sunday, October 5th  
Sunday, November 2nd  
Sunday, December 7th

**3PM TO 5PM**

**All LGBTQ+ folks and allies welcome! Come socialize and meet some new people! Please bring a snack or non-alcoholic drink to share!**



**Manchester True Collaborative**  
72 Concord St.  
Manchester, NH



## SHARE Food Pantry

The SHARE Food Pantry continues to be busy. Please know your donations are needed and truly appreciated.

### October Pantry Requests:

canned fruit, flour, sugar,  
coffee & tea,  
juice, instant rice, cold cereal,  
instant oatmeal packets,  
individually wrapped snacks



Donations may be left in our new SHARE collection container in the narthex, or may 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!



Gail and Lee

## Who Sits in the Pews (or Online)? (a.k.a. “Know Your Neighbor”) Gail Miller and Lee Bowley

For retirees Gail and Lee, living life is about more than just the day-to-day requirements of existence—it’s about passionately exploring the world around them while striving to make a difference, one adventure at a time.

A giant mounted world map pierced by 100 or so color-coded pin heads and flags graces their foyer wall. Geographic-travel-related achievement certificates (braving an Antarctic polar plunge, snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef, sailing above the Arctic Circle and across the equatorial line, and others) flank the map from all sides. The pins in the map mark past and still-dreamed trips, the flags favorite (Australia so far, if you’re wondering) and imminent destinations.

“We’ve been very blessed,” Lee notes. Gail agrees. “We’re very, very privileged to be able to do the travel and it really is eye-opening, too,” Gail said, noting the disparity of living conditions that can exist among people both here and abroad.

Travel, faith and ethics guide Gail’s and Lee’s journey through life.

It was the subject of disparity—racial justice, in particular—that in 2020 led then-postal carrier Gail and retired U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sergeant (E8) Lee to the CCA. A discussion of the book *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving initiated them, and they liked what they heard here so they stayed.

“Pastors Kate and Maureen were wonderful, as people and in the pulpit, so we transferred our membership,” said Gail. From there, participation in the book club morphed into Racial Justice Team involvement, she said.

Together, Gail and Lee have made a life out of sharing their blessings with others. That focus reaches back to bring them fulfillment.

How do they share? Well, Lee’s decades as an astute Air Force medic and instructor, ending her career as a First Sergeant where her job description was “to ensure the health and morale of all the enlisted personnel [as her] top priority,” is one example.

Then there’s tag teaming as compassionate doulas, even helping several newly deceased friends to transfer to their final resting places—one via a motorcycle procession from here to Boscawen when they escorted the decedent’s cremains on their trike for “one final ride,” another accomplished via an ice-filled inflatable kayak in their minivan along with their deceased friend who they ultimately interred in Maine following an intricate licensed green burial protocol.

Death doula-ing is mostly Lee’s calling, according to Gail. But Gail holds down the fort at home with their dogs and cats during Lee’s end-of-life care callings, and she organized the motorcade.

Lee attended a United Church of Christ seminary for a while. But, she says, that calling was more hers than God’s so she curtailed her plans. Still, Gail and Lee believe, Lee has what Gail calls “a special connection



Gail and Lee’s travel map with pins

## **Gail Miller and Lee Bowley**, continued from page 8

with God,” as witnessed through her intuitive skill in helping the terminally ill and their families through final days.

Recently, the pair helped celebrate a living milestone. They hopped in their car for a month-long cross country road trip with Lee’s paranormal-loving son and an uncle to celebrate their son’s 40<sup>th</sup> birthday with a visit to a haunted museum in Las Vegas owned by his favorite paranormal personality.

Hearing the timbre of Gail’s voice as she recalled the itinerary of their meticulously planned out route to and from Nevada, one gets a deeper glimpse into the essence of Gail and Lee—into why travel “makes them tick.” They explored the sorrow and solemnity of underground railroad stops throughout Ohio, of the Flight 93 memorial in Pennsylvania and of the towering indigenous “Dignity” statue...rounding out their adventure with touristy sights along Route 66 on their way back home.

