First Congregational Church Wilmot

An Open & Affirming Racial Justice Congregation
Of the United Church of Christ
Gathered in 1829

No matter who you are or where you are on your life's journey,
you are welcome here!

Order of Worship

October 18, 2026

Guest Speaker, Nikki Shults

Rev. Rachelle Eaton, Minister
Elaine Cox, Music Director

MORNING WORSHIP October 18, 2026

A TIME OF GATHERING AND SHARING

Prelude

Words of Welcome and Announcements

Bringing of the Light of Christ

A Time of Silence to Center Ourselves

Our worship service is taking place on N'dakinna, the traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki, Penacook and Wabanaki Peoples past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land and waterways and the people who have stewarded N'dakinna throughout the generations.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We bid you welcome, you who come with weary spirit seeking rest,
Who come with troubles that are too much with you, who come hurt and afraid.

We bid you welcome, you who come with hope in your heart,
Who come with anticipation in your step, who come proud and joyous.

We bid you welcome, you who are seekers of new faith,
Who come to probe and explore, who come to learn.

We bid you welcome, you who enter into this hall as a homecoming,
Who have found here room for your spirit, who find in this people a family.

ALL: Whoever you are, wherever you are on your journey.
We bid you welcome.

INVOCATION

Welcoming God, we can all remember times when we were newcomers or outsiders, hoping to be included. We remember clearly how it felt to be given the cold shoulder, or how it felt to be invited in with a friendly smile. We remember that on the cross, Christ spread his arms to embrace the whole world. Through your grace, you have welcomed each of us into your family just as we are, without preconditions. Give us that grace to welcome each other as we would want to be welcomed, knowing that it is within the safety of a caring community that we become free enough to change and grow into all that we are meant to be. Give us the grace to be that community for all who need it. Amen.

***HYMN "Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race" Chalice #485**

1. Diverse in culture, nation, race,
We come together by your grace.
God, let us be a meeting ground
Where hope and healing love are found.

2. God, let us be a bridge of care
Connecting people everywhere.
Help us confront all fear and hate
And lust for power that separate.

3. When chasms widen, storms arise,
O Holy Spirit, make us wise.
Let our resolve, like steel, be strong
To stand with those who suffer wrong.

4. God, let us be a table spread
With gifts of love and broken bread,
Where all find welcome, grace attends,
And enemies arise as friends.

MOMENT FOR MISSION - NEWS FROM FIJI Sally Olsen

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Scripture Readings Leviticus 19:33-34, Matthew 22:34-40

Reflection Nikki Shults

***HYMN "Abraham Journeyed To a New Country" Insert**

Abraham journeyed to a new country;
Sarah went with him, journeying too.
Slaves down in Egypt fled Pharaoh's army;
Ruth left the home and people she knew.

Mary and Joseph feared Herod's order;
Soldiers were coming! They had to flee.
Taking young Jesus, they crossed the border;
So was our Lord a young refugee.

Some heard the promise — God's hand would bless them!
Some fled from hunger, famine and pain.
Some left a place where others oppressed them;
All trusted God and started again.

Did they know hardship? Did they know danger?
Who shared a home or gave them some bread?
Who reached a hand to welcome the stranger?
Who saw their fear and gave hope instead?

God, our own families came here from far lands;
We have been strangers, "aliens" too.
May we reach out and offer a welcome
As we have all been welcomed by you.

MORNING PRAYERS

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer followed by The Lord's Prayer

Our * … 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen

**We have come to know God by many different names and images. Please use the one which speaks from your heart today.(e.g. Father, Mother, Creator, God…)*

Prayer Response "Restless Weaver" Chalice #658, Verse 4

Restless Weaver, still conceiving new life now and yet to be.
Binding all your vast creation in one living tapestry.
You have called us to be weavers. Let your love guide all we do.
With your Reign of Peace our pattern, we will weave your world anew.

THE GIVING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

Doxology** ***NCH #778

Praise God, from whom all blessing flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below:
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

***HYMN "We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky" NCH #563**

1. We cannot own the sunlit sky, the moon, the wildflowers growing,
For we are part of all that is within life's river flowing,
With open hands receive and share the gifts of God's creation,
That all may have abundant life in every earthly nation.

2. When bodies shiver in the night and weary, wait for morning,
When children have no bread but tears, and war horns sound their warning,
God calls humanity to wake, to join in common labor,
That all may have abundant life in oneness with their neighbor.

3. God calls humanity to join as partners in creating
A future free from want or fear, life's goodness celebrating.
That new world beckons from afar, invites our shared endeavor,
That all may have abundant life and peace endure forever.

***CLOSING CIRCLE AND COMMISSIONING ONE ANOTHER**

Go into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

***SUNG RESPONSE "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" Chalice #433**

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.
When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

We extend a special welcome to our guests from Building Community in New Hampshire. Thank you for the work you do to support New Americans and for coming to share with us about it today.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Tuesday, October 20	**1:00 pm –** Justice and Witness
	2:00 pm – Church Council
	3:00 pm – Appreciative Inquiry Second Round
Thursday, October 22	**6:00 pm -** AA Men's Beginners Big Book Step Meeting
	7:00 pm – Appreciative Inquiry Second Round on Zoom
Sunday, October 25	**12:00 pm -** Appreciative Inquiry Second Round
Sunday, November 1	**3:00 pm** – Rachelle's Installation

First Congregational Church Staff and Officers

Ministers: Members and Friends of the Congregation
Settled Minister: Rev. Rachelle Eaton
Moderator: Bob Evans
Clerk: Open Position
Director of Music: Elaine Cox
Deacon of the Month: October: Michiko Yamaguchi
Religious Ed Director: Nancy Allenby
Secretary: Mary Heath

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