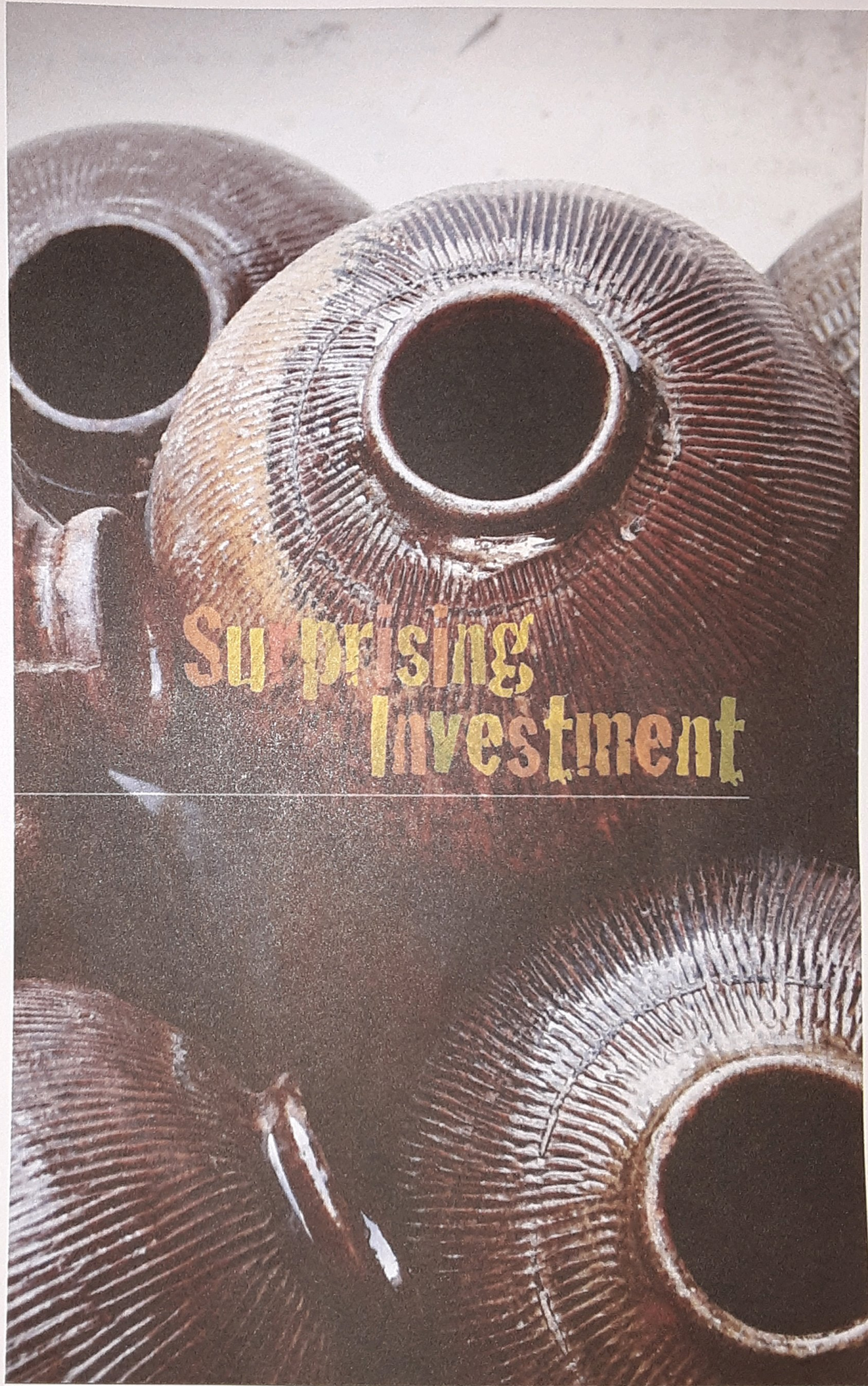


The Congregational Church of Laconia
United Church of Christ
18 Veterans Square
Laconia, NH 03246-3425

Rev. Neil H. Wilson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Paula B. Gile, Associate Pastor
K. Robert Bengtson, Director of Music
Church office: (603) 524-0668



Surprising
Investment

Gathering for Worship

September 29, 2019

www.laconiaucc.org

9:30 a.m.

