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

To be yourself in a world that is
constantly trying to make you something else
is the greatest accomplishment.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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."

October 25, 2026 TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 10:00 am

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

GREETING AND NOTICES OF PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE *Partita on "Showalter"* Jon Spong
(Leaning on the Everlasting Arms)

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP
*(*Please rise in body or spirit.)*

One: When we feel abandoned and alone, unable to find a way out of the wilderness that surrounds us, we cry out to God…
Many: And God listens to us.

One: When we feel discouraged and defeated, unsure we will ever really be able to make ends meet and worried that no matter how hard we work, it will never be enough, we cry out to God…
Many: And God listens to us.

One: When we feel lost and forgotten, unable to find the words for the grief, isolation, and despair that we feel, our hearts cry out to God…
Many: And God pays attention to us.

One: As we gather in this place and time, remember: You are not alone. God knows where you are, and God listens to the cries of our hearts.
Many: May we also listen to one another as God guides us toward the cool, refreshing waters we need to continue our journey as the family of God.

*HYMN *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* No. 276

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

Gracious God, we come this morning to seek you, and our own faith –
the faith that makes us whole.
we come to express our common faith –
the faith that bring us joy.
we come to give thanks for faith –
the faith that is a gift from you;
we come to share the faith of others
and offer with love our faith to them.
Receive us into worship with your welcome of grace.

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.

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH *Go Lord* Youth Choirs

COMMISSIONING OF OUR CONFIRMANDS AND MENTORS

Confirmand	**Mentor**
Abby Endres	Sue Werst
Evan Greer	Dave Hagerstrom
Aidan Phillips	Steve Boczenowski

ANTHEM *It Is Well with My Soul* John Ness Beck
Chancel Choir

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE
The peace of God be with you. **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

SCRIPTURE LESSON Genesis 16:1-5, 21:8-21

Because Sarai remained childless, she gave her Egyptian slave Hagar to Abram as a wife so she might have children through her. After Hagar conceived, she looked on Sarai with contempt, leading Sarai to mistreat her and Hagar to flee. The angel of the Lord found Hagar by a spring in the wilderness, instructed her to return and submit to Sarai, and promised that her descendants would be greatly multiplied. The angel told her she would bear a son named Ishmael because the Lord had heard her affliction, describing him as a wild ass of a man living at odds with his kin. Hagar named the Lord "You are El-roi" and called the well Beer-lahai-roi. Hagar then bore Ishmael when Abram was eighty-six years old.

When Isaac was weaned, Abraham held a great feast. Seeing Hagar's son Ishmael playing (or mocking) with Isaac, Sarah demanded that Abraham cast out the slave woman and her son so Ishmael would not inherit alongside Isaac. Though distressed, Abraham obeyed after God assured him that Sarah's demand should be followed, promising to make a nation of Ishmael as well. Abraham sent Hagar and the boy away with bread and a skin of water. When the water ran out in the wilderness of Beer-sheba, Hagar placed the child under a bush and wept. God heard the boy's voice, and the angel of God promised again to make a great nation of him. God opened Hagar's eyes to a well of water, and God was with Ishmael as he grew up in the wilderness of Paran, becoming an expert with the bow and marrying an Egyptian woman.

SERMON "Hagar"

*HYMN *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* Page 6

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 the pastor during the second hymn, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

CHORAL RESPONSE

SHARING OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC *Nearer, My God, to Thee* Lowell Mason/Gordon Young

*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)
Listening God, you hear the cries we whisper and cries we cannot speak. In a world still marked by fear, abandonment, and unfairness, you remain the one who listens and who hears the voices of the outcast, the wounded, the overlooked. As we bring our offerings today, open our ears as yours are open. Make our giving an act of solidarity with those whose voices rise in need. Use these gifts to reveal your presence, to bring water into desert places, and to remind all your children that they are not alone. Shape us into people who hear because we have been heard. Amen.

*HYMN *Guide My Feet* Page 7

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD
*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION
*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE *Fanfares on "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"* Martin Luther/Robert Lau

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 October 21 and 27 via Zoom. New members will be formally received on Sunday, November 8. 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 during the worship service for children Pre-K through Grade 7.
- Our church nursery is staffed and available during services 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 the Community Room for a time of fellowship and refreshments after the worship service.
- 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 through Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Phone (603) 673-3231 or email officeadmin@ccamherst.org. 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	Ministers to the World
Rev. Maureen R. Frescott	Senior Pastor
Rev. Charlotte E.Y. Bell	Associate Pastor
Sara Phelps	Director of Music
Michael Havay	Organist/Accompanist
John Swanson	Deacon in Charge
Kathleen Bouchard, Liz MacMillan	Deacons
Katie Henderson, Avis Moller	Ushers
Doug Topliffe	Videographers

LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley	Director of Youth Ministries
Kelly Isaacs	Teacher, Preschool
Sue Werst	Teacher, Kindergarten to Grade 2
Linda Lannin	Assistant, Kindergarten to Grade 2
Vicky Leknes	Teacher, Grades 3 and 4
Alexis Baker	Assistant, Grades 3 and 4
Larissa Riley	Teacher, Grades 5 to 7
Melissa Lewis	Nursery Attendant

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

GIVE THANKS WITH US! Our church is hosting a Thanksgiving Celebration on **Sunday, November 15 at 5:30 pm** in the Community Room. Enjoy a shared meal, great conversation, and a time to thank God for all we've been given. Bring a dish, volunteer, or simply come and celebrate. All are welcome--every age, family, single, visitor, and friend.

There is a sign up sheet in the Community Room during Fellowship Time today. There is also an online form accessible through the QR code to the right. For details contact **Matt Emmons** (603) 494-0293, or email <memmons85@gmail.com>.

Thanksgiving Sign-Up Form QR Code

TREASURES WANTED: The Woman's Association is still accepting donations of quality new, like new, vintage, antique and collectible items for the Holiday Fair's Treasures Table. Items can be dropped off in the church vestry on Sunday or Morning mornings. No books or furniture, please. Contact Theresa at (603) 325-5062 or twvham@gmail.com with any questions about Treasures donations.

NEW MEMBER INFO SESSIONS: 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 an INFO SESSION on Tuesday, October 27 at 7:00 pm via ZOOM. Please reach out to Michael in the church office or Pastor Maureen - officeadmin@ccamherst.org OR pastormaureen@ccamherst.org.

MEDICAL RESPONSE TRAINING SESSION: On **Saturday, November 14 , starting at 9:00 am** and running for approximately 3 hours, the Safety Team has organized a medical response training session for all interested friends and members of the church. The class will be run by the Amherst Fire Department, EMT personnel. Among other things it will address first aid, basic CPR, AED equipment usage, Epi-pens, and stop the bleed techniques. At the end of this class, attendees will be better prepared to respond to emergency medical situations should they arise.

All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Class will be held in the Community Room. To sign up, please contact Michael in the church office by **Nov. 12**. Phone 673-3231, or email officeadmin@ccamherst.org

Your Church Safety Team

Note: This an informational class, and not a CPR or other certification class.

Financial Summary

(as of September 30, 2026)

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference
Income	$192,243	$167,785	$24,458
Expenses	$155,682	$160,683	<$5,001>
Net Income	$36,561	$7,102	$29,459

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), Gail Miller, Kelly Schmidt, Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, and Todd Whitney (Chair).

The Woman's Association will hold its popular Holiday Fair this fall on **Saturday, November 21 from 9:00am-2:00pm.** The fair features fresh holiday wreaths and evergreen centerpieces, a large selection of gift ideas including handmade items such as knitted, embroidered, and painted crafts, jewelry, delicious baked goods, a silent auction, raffle baskets, pecans, Cabot cheese, holiday decor, and so much more!

It's also easy to be part of this special event. The WA welcomes anyone interested in helping with preparations leading up to the fair. And there are many ways to participate! Crafts are an important part of the fair. So if you would like to join others in crafting activities, please join us for workshops on Mondays. Contact Adrienne Topliffe or any WA member for information.

Our Church Calendar

October 25-31, 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.

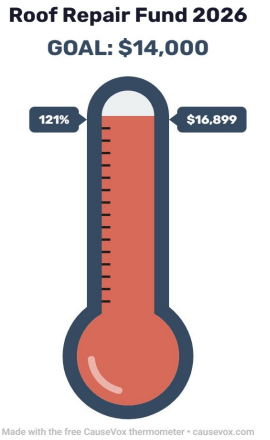
Today	10:00 am	Worship
	11:15 am	Fellowship Time
	11:30 am	Youth Choir
	11:30 am	Racial Justice Team
	11:30 am	Christian Education Team
	6:30 pm	Senior Youth Group
Monday	10:00 am	WA Workshop
	7:00 pm	World Service Team
Tuesday	7:00 pm	New Member Info Session
Wednesday	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
	7:00 pm	Adult Confirmation
Thursday	6:00 pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:30 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Neighbors in Need

NEIGHBORS IN NEED COLLECTION: The annual appeal for Neighbors in Need, a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ, continues through the month of October. Donations support ministries of justice and compassion, with special consideration given to projects which serve our immigrant neighbors and communities. Donation envelopes are available in the pews, or you may send a check to the church office, or visit our online donation page on the website <ccamherst.org>.