Gail, an amateur bird photographer, no doubt got to snap a few shots along the way. Some are sure to make their way into the couple’s collection of memorabilia.

Speaking of memorabilia, just around the corner from the foyer’s eye-catching map stands Lee’s impressive self-described “I Love Me Wall” of Air Force service achievements and memorabilia. Mounted dog tags affixed alongside the poignant words “Not all women wore love beads in the 60s” express just a small part of Lee’s core and of her story.

An annotated instructional art piece—a stylized painting detailing the ethical way to hunt kangaroo—graces another surface nearby.

Then on the wall leading into the dining room one sees a framed piece certifying that Gail and Lee rode a hot air balloon over the Serengeti. Another bucket list item checked off, yes. But most notably these two last pieces—the kangaroo hunt and the aerial exploration certificate—seem to sum up their life journey rather well: for these women, guided by a zest for life imbued with faith and compassion, “the sky’s the limit!”



*Painting detailing the ethical way to hunt kangaroo*



*Certificate of hot air balloon ride over the Serengeti*

## **Who Sits in the Pews (and Online)? (a.k.a. “Know Your Neighbor”)**

We worship together. Some of us work in direct service to God, congregation or needs outside our church doors. Perhaps we enjoy a bit of fellowship. Maybe, simply, our warm smiles silently touch the hearts of those who need them most as we “pass the peace” each Sunday.

We are a community—a faith family—but how much do we truly understand each other’s core? New members are introduced to the congregation. But typically those who have prayed together for decades are never re-introduced.

So, here’s your chance to more fully embrace the sense of community that is the Congregational Church of Amherst.

Share and shine with us—tell us about yourself or your family. We’ll publish periodic member spotlights in *The Spire* throughout the year...for as long as it takes!

Below are a few questions to get the ball rolling. Submit your responses to [patty\\_cc@yahoo.com](mailto:patty_cc@yahoo.com). Patty Jillson will contact you for clarification or additional insights.

- Individual or Family Surname(s):
- Individual First Name(s):
- Preferred Contact: (phone, email)
- How long have you been with the Congregational Church of Amherst? What brought you here?
- What roles do your faith and this community play in your life? How have they helped you?
- What do you like most about the CCA?
- Do you have a favorite CCA memory that you’d like to share? If so, please do.
- What else would you like to share? (Perhaps a life’s motto or goal, a job or hobby, an obstacle overcome, a current struggle, a fun factoid?) What makes you “tick?”

Thank you for sharing!

## Youth Ministries

### Church School

(preschool - grade 7)  
 Every Sunday in October during morning worship.  
 New friends are always welcome!

### Junior Youth Group

(grades 5 - 7)  
 10/19: Meeting after Worship.  
 Bring a bag lunch and we will fill Birthday Bags for SHARE.

### Confirmation Class

(grades 8 - 12)  
 10/7: Class at 6:30 p.m.  
 10/21: Class at 6:30 p.m.  
 10/26: Commissioning during worship

### Senior Youth Group

(grades 8 - 12)  
 10/5: Meeting at 6:30 p.m.  
 10/19: Mission Sunday - 2025 Mission Trip Participants lead Children's Time during worship  
 10/26: Halloween Prep at 6:30 p.m. - carving pumpkins!

## Trick or Treat

Trick or Treat on Halloween in the Amherst village is a fun, slightly chaotic night, bringing lots of ghosts, goblins and other scary (and not-so-scary) beings into town.

Once again, our church is participating in the activity in the village by passing out candy. Since we can easily see upwards of 1000 children, we are in need of lots of fun-sized candy. Donations can be left in the church office or in the container in the narthex.



We recognize that candy is not for everyone, and so we also hope to have a few small items to give out as an alternative to candy: think party favors such as glow sticks, pencils, stickers, etc.

