

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



"It is the force of love that heals, that performs miracles."

~ Beulah Emmet

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 23, 2025

Third 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

Pastorale on "Blessed Assurance"

Phoebe Palmer Knapp/
Robert Lau

INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Please rise in body or spirit.

One: Children of God, what has God done for you?

Many: God saves, provides, and holds us in God's steadfast love.

One: Consider and remember: in the joyful times and in the sorrowful times, what has God done for you?

Many: God covers us and lifts us up, protecting and empowering us with steadfast love.

One: When you have been like the fig tree in Jesus' story that seems unable to produce and that everyone has given up on, what has God done for you?

Many: God tends the soil and waters the ground, nurturing us into life with steadfast love.

One: Children of God, come, let us worship God who never gives up on us!

Many: We come to worship and cling to God, for God's steadfast love never fails!

*HYMN

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

No. 478

CALL TO CONFESSION

The congregation may be seated.

God, you call us to step more deeply into ourselves as we adjust and awaken to who you desire us to be. Let us acknowledge our wrongdoings in stillness and in silence so that we may prepare our hearts for change.

Moment of silence.

CONFESSIOALPRAYER (unison)

**We confess that we have not always brought forth good fruit.
In the midst of chaos and frenzy, we have often lost our way.
Our feet have strayed from the place where we met you.
Our egos have kept us from noticing our missteps;
Yet, with you, we know there's another chance for change.
There is another opportunity to bear good fruit
In a world full of spoiled and rotten produce and systems designed to kill,
We are called to be the change that sustains generations.
Let us lean with you into this chance for transformation.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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.

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANTHEM

Thy Will Be Done
Chancel Choir

Joyce Eilers

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 13:1-9

At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did."

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the man working the vineyard, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.' "

SERMON

"Bearing Fruit"

*HYMN

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

No. 326

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 one of the pastors during the hymn after the sermon, and will be shared during Joys and Concerns.

CHORAL RESPONSE

INVITATION TO SHARE OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Come Unto Me

Healey Willan

*DOXOLOGY (Tune: OLD HUNDRETH, No. 592)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Faithful God, our guide and sustainer, as we offer these gifts, may they bear fruit for your kin-dom. In this solemn season of Lent, we remember your call to repentance and renewal. Help us tend the soil of our hearts so that we may grow faith and bear witness to our grace. Use these offerings to bring hope to those in need and light to those in darkness. May we live as your fruitful servants, trusting in your abundant mercy. In the name of Christ who calls us to new life, we pray. Amen.

*HYMN

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

No. 280

*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE

Epilogue on "Lobe den Herren" (Praise to the Lord)

Lani Smith

*(*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 22 and 23.** New members will be formally received on Sunday, May 4. 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
 Shellie Brook
 Sara L. Phelps
 Michael Havay
 Roger Hooper
 Kathleen Bouchard, John Swanson
 Don and Carol Lyon
 Doug Topliffe

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

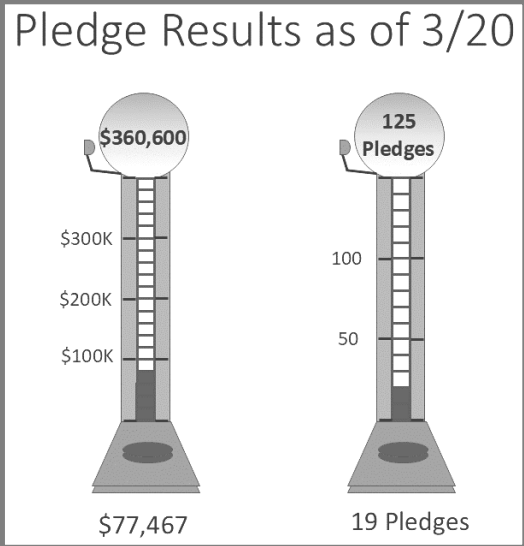
LEADING OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY

Larissa Riley
 Sue Werst
 Larissa Riley
 Dave Hagerstrom
 Melissa Lewis

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

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are given by Rev. Charlotte and Kenneth Bell, to the glory of God and in celebration of this afternoon's Service of Installation with Pastor Charlotte.

DID YOU KNOW... The Racial Justice Committee has a Lending Library located at the entrance to the church and it has books for both children and adults. Children's books include *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Chor, *POW Wow Day* by Traci Sorell, and *Dream Big, Little One* by Vashti Harrison; and for adults, *All That She Carried* by Toya Miles, *The Black Friend* by Frederick Joseph, and *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. *Submitted by the Racial Justice Committee*



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

THE LENTEN SUPPER SERIES, *Questions Jesus Asked*, continues on Wednesday, March 26, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Join us on six Wednesday evenings during Lent as we gather for a simple supper of soup and bread and explore six questions that Jesus asked in our Gospels that reflect the joys and challenges of being human. We'll gather in the second floor parlor for soup and then watch a short video before engaging in an informal discussion facilitated by Pastor Maureen. Those who can't be present in person are welcome to Zoom in for the video and discussion, and for supper as well if you'd like to eat with us from afar! Email pastormaureen@ccamherst.org to RSVP or to receive the Zoom link.

144 ENVELOPES FUNDRAISER CONTINUES: Our Senior Youth Group's *144 Envelopes Fundraiser*, to help pay for the 2025 Hurricane Helene Relief Mission Trip, is now underway. After worship, be sure to visit the bulletin board in the Community Room to learn more about the trip and check out the numbered envelopes decorated by the teens. It's easy to support the trip: just choose an envelope from 1 to 144 and make a donation in the amount equal to the number you chose. If you only have \$5 to give, or your child wants to donate \$1, that's great! We need every envelope to be selected in order to reach our goal of \$10,000. We are grateful for every dollar given.

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 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!

CCA Celebrates Pastor Charlotte!

All Congregational Church of Amherst
Members and Friends are invited to join us on
Sunday, March 23 at 3:00 p.m.
for the Installation of
The Rev. Charlotte E.Y. Bell
as our settled Associate Pastor!

A celebration of the Hillsborough Association
and the New Hampshire Conference of
the United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. Mary Luti, Guest Preacher
Our Chancel Choir will sing as well!

A reception will follow in our Community Room

Our Church Calendar March 23—29, 2025

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. 11:15 a.m. 11:15 a.m. 3:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Worship Fellowship Youth Choir Installation Service for Rev. Charlotte Bell Senior Youth Group
Monday	10:00 a.m.	WA Workshop
Wednesday	9:30 a.m. 6:30 p.m.	Staff Meeting Lenten Supper Series
Thursday	6:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Bell Choir Chancel Choir

Sunday, March 23, 2025



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. Our OGHS Sunday will be celebrated on March 30th.
- 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!

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Love



patience



faithfulness



kindness



Joy



gentleness



self-control



peace



goodness

