

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



“God is the name of the blanket we throw over mystery to give it shape.”

— Barry Taylor, road manager of AC/DC

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."*

March 1, 2026

Second Sunday in Lent

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

Lenten Meditation

Gerald Peterson

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP and PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Please rise in body or spirit.

One: As we gather in this sanctuary, may we hear this –
God loves the world, and we too are beloved!

Many: **May the truth of this unconditional love,
shine through our worship today.**

One: We come, as we are
with our weariness and our wonder,
with our hesitations and our hopes.

Many: **We come, as we are
with our doubts and our faith,
with our convictions and our longings.**

One: Holy One, we come to discover yet again
how your love, mercy, and grace
are revealed to us in the way of Jesus.

Many: **We come to listen for your Word,
to lift up our prayers, to sing out in joy,
to serve one another in your name!**

*HYMN

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly

insert

LENTEN LITANY OF CONFESSION and WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The congregation may be seated.

One: Reconciling God,

Many: Creator of all.

One: In this Lenten season, we look deeply into our hearts,

Many: to acknowledge where we've wandered from your will and your way.

One: We confess that we often place a greater focus on our own needs than we do on the well-being of all your children.

Many: We confess that we're often quick to call out the failings of others yet struggle to see the ways in which we fall short.

One: We confess that we tend to dehumanize those we don't understand, making it easier for us to dismiss them.

Many: We confess that we sometimes distance ourselves from those who disappoint us or remind us of our own frailty.

One: Forgive us, O God, lift us to a higher, holier calling.

Many: Help us to draw as close to one another as you are to us.

One: People of God, hear this good news:

God's covenant with us is true.

When we seek healing, God makes us whole.

All: We welcome this gift of grace and mercy.

Thanks be to God, and Amen!

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANTHEM

God So Loved the World
Chancel Choir

John Stainer

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 2:1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding

twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the person in charge of the banquet.” So they took it. When the person in charge tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), that person called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.” Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

SERMON

“Sign of the Times”

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND PRAYERS

All are invited to place their offerings and prayer cards in the plates as they're passed.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Larghetto

Robert Wilkinson

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

*We welcome all people to join in receiving this sacrament.
Children may participate at the discretion of their parents.*

INVITATION AND CALL TO COMMUNION

One: In this Lenten season, we gather at this sacred table,
where God invites us into relationship.

Many: At this table, we receive and reflect God's unconditional love.

One: Here, we remember that Jesus revealed God's love to the world —
a love that is inclusive, expansive, and transforming.

Many: We come to this table to connect, to belong, and to grow.

One: So come now to this table that has been prepared for you.
Come not because you must, but because you may.

Many: For here, all are welcome to share in God's bounty!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION and 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

Versets for the Kyrie

Girolamo Frescobaldi

COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

We give thanks, loving God, for this communal meal that links us to all who have called upon your name. May your wisdom grow within us. May your word inspire us. May the nourishment of this bread and cup strengthen us for the journey, as you send us out into the world as people of courage, compassion, and commitment. Amen.

*HYMN

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

insert

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BLESSING

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Postlude on "The Glory of These Forty Days"

Matthew McConnell

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

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

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. **The next new member informational sessions will be held April 15 and 22.** New members will be formally received on Sunday, May 3. 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
Rev. Charlotte E. Y. Bell
Sara L. Phelps
Michael Havay
Sally Bowkett
Sally Hooper, Liz MacMillan, John Swanson, Gail Wiegand
Andrea Cyr

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

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
Sue Werst
Sheryl Gottwald
Vicky Leknes
Gretchen Davis
Larissa Riley
Melissa Lewis

Director of Youth Ministries
Teacher, Preschool/Kindergarten
Assistant Teacher, Preschool/Kindergarten
Teacher, Grades 1 to 4
Assistant Teacher, Grades 1 to 4
Teacher, Grades 5 to 7
Nursery Attendant

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES MAY 2026: The Ad Hoc Bylaws Review Team recently shared that proposed changes to our church's current bylaws are ready for the congregation's review. These proposed changes, which have been approved by Council, will be on the Annual Meeting agenda, scheduled for May 17, 2026 (after worship), and are available in the member's section of our church website. Anyone preferring a hardcopy, please contact Andrea Cyr at andrea@ccamherst.org or (603) 673-3231 ext. 0.

Two Informational Sessions have been scheduled to address any questions/inputs:

- Monday, March 16, 7: 00 p.m. on Zoom, (contact Andrea in the church office for the Zoom link)
- Sunday, March 22 11:30 a.m. in person in the parlor.

We look forward to seeing you at either/both of these sessions, Ad Hoc Bylaws Review Team:
Steve Boczenowski, Pastor Maureen Frescott, Heather MacDonald, Susan Manchester, Doug Topliffe, Sue Werst

144 ENVELOPES FUNDRAISER: This month, the Senior Youth Group will be kicking off the *144 Envelopes Fundraiser* to help offset the cost of the 2026 Mission Trip to Savannah, GA. After worship each Sunday, be sure to visit the bulletin board in the Community Room to learn about the SYG and check out the numbered envelopes decorated by the teens. It's easy to participate: just choose an envelope and make a donation in the amount of the number on the envelope. No amount is too small! We need every envelope from 1 to 144 to be selected in order to reach our goal of \$10,000.

