

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



*“You shall take the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees,
boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook;
and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God.”*

- Leviticus 23:40

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 29, 2026

Palm/Passion Sunday

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

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Pierre La Plante

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Please rise in body or spirit.

One: We gather together...

Many: Waving palms of joy, waving branches of peace.

One: Eager to see Jesus, anxious for his healing touch, hoping to receive a blessing,
we gather together...

Many: Waving palms of joy, waving branches of peace.

One: Longing for a savior, longing for justice, longing to belong,
we gather together...

Many: Waving palms of joy, waving branches of peace.

One: Ready ourselves for what is to come:

Many: the night of anguish, the hours of darkness, the hope of dawn.

One: We gather together.

Many: Waving palms of joy, waving branches of peace, walking towards Easter.

*HYMN

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

No. 88

SCRIPTURE LESSON

The Flock will Scatter

Matthew 26:31-35

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Meditation for Passiontide

Dennis Eliot

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Praying in the Garden

Luke 22:39-42, 45-46

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.'

SCRIPTURE

Judas Betrays Jesus

Mark 15:43-50

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." All of them deserted him and fled.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Cantabile Sacra 93

Paul F. Page

("Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me")

(paulpage.org)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Peter Denies Jesus

Matthew 26:57, 69-75

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.' But he denied it before all of them, saying, 'I do not know what you are talking about.' When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.' Again he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.' After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.' Then he began to curse, and he

Continued page 5

swore an oath, 'I do not know the man!' At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: 'Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jesus or Barabbas

Luke 23:13-20, 24-25

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, 'You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.'

Then they all shouted out together, 'Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!' (This was a man who had been put in prison for insurrection and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, 'Crucify, crucify him!' A third time he said to them, 'Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death.' But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released Barabbas and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Olivet

James Southbridge

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jesus Crucified

Luke 23:33-35, 44-46

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!'

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

TOLLING OF THE BELL

CARRYING CHRIST INTO HOLY WEEK

*HYMN

What Wondrous Love is This

No. 85

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

With Grief My Heart is Laden

Stanley E. Saxton

(*Please rise in body or spirit.)

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 23.** 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
 Kathleen Bouchard, Colleen Cushing
 Eric Davis, Owen Davis, Mariellah Dart, Abby Endres
 Tim Wiegand

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

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
 Deb Boczenowski
 Sheryl Gottwald
 Matt Emmons, Vicky Leknes
 Larissa Riley
 Melissa Lewis

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

ANNUAL REPORTS are due to the church office by April 15.

THANK YOU! The Diaconate would like to thank the Congregation for your generosity in support of our Easter Friendship Basket collection. With the over \$1100 in donations received, we were able to provide grocery gift cards to twelve families in our community. Parish outreach is an important part of our mission, and we could not do it without your support.

Our Church Calendar

March 29—April 4, 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
	11:30 a.m.	Youth Choir
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Diaconate
	7:00 p.m.	World Service
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	Adult Confirmation
Thursday	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Service

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

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 by composer for performance/recording.*

Bulletin cover image by vikayatskina from Freepik.com.

CALLING ALL READERS: The Congregational Church of Amherst and the CCA Racial Justice Team will once again sponsor a reading of Frederick Douglass' moving speech, "**What, To the Slave, Is Your Fourth of July.**" The reading will take place in the CCA sanctuary at noon time on June 27, 2026. If you would like to participate in this stirring and poignant reading, please contact Gail Miller at: five0vnine@yahoo.com.

Submitted by the CCA Racial Justice Team

DID YOU KNOW: April is **Genocide Appreciation and Awareness Month in New Hampshire**, officially established in April of 2014. It is a time for us to remember those victims who perished due to the hatred and ignorance of others. This remembrance month also encourages us to recognize the signs of hatred and take action to foster acceptance while combating bigotry. You can visit the **Holocaust Memorial** in Rotary Common Park at 315 Main Street in Nashua to honor the many souls who succumbed to the Reich, or read a story such as, **Left to Tell: One Woman's Story of Surviving the Rwandan Genocide** by Immaculee Ilibagiza with Steve Erwin, a true story about how one woman and several friends miraculously survived the bloody slaughter of nearly a million other Rwandans.

Submitted by: The 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!



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm/Passion Sunday: March 29 - 10:00 a.m.

We begin with the traditional waving of the palms and end with a presentation of the Passion story.

Maundy Thursday: April 2 - 7:00 p.m.

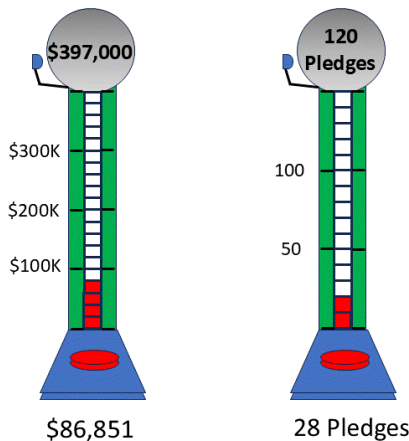
A prayerful reflective service with Communion and Tenebrae – a commemoration of Jesus' last night with his disciples.

Easter Sunday: April 5

7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service on the Amherst village green. Celebrate the Resurrection at daybreak followed by coffee and donuts on the green.

10:00 a.m. Easter celebration service in our sanctuary with our Chancel and Bell Choirs. Join us as we praise God with a joyful noise!

