

**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
LACONIA
A JUST PEACE AND OPEN & AFFIRMING
CONGREGATION
IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

September 24, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

Welcome to Worship at Congregational Church of Laconia. All are welcome here! Together, we sing hymns, listen to scripture, reflect on the Good News, share in prayers of thanksgiving and concern, and find the inspiration needed to go forth to serve others – spiritually renewed and refreshed. May that be so for all of us today!

A Morning Meditation

“When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion.”

Ethiopian Proverb

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
Interim Pastor

Campbell Lovett,

INTROIT

Celtic Alleluia

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

***HYMN # 42**

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

GATHERING PRAYER – *praying together*

Draw us together, Eternal One, from paths of aimless wandering. Lead us today toward the community you intend. Draw the fragments of our lives together into some meaningful whole. Help us deal with present concerns in constructive ways yet point us beyond ourselves to engage with you in larger issues. Help us feel the hunger and thirst of others; then lead your church to make a caring response. May your love fill us and overflow into other lives. Amen.

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (*using “sins” and “those who sin against us”*)

MINISTRY OF MUSIC “Take this Moment”
John L. Bell

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Lyllah Anstey
Matthew 20: 1 – 16 *Jesus tells the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.*

SERMON The Grace of Life Campbell Lovett

MUSICAL OFFERING Here I Am,
Lord *Dan Schutte*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE “God in your mercy...”
“Hear our prayers.”

***CLOSING HYMN # 484** O Come to Me, You Weary

BENEDICTION - *seated*

BENEDICTION RESPONSE Go in Peace

POSTLUDE

Today’s Altar Flowers are given In Celebration of Weddings
by Warren & Martha Clement

Participants in this morning’s service of worship: Pianist,
Lorraine Barrows; Media Technician, Mike Marshall; Reader,
Lyllah Anstey; Ushers; Catherine Tokarz and Louise Bastille;

Online Greeter, Brad Geltz; Interim Pastor, Campbell Lovett.
Coffee Hour hosts, Educational Ministries.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FALL FELLOWSHIP POTLUCK SUPPER: TONIGHT, 5-7 p.m.
Church Hall. Emilia Halstead, pastor of First Congregational Church in Concord, and her Jazz Ensemble. Please bring a dish to share and get ready to have fun!

NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH? Don't have a ride to church, but would like to come? The Caring Connection Program would like to offer you a ride. Church begins at 9:30 am each Sunday. Send an email to: mvkreitler@gmail.com

SCARVES & HATS IN THE SQUARE: Stitches of Love is getting ready for Scarves and Hats in the Square on Friday, November 3. Any styles or colors are welcome - for kids and adults! If you would like to contribute your hand-stitched projects, they can be dropped off in the Church Office.

MEN'S BREAKFAST: The next Men's Breakfast will be on Friday, September 29, 8 a.m. at the Water Street Café.

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST: Wednesday, October 11, 8:30 a.m. Please RSVP to Betty Bergstrom by October 7 - bettobergstrom@gmail.com

HANDS ACROSS THE TABLE: Volunteers are needed to help with serving and clean up duties at the Hands Across the Table weekly community meal on Wednesday, Oct. 11. If you would like to help, please contact Hollis.

EXPERIENCE TRANSFORMATION: October 21, 2023, 9:00 – 3:00.
You're cordially invited to the **222nd Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference, UCC**. This year, we're embracing the theme of "Turning the Tables," drawing inspiration from Matthew 21:12-16. Visit NHCUCC.org to learn more and to register.

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL: October 28th (prep Oct. 27th). Volunteers needed to bake pumpkin rolls or cookies and make chili. People also needed for prep, clean up and throughout the day in two-hour increments.

CHRISTMAS FAIR: Save the date - Saturday, Nov. 4, 9-3 p.m. (with set up Friday, Nov. 3). To volunteer or donate items, contact Hollis or call the Church.

A Statement of Solidarity and Support

The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, joins with others of goodwill in condemning the antisemitic graffiti recently found on buildings at the former State School. Antisemitic graffiti is a troubling sign of bigotry and prejudice that has no place in our community or country. Not speaking out against such hate tacitly condones the intolerance it represents. Therefore, this church publicly declares our stand against hatred and violence in every manifestation. We also proclaim our solidarity with our Jewish brothers and sisters of Laconia in a spirit of friendship and faith, and in the pursuit of justice and peace.

While law enforcement investigates this heinous crime, we will join local efforts that advocate against antisemitism, promote unity, foster respectful dialogue, and encourage empathy. We pray for a future of shalom where this testament of the ancient prophets will become a reality: "...they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."

The Church Council
Congregational Church of Laconia
September 20, 2023

Spirit of New Hampshire Award

The Congregational Church of Laconia has been selected to receive a Spirit of New Hampshire Award. The Spirit of NH Awards ceremony will be held at the Bank of NH Stage in Concord on Monday, October 23rd. We were nominated by Paula Ferenc, Executive Director of the Belknap House, who believes that our "service to the community goes above and beyond," specifically highlighting the Thursday night meals that we have provided weekly for the Belknap House since 2020. The Spirit of NH Awards are New Hampshire's largest volunteer recognition event, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. A slate of more than 60 award recipients spanning all ages, groups and organizations will be recognized. Well done, Belknap House volunteers!