

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



*“Sometimes the fact that there is nothing about you that makes you the right person to do something is exactly what God is looking for.”*

— Nadia Bolz-Weber

# THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

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

September 26, 2021

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

*Préambule, Op. 31, No. 1*

Louis Vierne

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Here, in this place, God welcomes us:

Many: **the dreamers and the doubters,  
the worriers and the wanderers.**

One: Here, in this hour, God challenges us:

Many: **to step out of comfort into the unknown,  
to embrace or face our fear.**

One: Here, in this space, God encourages us:

Many: **to lean on one another,  
and to lift one another up.**

One: Here, in this time, God reminds us:

Many: **of all the ways God has graced us,  
and gives us strength.**

One: Here, in these moments, we are assured:

Many: **that God is with us, always!**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION and THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

When we feel compelled  
to hide ourselves away,  
especially from you, Creating One,  
it is enough that your grace  
invites us to open up,  
and step out.

When we stand naked and exposed  
to the buffeting winds  
of our doubts and questions,

it is enough, Healing Servant,  
that you clothe us in your peace,  
and put our minds at ease.

When we are entangled  
in that legion of worries and fears  
which consume our lives,  
it is enough, Spirit of Silence,  
that you untie the knots  
and set us free.

It is enough,  
God in Community,  
that you are with us in this very moment,  
as we pray as Jesus has taught us, saying,

**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.**

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king."

Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

SERMON

“Esther’s Fear”

ANTHEM

*In the Garden*  
Sara Phelps, soprano  
Michael Havay, piano

C. Austin Miles

JOYS AND CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

*If you have a prayer to share, fill out a prayer card in your pew and place it in the “Joys and Concerns” plate at the back of the sanctuary. Ushers will bring the cards forward to the pastor during the Anthem.*

INVITATION TO OUR OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Thank you, God, for the opportunity to share in your creative and restorative work among your people. Because you have blessed us, we have much to give. May these gifts bring light to those who walk in darkness, hope to those who live in despair, and a healing balm to those who long for grace. These offerings express our gratitude and our aspiration to be more fully the body of Christ. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Prelude in F Major, WV412*

Johann Ludwig Krebs

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

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

*Portions of the liturgy have been adapted from  
Thom Shuman from Lectionary Liturgies.  
<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.ca/>*

# 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.
- The nursery is not currently staffed. Parents with very young children are welcome to use it during worship.
- Joys and Concerns may be written on the cards found on the small table as you entered the sanctuary. You are also welcome to submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the worship service.
- Offering plates can be found at the front and the rear of the sanctuary.
- Please join us in the memorial garden for fellowship after the worship service, weather permitting.
- 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, and available 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 SERVICE

Members and Friends of The Congregational Church

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy

Sara L. Phelps

Michael Havay

Sally Hooper

Wendy Valeri

Gretchen Davis

Ministers to the World

Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Director of Music

Organist/Accompanist

Deacon in Charge

Bell Choir Director

Interim Children's Coordinator

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**CHURCH SCHOOL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS:** Have you ever wanted to participate in Church School but wasn't quite sure it was the right fit? Now is your chance to get involved!! Church School is currently looking for volunteers to join us outside once or twice a month. We are looking for adults that could help us with crafts, story time and/or games. No planning or preparing lessons required. If you are interested please contact Gretchen Davis at churchschool@ccamherst.org.

**SLEIGH BELLS MARKETPLACE:** The Woman's Association is now seeking items for their Sleigh Bells Marketplace Auction, taking place online November 8 through 21. Please consider what you might be able to donate. Some ideas for auction items include gift cards to restaurants or other local businesses, Amherst memorabilia, artwork, antiques, professional services, vacation stays, etc.

WA members will be at the church to accept items from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays, October 2 and October 16. All proceeds from the auction will go to support our church and community charities.

**SHARE FOOD PANTRY** requests for September include canned ham, canned meats, side dishes (seasoned pasta mix, Hamburger Helper, etc.), ravioli and Beef-a-Roni. Donations should 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!

### Financial Summary

(as of August 31, 2021)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$111,743	\$132,381	\$(20,638)
Expenses	\$ 99,594	\$102,280	\$( 2,686)
Net Income	\$ 12,149	\$ 30,101	\$(17,952)

*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: Keith Lammers, Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand (Treasurer).*

**ARE YOU RECEIVING EMAILS FROM CHURCH?** We are hearing from a few folks that they do not always receive emails sent from our domain (@ccamherst.org). This past week we sent out *News from the Pews*, and another email about the capital campaign and a matching gift. If you did not see them in your inbox, please check your spam/junk/promotions folders. If you did not receive them, please let us know. We are trying to understand out how wide spread this problem is.

**OUR CHURCH NURSERY IS OPEN!** We welcome our tiniest members to attend services, and when parents feel the need for a quiet, safe place to go to our church nursery is available. It is located on the ground floor, and can be found by walking through the double doors in back of the staircase.

The nursery has been fully cleaned, all linens washed, and has a changing table and portable play pen, as well as many early childhood toys. A monitor is now available to watch and listen to the service. The church is currently requiring mask use for all people.

**POLAR FLEECE BLANKET BONANZA!** Do you have new anti-pill polar fleece in your house? Our Church School “Be A Blessing” mission project this September is no-sew polar fleece blankets to support Sleep In Heavenly Peace (SIHP) for the NH-Hillsborough Chapter. This will run now to mid-October. We are in need of donations of new anti-pill polar fleece as well as any 1/2 yd to 2 yds pieces. There is a designated drop off bin at the back door of the church.

You can also help by donating online through our website; under *Giving, Donate*, choose *Missions* and specify SIHP. Any funds not used to purchase the polar fleece will be sent to the SIHP Chapter: NH-Hillsborough, for mattress purchases. You can also send a check to the church office, make it payable to *The Congregational Church of Amherst*, with *SIHP* noted on the memo line.

*The Lectionary texts for the next two weeks are:*



October 3: Job 1:1, 2:1-10 and Psalm 26  
Genesis 2:18-24 and Psalm 8  
Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12  
Mark 10:2-16

October 10: Job 23:1-9, 16-17 and Psalm 22:1-15  
Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 and Psalm 90:12-17  
Hebrews 4:12-16  
Mark 10:17-31

*Sunday, September 26, 2021*

### **Our Church Calendar**

**September 26—October 2, 2021**

Many 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	9:50 a.m.	Church School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship—Sanctuary
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship—Memorial Garden
	1:00 p.m.	Middle High Youth Group
	4:00 p.m.	Senior High Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	Woman's Association—Memorial Garden
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	World Service Team
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir—Sanctuary
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir—Sanctuary
Saturday		Confirmation Class Retreat
	2:00 p.m.	WA Collecting for Sleighbell Marketplace