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR TODAY were given in loving memory of Marshall Strickland by his family. A graveside service was held at the Meadowview Cemetery on Saturday, October 24.

ROOF REPAIR DONATIONS: Preservation of our beloved, historic church building is the responsibility of every generation that gathers for worship and fellowship within these walls. It has been determined that repairs to the slate roof are necessary to prevent any further damage to the building. And we are asking our members and friends to consider a donation to cover the cost of those repairs, estimated at $14,000. You may put your donation in the offering plate, or go online to Special Donations on the Donate page of our website. Please indicate "Roof Repairs" on your check or in the donation notes online. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



Sat, November 21 - WA Holiday Fair
9:00 am-2:00 pm

Sat, December 5 - Breakfast With Santa
9:00-10:30 am and 10:30 am-12:00 pm

Sat, December 12 - Holiday House Tour
10:00 am-3:00 pm

Sun, December 13 - CCA Family Christmas Concert - 4:00 pm

Details on our website ccamherst.org

During the month of November, our Racial Justice and Widening Our Welcome teams are inviting the congregation to participate in constructing and displaying prayer flags in memory of the more than 100 people who have died in connection with immigration enforcement activity since 2018 (the first year of mandated reporting).

Why are we doing this? Our faith calls us to see the humanity of the stranger and the suffering of our neighbors. The display is intended to be a quiet, yet powerful, prayerful act of remembrance and a visible expression of compassion and lament. Each flag will carry the name of one person to remind us that:

- Every life has sacred worth.
- Every death deserves to be named and mourned.
- No person should be reduced to a legal category.

We are not doing this alone. The project was conceived by two NH UCC pastors, the Rev. Mark Koyama and the Rev. Traceymay Kalvaitis, and is part of a broader faith community effort led by the Granite State Organizing Project. Churches around the state will be participating.

Why November? This is the month where we remember those we've lost (All Saints/ Souls) and offer up prayers of thanksgiving in celebration of ancestorial immigrants, while also recognizing the biblical proclamation that we're all "strangers in a strange land" at heart.

Construction of the prayer flags will take place on Sunday, November 1, in the Community Room after worship. The flags will be displayed in the sanctuary for three Sundays -- November 8, 15, and 22 -- (as approved by Church Council). We sincerely hope you can join us in this important project. For those interested, a GSOP sponsored flag-making workshop will be held on Sunday, October 18 at 2:00 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Milford.

FOOD PANTRY LIST: SHARE Food Pantry requests for November include: cooking oil, condiments, cooking sauces and seasonings, pasta sauce, tomato sauce, tomato paste, diced tomatoes. Donations may be left in our SHARE collection containers found in the narthex, and outside the community room. Donations may also be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford. For directions please call their office at (603) 673-9898. Thanks for your continued generosity!

HALLOWEEN CANDY DONATIONS: The Amherst Village green will be filled with little ghosts and goblins Halloween night seeking tricks or treats from community residents and businesses. CCA will join in the fun once again, distributing candy and favors to the children. We will need lots of fun-sized candy or small gifts like stickers, glow sticks, pencils, or toys. Donations can be left in the church office, or in the caldron in the Narthex. Thanks for your generosity!

CCA Worship Service Reflection

Sunday, October 25, 2026

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…

"Breakfast with Santa" is a special annual event sponsored by our church community and open to the general public. This year's event will take place on **Saturday, December 5** with seatings from 9:00-10:30 am and 10:30 am-12:00 pm. A hot breakfast with a variety of options will be served, there will be organized games and crafts, and of course the opportunity to visit with Santa himself!

Registration started October 20 and goes through December 2. Cost is $15.00 for adults, $12.00 for children under 14, and children 12-months & younger are free. We usually sell out way before the event so register early! We will also be looking for food donations from church members. Stay tuned for those details. We hope many church families will participate – this is a great event for grandparents to bring grandchildren. The money raised goes back into our church. To register go to www.ccamherst.org/bws/ or click on the QR code below. Questions? Contact Marti Warren: martiwarren@comcast.net

The annual **Christmas Hour Tour** in our beautiful town of Amherst is scheduled for **Saturday, December 12 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.** The tour of five historic homes is sponsored by our church, and has become a favorite local event. Ready for the holidays with traditional and unique decorating ideas, every home is unique in size and style, and each will be a delightful surprise. All of the homes are within easy walking distance.

Tickets came on sale on October 20 and will be available online through December 10 for $40, and for $45 on the day of the event. We are also offering a luncheon from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm at the church for $20, limited to 150 people. Lunch tickets can be purchased and reserved along with tour tickets.

Visit our website at www.ccamherst.org/cav/ or click on the QR code below for information and tickets.