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

+ * + * + * + * +

The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is a welcoming Christian community with a scriptural foundation seeking Justice and peace for all.

Preparing

Organ Prelude

K. Robert Bengtson

Meditative Thought *"If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough"* - Oprah Winfrey

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

"Celtic Alleluia"

Chancel Choir

Praising

Call to Worship (Congregation responds with bold print.)

When we are lost and uncertain,
God provides prophets, storytellers, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to guide us toward the truth.

When we are in need of rescue,
God provides the light.

When we are looking, seeking, and hoping,
God provides open arms to welcome us with love, faithfulness and mercy.

***Opening Hymn**

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

#1

Invocation (Unison)

God, you are wrapped in mystery, shrouded in light, unseen, but ever with us. Yet, you care for us—keeping us safe, protecting us, and answering when we call. It seems easier to cling to our bank accounts and place our trust in our possessions, but they are not what really matters. You are the true riches in our lives. Open our hearts to one another and to the needs of the world, that we may share your abundance, and find true life in your love. Our hope is in you, source of goodness and life. Incline your ear to us as we pray in the manner of Jesus: 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.

| | | |
|--|---|------------------|
| Musical Offering | <i>"I Will Arise and Go to Jesus"</i> | Chancel Choir |
| A Moment with Our Children | | |
| Passing of the Peace & the Gloria | | |
| | <i>Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle, Halle, Hall-lu-jah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah</i> | |
| | <u>Reflecting & Praying</u> | |
| Scripture Reading | 1 Timothy 6: 6-10 (NRSV) | Pew Bible p.1083 |
| Sermon | "Contentment " | Rev. Paula Gile |
| Meditative Moment | | |
| Prayer Preparation | <i>"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"</i> | Children Praying |
| | <i>Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your Spirit in this place; Lord, listen to your children praying; send us love, send us power, send us grace.</i> | |
| Pastoral Prayer | (Yellow prayer cards may be placed in the offering plate. Also you may go to the Church's website click on Prayer Wall and post your requests. www.laconiaucc.org) | |
| Blessing of the Scarves | | |
| Prayer Response | <i>"Amen"</i> | Chancel Choir |
| | <u>Committing</u> | |
| Stewardship Invitation | | |
| Offertory | <i>"How Marvelous Are the Works"</i> | Chancel Choir |
| Doxology | | |
| | <i>Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen</i> | |
| *Prayer of Consecration/Dedication | (Unison) | |
| | Generous God, we offer these gifts to do your work in this community and the world. May these gifts be signs of our faithfulness to you and to one another. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. | |
| | <u>Going to Serve</u> | |
| *Closing Hymn | <i>"Take My Gifts"</i> | #562 |
| Pastoral Benediction | | |
| Benediction Response | <i>"Go In Peace"</i> | |
| Organ Postlude | | |
| | *You may stand as able | |

This Week's Committee Meetings and Gatherings

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Today Sep 29- 9:30 a.m. | Sunday Worship |
| 10:30 a.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| 11:15 a.m. | Deacon's Retreat |
| 11:45 a.m. | Hand-Bell Practice |
| 4:00 p.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| 9:30 p.m. | Channel 25 Worship Broadcast |
| Tuesday Oct 1- 1:00 & 6:00 p.m. | Embracing an Adult Faith Study |
| 6:30 p.m. | Membership Committee Mtg |
| 7:00 p.m. | Stitches of Love |
| Wednesday Oct 2- 2:00 p.m. | Alzheimer/Dementia Support Groups |
| 6:30 p.m. | Outreach Committee Mtg |
| Thursday Oct 3- 5:30 p.m. | Stewardship Committee Mtg |
| 7:00 p.m. | Choir Practice |
| Friday Oct 4- 10:00 a.m. | Scarves in the Square |
| Saturday Oct 5- 11:00 a.m. | Mary Harrington Memorial Service |
| Next Sunday Oct 6- 9:30 a.m. | Sunday Worship |

Announcements

Today after coffee - A very short meeting In Beane Parlor for anyone interested in creating Advent calendar ornaments.

Tuesday October 1 Embracing an Adult Faith 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. in library
Every Tuesday in October we will gather for a five week study written by Marcus Borg. This video based series explores what it means to be Christian. There are few books available in the office for \$18, or you can order your own. Scholarships available.