**Thank you so much for your generosity!**

## 2025 Holiday Fair Saturday, November 22

This year's Woman's Association Holiday Fair, will take place on November 22, the Saturday before Thanksgiving, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The lower level of the church will be transformed into a holiday wonderland full of features to delight shoppers of all ages. Plan to see special craft items, wreaths, ornaments and other holiday decorations, holiday baked goods, pecans and cheese, jewelry, handbags, collectibles, gifts for all ages, a raffle of holiday baskets and a silent auction.

The WA welcomes anyone interested in getting involved in the fair preparations.

Crafts are a popular part of the Fair. If you are a crafter and would be willing to make things to be sold at the fair, that would be much appreciated. Crafters are also invited to join the WA Monday morning crafters who work together from 10 to noon in the Vestry. Any questions about crafts can be directed to Deb Bozcenowski ([dbocz25@gmail.com](mailto:dbocz25@gmail.com) or 978-302-3851).


We are actively seeking items for the Treasures section of the fair. What are Treasures? Basically we are looking for new or gently used items that would make good gifts. Questions? Contact Theresa van Ham at [twvham@gmail.com](mailto:twvham@gmail.com) or 603-325-5062.

We are also looking for potential silent auction items (gift certificates, experiences, special gift items, etc.). Questions? Contact Kay Steeves at [kksteeves@gmail.com](mailto:kksteeves@gmail.com) or 978-337-1041.

Sally Bowkett is always looking for donations of any kind of jewelry, new or used, costume or fine, even broken pieces. You can contact her at [sbb46@hotmail.com](mailto:sbb46@hotmail.com) or 603-673-7409.

As the Fair gets closer, the WA members will be looking for baked goods for the bake shop, help with set-up and/or clean-up, and volunteers to work at the Fair.

Mark your calendar for November 22 and contact the WA ([wa@ccamherst.org](mailto:wa@ccamherst.org)) with any questions or to volunteer. Check out the WA website ( <https://www.ccamherst.org/womans-association>) for current information. You can also contact Adrienne Topliffe ([abtopliffe@gmail.com](mailto:abtopliffe@gmail.com) or 603-673-7436) or any other WA member for more information.



**BUDGET Update**

### Financial Summary

(as of August 31, 2025)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$161,824	\$160,146	\$ 1,678
Expenses	\$117,042	\$120,339	\$(3,297)
Net Income	\$ 44,782	\$ 39,807	\$ 4,975

*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 (Treasurer), Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, and Todd Whitney.*

# October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Youth Choir 11:30 Racial Justice Team 6:30 Senior Youth Group	6) 10:00 WA Workshop	7) 1:00 Bylaws Review Team 5:00 Church Council 6:30 Confirmation Class 7:00 Trustees of the Facility	8) 10:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 Adult Confirmation	9) 10:00 Congregational Care 12:30 Finding Your Why Team 6:00 Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	10) 11)	11) 10:00 Blessing of the Animals
12) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Youth Choir	13) 10:00 WA Workshop	14) 10:00 WA Board 7:00 Communications Team 7:00 Diaconate	15) 10:00 Adult Confirmation 5:30 Budget & Finance Team	16) 6:00 Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	17) 18)	
19) <b>SHINE SUNDAY</b> 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Junior Youth Group 11:30 Second Hour 11:30 Youth Choir	20) 10:00 WA Workshop	21) 10:00 Caregivers Circle 6:30 Confirmation Class	22) 10:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 Adult Confirmation	23) 6:00 Bell Choir 7:00 New Member Info Session 7:30 Chancel Choir	24) 25)	
26) 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship 11:30 Youth Choir 6:30 Senior Youth Group	27) 10:00 WA Workshop	28) 4:00 WOW Team 7:00 World Service Team	29) 7:00 New Member Info Session	30) 6:00 Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	31) 6:00 to 8:00 Trick or Treat	

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

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