Pledge Results as of 3/27



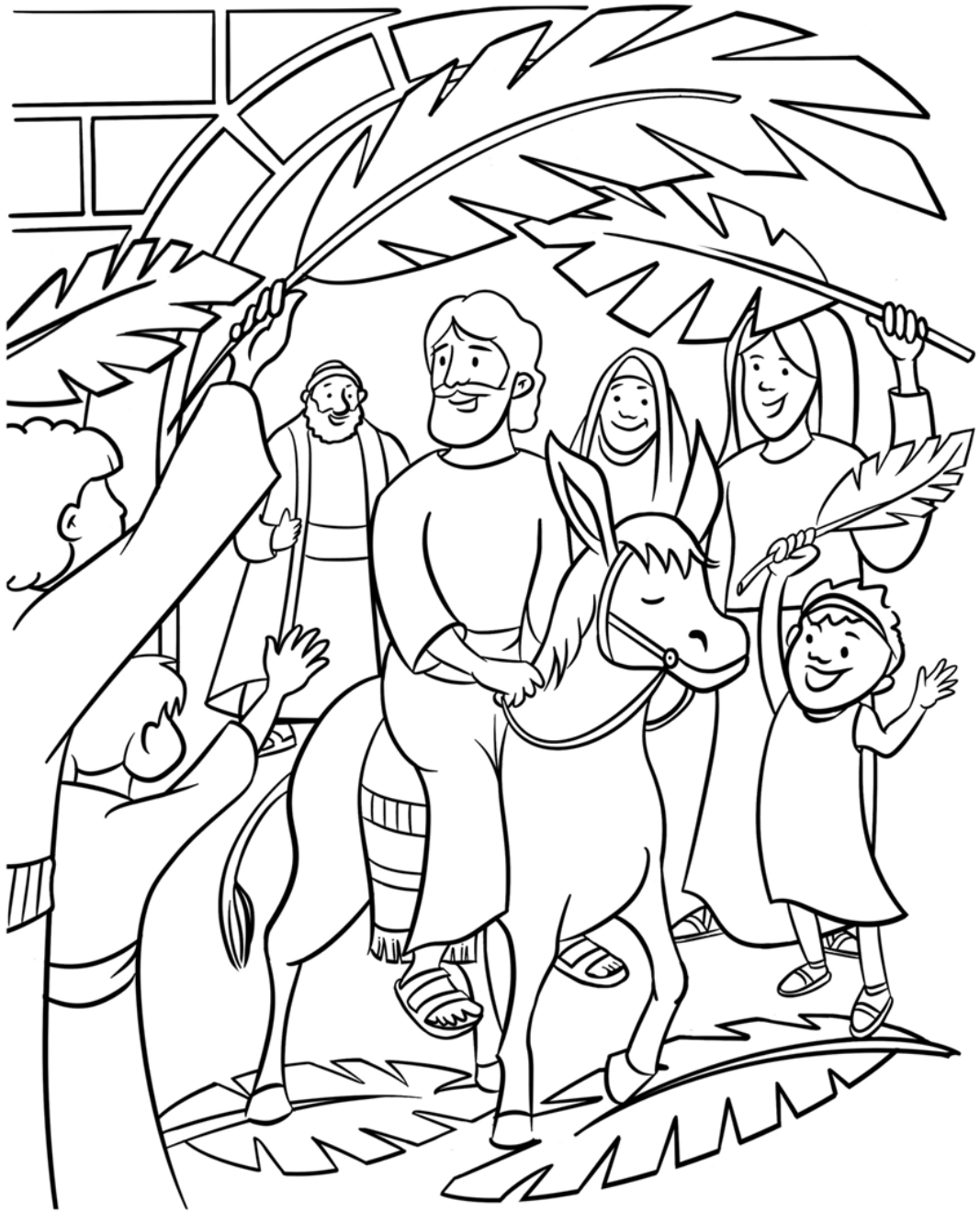
CCA Worship Service Reflection

The theme of the service was...

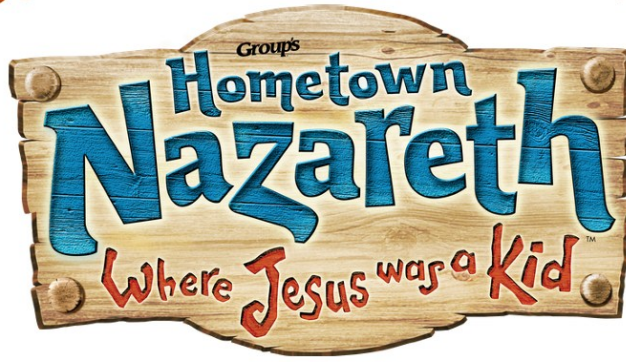
I learned...

I did not understand or still wonder about...

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



Vacation Bible School



The Congregational Church of Amherst, UCC

Join us for a Holy Land Adventure as we travel back in time to learn what life was like when Jesus was growing up. Each day, kids will be immersed in a different Bible story through games, music, crafts, snacks, and more!



Dates: August 3rd- 7th 2026

Time: 9 am - noon daily

Ages: Preschoolers - Rising 5th graders

Cost: \$30 per child

Rising 6th - 12th graders can be Youth Volunteers!



Register Online by July 27: ccamherst.org/vbsreg

Sunday, March 29, 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!