



The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
30 North Pleasant Street
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Rev. Andrew Nagy-Benson, Pastor
Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.
New Light Service at 4:00 p.m.

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What We Believe

Our Covenant

The Congregational Church of Middlebury, United Church of Christ, is an open and affirming church. We welcome you, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey.

We are a self-governing community of faith in covenant with the United Church of Christ, active in the local and global mission of the church. It is our aim to offer welcoming hospitality to all. Our belief in the one God of love compels us to embrace one another, people from other Christian denominations, followers of other faiths, and individuals who do not identify as religious at all. Our goal is to see Christ in every human being and to value each person as an individual. We endeavor to love each other as God loves us.

We are a church that is constantly growing in faith, with great diversity in conviction. There is no creed you must profess to be a member. Instead, we encourage one another to learn and grow in faith, to own and speak our convictions freely, and to respect those who believe differently from us. Indeed, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians, we long to live a life worthy of the calling we have received, to be humble, gentle, and patient with each other, bearing with one another in love and making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Our unity comes from gathering and living in the name of Jesus, the one whom Christians have called Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Christ, the Messiah of God. For some of us, we follow Jesus because we believe he taught and modeled the quintessential life of goodness. Jesus showed us the way, the truth, and the life lived with grace. He taught us to love God with our whole being, to love others as we love ourselves, and to labor for the reign of God through the pursuit of justice and peace. For others of us, we also follow Jesus because we believe he was the incarnation of the triune God. In his life, death and resurrection, Jesus testified to the reality of God-with-us. Jesus is the Son of God who came into the world so that we might be reconciled with God through grace, and experience new life in the Spirit of divine love.

Within our faith community, we embrace very different understandings of Jesus and the meaning of his life and death. Nonetheless, we are united in our allegiance to Jesus as the heart of our fellowship. His enduring presence lives in our regard for one another, as well as in our outreach to those beyond our congregation.

As followers of Jesus, we recognize that we are on a journey of personal and spiritual growth. We grapple with questions of life and death and the mysteries of faith. No matter where we are on our journey, we are committed to supporting one another in nurturing our spiritual lives, throughout every stage of life. We embrace a multi-faceted ministry to children and young adults, while also offering educational opportunities for adults and pastoral care for all. We give individual care to the homebound, the sick, the elderly, and the dying with a love grounded in faith.

As a Christian congregation, we honor scripture and tradition as pillars of our faith. In these texts and histories, we are heirs to a rich and varied treasure of stories, myth, poetry, and music. For some of us, the Bible represents the Word of God, while for others it is one source of wisdom and knowledge among many. Nonetheless, we are intentional in our commitment to study Christian scripture and tradition for wisdom, moral guidance, and an understanding of God and the world in which we live. No matter our approach to scripture and tradition, we are united in our conviction that “God is still speaking.”

As a community of faith, we assemble weekly for public worship. We pray privately and together, share music, and celebrate the sacraments. We deepen our connection to God and each other through scripture and sermon. We come together as the Body of Christ to be present for one another and in the presence of God. For it is written that, “...where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Matthew 18:20).

Our congregation embraces two sacraments: Baptism and Communion. The sacrament of Baptism symbolizes God’s gracious claim on each of us and welcomes us into the church, the Body of Christ. We baptize during worship when the community is present because baptism includes the community’s promise of love and care for the baptized.

We believe that all are welcome at Christ’s table for the sacrament of Communion. As long as there has been church, Christians have come together to break bread and share a cup in remembrance of the life and death of Jesus Christ. For some of us this provides a deeply spiritual and personal connection to God, while for others of us it is a symbolic meal representing the love that binds us together as a community. However we experience the meal, we celebrate Christ’s presence in our midst.

United as a community by our allegiance to Jesus, we are called to work together to help realize the reign of God on Earth. We do this by promoting peace and justice in our communities, our nation, and the world. We promote peace by building strong communities and seeking nonviolent solutions in situations of conflict. We promote justice by caring for the sick, feeding the hungry, and helping the disadvantaged among us, both at home and abroad. As stewards of God’s creation, we strive to protect Earth and all the gifts it brings us. As Christians, we confidently look for opportunities to partner across denominational and interfaith lines to foster cooperation and good will in the world.

This is who we are: A church united in its diversity, with a faith centered on Jesus, committed to living out the Christian vision captured in the words of the prophet Micah: “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)