Thursday through Sunday, Oct 3 - 6 Fall Clean up at Horton Center
Contact Tim Hughes thughes@nhucc.org or 603.545.9660

Thursday October 3 Deadline for Scarf Delivery for Scarves on the Square

Rummage Sale ~ Delivery dates: Oct. 7 - 10 from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Set up time: Oct. 10 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Thursday October 24 6:00 p.m. Spelling Bee
The Lakes Region Scholarship Foundation is looking for one or two spellers who might be interested in joining the team. The LRSF provides scholarships. Contact Jean Clarke at clarkefaily@metrocast.net or 455-9702.

Welcome & Information

Welcome to our service of worship! Please introduce yourself to those sitting near you and use a pew rack card to inform us of requests.

Wireless hearing assistance devices, back cushions, and large print bulletins are available; please ask an usher.

Nursery & Child Care: Children younger than 1st grade are welcome in the Nursery before the service begins or following the Moment with our Children. Please escort your child to the Nursery room across The Bridge and pick them up after the service. Visitors are always welcome!

Faith Formation for Children: After the Moment with our Children, children/youth in grades 1-8 are invited to meet across The Bridge in the Yellow Room. Confirmation students are welcome to join in the fun and assist the younger kids.

Yellow prayer request cards are available in pews. Write your request(s) and place them in the offering plate. Our prayer disciples will pray during the week.

Our Service is video recorded and published. Please speak to one of our ushers if you have any concerns.

Our Greeters today are Ila Mattila, Janet Janke

Today's Ushers are Carolyn, Bob, Jamie and Trevor Hunt

Today's Rose on the Altar ~ in honor of Betsy Fosburgh's 90th Birthday! Happy Birthday to you!

Altar Flowers today are *"In loving memory of Paul and Claudine Clement"* given by Warren Clement.

Join us for a time of fellowship downstairs following the service for refreshments served by the Worship and Music Ministries. Fair Trade coffee is served in biodegradable cups. We are a *Just Peace Church* caring for our environment.

Volunteer Positions at NH Conference Ministry

The NH Conference has volunteer positions available for dedicated individuals interested in a variety of topics including justice, peace, local church support, witness in the wider world, Christian formation, immigration, racism, and economic equality. Contact Pat Harris, chairperson of the Conference Nominating Committee at patharris.hollis@gmail.com.

September 29, 2019

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Surprising Investment
American Indian Ministry Sunday
United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday

Jeremiah, faced with a people and a situation devoid of hope did what you would expect a man of God to do. He engaged in a risky real estate transaction.

Okay, you're right. That's actually the very last thing you'd expect a man of God to do when faced with the destruction of his people, his holiest place of worship, his city and his culture.

You'd expect him to exercise prudence, to be careful, to guard what little he had against the coming difficulties. Instead Jeremiah negotiated the purchase of a piece of land.

Chief Seattle, leader of the Suquamish and Duwamish people in the Pacific Northwestern United States, said "humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."

Today's passage reminds us that God's children have not always gotten land ownership right. We have too often used land ownership as a mode of severing ourselves from our connection with all things. We have made land ownership a tool or a weapon, forgetting that our God is the God of all the world, not just the God of a single people. Forgetting the connection that binds us with all humanity, we have made land ownership a divine right in our own minds, even committed terrible atrocities to control the land we think we own.

Too often, land ownership has been a matter of greed controlled by violence, instead of a reason for hope and opportunity to experience God's grace and joy. What if we thought of stewardship of the land as our part of the web of a connected creation, rather than the opportunity to acquire resources? What if land ownership was not a divinely ordained right, but instead, we approached our care of all land as the joyful result of our interconnection with all beings.

Imagine if our approach to land ownership came from an attitude of abundance and grace. How would this have changed our history? Is there a way that we could bring that attitude with us into the future?

Today on American Indian Ministry Sunday, we recognize The Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). According to caimucc.com, CAIM "is comprised of five ministries with 22 congregations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota... We are an integral part of the life of the United Church of Christ. We maintain our Indian traditions by employing our Native values and cultures to witness in our communities through authentic and postcolonial Indian expressions of the Christian faith. We are a gathering 'place' for all UCC Indian people who seek such a place."