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.

IT'S TIME TO REGISTER FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! This summer's program will run August 3rd - 7th from 9:00 a.m. to noon daily. VBS is open to preschoolers through rising 5th graders. Middle school and high school students can be Youth Volunteers. More information and online registration is available at: www.ccamherst.org/ybsreg.

DID YOU KNOW: This is a true love story! Richard Loving, who identified as white, and Mildred Jeter, who identified as mixed African American and Native American ancestry, were longtime friends who had fallen in love. They married in Washington, DC in 1958, but on their return to Virginia, where mixed marriages were forbidden, they were arrested and imprisoned. The Lovings were allowed to stay together and live freely as long as they stayed away from Virginia for 25 years. But the Lovings were not satisfied being separated from their loved ones in Virginia. With the support of the American Civil Liberties Union, they fought the Virginia ruling that forbid interracial marriage. In June of 1967, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of the Lovings. Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote: *"Marriage is one of the basic civil rights of man, fundamental to our very existence and survival...Under our Constitution; the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State."* Following the ruling, the Lovings continued to live freely in Virginia along with their three children, and sixteen states were forced to overturn their anti-miscegenation laws. Submitted by: *The CCA Racial Justice Team*

SHARE FOOD PANTRY requests for March include canned fruit, flour, sugar, coffee and tea, juice, instant rice, cold cereal, instant oatmeal packets, individually wrapped snacks. Donations may be left in our SHARE collection containers found in the narthex, the church office, and outside the community room. Donations may also 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!

The Senior Youth Group's
Spaghetti Supper & Variety Show

Saturday, March 21
6:00 p.m. in the Community Room



All are invited to join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and entertainment!

If you have an act or talent that you'd like to share in the variety show, contact Larissa Riley (churchschool@ccamherst.org) by March 15th. All ages can participate!

Our Church Calendar
March 1—7, 2026

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
	6:30 p.m.	Senior Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Tuesday	5:00 p.m.	Church Council
	6:30 p.m.	Confirmation Class
	7:00 p.m.	Trustees of the Facility
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Adult Confirmation Class
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir



Preparing for the Future— End of Life Planning

Saturday, March 14, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
in the Community Room

Have you ever thought, “I really should get my end-of-life stuff sorted...” and then promptly put it in the too-hard basket? Or realize you don’t know where to start?

You are not alone. Plan on starting by attending this no-cost workshop to learn more about End-of-Life Planning from local professionals. An attorney, along with medical and funeral home representatives will discuss documents and decisions, and assisting people in their time of need every day. You’ll come away with information on where to begin, and in a way that feels calm, empowering and uplifting. Let’s get it done, so you can focus on living!

For additional questions or inquiries contact the Rev. Charlotte Bell, pastorcharlotte@ccamherst.org or leave a message to 603-3231 x14.

Safety-Related Educational/Training Opportunities

All are welcome!

If you are interested in participating in one or both opportunities, use this link to sign up: <https://www.ccamherst.org/safety/> or contact Andrea in the church office.

ALICE Training Webinar

Alert Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate

This training webinar is presented via Zoom on Monday, March 23 at 9:00 a.m. It is a 3-hour presentation meant to provide an overview of ALICE, an active shooter response training program delivered with a trauma-informed approach. It helps prepares people to survive the unimaginable and is used extensively by our school system to help keep students and teaching staff prepared. Information with details on training and the Zoom link will be available soon.

CPR / AED / First Aid Training

Led by staff from the Amherst Fire Department, this is an informational training program that is intended to provide participants with a general knowledge of the current practices and procedures associated with CPR, AED equipment usage, and general first aid. It will most likely be a mix of on-line training and a hands-on session on a Saturday morning. It is not a certification program.

Once we have a level of interest established, we will be able to schedule this program.

John 2:1-11 – Wedding at Cana



Jesus' First Miracle – Water into Wine!

CCA Worship Service Reflection

The theme of the service was...

I learned...

I did not understand or still wonder about...

Something that helped connect my faith to my everyday life was...

Sunday, March 1, 2026



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It connects you to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development efforts around the globe. When disasters strike, or when individuals are displaced due to violence or poverty, OGHS ensures immediate response and ongoing recovery.

Through your support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, microfinancing, and women's empowerment. By partnering with Global Ministries and international response networks, OGHS maximizes its impact. Your contributions help meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring long-term, sustainable solutions for affected communities.

Please consider giving to One Great Hour of Sharing. There are several ways to donate:

- 1) One Great Hour of Sharing envelopes are in the pews for your convenience mid-March.
- 2) **Donate Online** through our church website, select the 'Missions' offering and type OGHS in the memo box)
- 3) Send a check to the office; make your check payable to *The Congregational Church of Amherst*, with *OGHS* on the memo line of your check.

THANK YOU!