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Did you know Anna Garlin Spencer...

Born in 1851, Anna Garlin Spencer is known as a woman of many firsts. She was the first woman ordained as a minister in the state of Rhode Island (an 'independent' serving an independent chapel), the first woman to serve as a leader in Ethical Culture. She was also a pioneer in the profession of social work, a college teacher, an author and expert on the family.

She is also known as a peace activist, woman's rights reformer, temperance worker, seminary professor, child labor reformer and founder of the NAACP. Her greatest passion was that all humankind reach its highest potential. This required the emancipation of all souls – male and female – from earthly expectations.

She is quoted as saying, *"Slowly...the truth is drawing upon women, and still more slowly upon men, that woman is no stepchild of nature, no Cinderella of fate to be dowered only by fairies and the Prince; but that for her and in her, as truly as for and in man, life has wrought its great experiences, its master attainments, its supreme human revelations of the stuff of which worlds are made."*

...was a Congregationalist?

Celebrating 400 Years of American Congregationalism
Learn more about our Congregational History at naccc.org



Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way.

C: We come, aware of our place as 21st Century pilgrims.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

Invocation (in unison)

Let Your holy presence be among us, O Lord, in this year of remembrance, that we, being made aware of the conviction and character of those before us, may enter into our inheritance, standing firm in the convictions for which they ventured to this new world freedom. Let our forebears' dedication to freedom and righteousness be their gift to us this day, and all our tomorrows. Amen

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Joel Harvey Linsley...

The Rev. Dr. Joel Harvey Linsley was born on July 15, 1790, in Cornwall, Vermont, to Levina Gilbert and Joel Linsley. His family later moved to New York where his father served as a judge. The younger Joel graduated from Middlebury College, then studied and practiced law for several years before becoming a pastor.

He served South Congregational Church at Hartford, and Park Street Congregational Church in Boston, where those attending heard their Sunday School children perform "America" (My Country 'Tis of Thee) for the very first time. The tune—which is also used for "God Save the Queen"—was adapted by Park Street Organist Lowell Mason to fit the lyrics penned by Samuel Francis Smith.

In 1835, the trustees of Marietta College recruited Joel to serve as the college's first president, a position he served from 1835–1845. Linsley began his work at Marietta College, and served as the minister of Marietta's First Congregational Church, after the Rev. Luther Bingham—founder of the Marietta Collegiate Institute—had been dismissed from service.

By the end of 1846, he accepted pastorship of the Second Congregational Church in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he served until his death in 1868. *The Marietta Register* published an obituary announcing his death on March 22, 1868, and included commentary about his time at Marietta College: "As President of the College, he was active and faithful, devoting himself unspairingly [sic] to the interests of the Institution, winning the respect of his associates, and the love of his pupils."

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L: We come to worship, celebrating 400 years since the landing of the Pilgrims.

C: They founded a life together based on faith in God and Christ's constant care.

L: They dared to rise up and create a country based entirely on leaning on God.

C: And so we come week after week, but especially this year thanking God for our life together as God's Pilgrim people.

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to you and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know John Cotton...

John Cotton, born on December, 4 1585, was a clergyman in England and the American colonies and, by most accounts, the preeminent minister and theologian of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

John studied five years at Trinity College, Cambridge, and later for nine years at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He built a reputation as a scholar and preacher in England, but later moved to New England. As a Puritan, he wanted to do away with the ceremony and vestments associated with the established Church of England and preach in a simpler manner. He felt that the English church needed significant reforms, but he was adamant about not separating from it; his preference was to change it from within.

John was highly sought as a minister in Massachusetts and was accepted as second pastor of the Boston church. He generated more religious conversions in the first six months than had been made the whole previous year. He wrote many letters and books on the governance of the New England churches, and it was he who called this form of church polity "Congregationalism."

Clergy and laity in New England regarded Cotton very highly for his scholarship. He became more conservative with age. He battled the separatist attitude of Roger Williams and advocated severe punishment for those whom he deemed heretics, such as Samuel Gorton and Obadiah Holmes. He was a scholar, an avid letter writer, and the author of many books, and was considered the "prime mover" among New England's ministers. He was grandfather of Cotton Mather. He died on December 23, 1652 at the age of 67, following a month-long illness.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith* AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALISM SINCE 1620

Call to Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future.

Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed.

Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Phyllis Wheatly...

Phyllis Wheatly is the name her slave master gave to her. She was sold into slavery at about age seven in West Africa. She survived the "Middle Passage." The ship she came on was the Phillis, so they called her Phyllis. She was sold in Massachusetts in about 1761. Yes, there was slavery in Massachusetts.

Her master's daughter Mary taught her how to read and write. She took to it so well her master's family were delighted. Then she read Greek and Latin classics. She began to write poetry.

The Wheatlys were so proud of Phyllis they took her with them when they went to England in 1773. There she met the Lord Mayor of London, and the Countess of Huntington helped get a volume of her poems published. Many people had trouble believing she wrote the poems. She was the first African and first African woman to be published. Her writing was acclaimed!

In 1778 she was freed in her master's will. Soon she married John Peters, a free black grocer. Hard times came. All her children died young. Her poetry was about her faith which she learned at Old South Church. It was dear to her. She wrote many elegies about the sun, but little about Africa. She died young at age 31.

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Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God, we come

C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls

C: And set us on the path again, of redemption

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will

C: To continue this journey toward the community of heaven

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ's new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Richard Mather...

The Mathers were the First Family of the Massachusetts Bay Colony during the first century of its existence. Richard Mather was the family patriarch who came to the Colony in 1635. He was the father of Increase Mather, and the grandfather of Cotton Mather.

Richard trained for the ministry at Oxford and was ordained in 1618. In 1634 he was removed from his parish and forbidden to preach due to his congregational convictions. He decided to move his family to the Bay Colony and quickly became one of its leading ministers. Mather was one of the ministers who, in 1640, produced *The Bay Psalm Book*, the first book published in the Colonies. The Psalms were translated to be sung to the meter of familiar English tunes for use by the churches in worship.

Richard Mather's greatest contribution to American Congregationalism came when he was chosen by the Cambridge Synod to write the first draft of the Platform of Congregational Polity and Discipline. The Synod abridged and modified Mather's draft, but the final product which the Synod adopted in 1648 was largely his. The Cambridge Platform is the clearest statement of American Congregational polity that has ever been written. It affirms the independence of each congregation, but equally affirms that a strong cooperative bond exists between them that creates an affectionate family of sister churches. Local churches are related to each other to promote their common good. They recognize each other's members, and consult on matters of mutual concern.

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Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know William Goodell...

William Goodell was a Congregational missionary born at Templeton, Massachusetts, in 1792, and was educated at Phillips Academy, Dartmouth College, and Andover Seminary.

In 1822, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent him to Malta and then on to Beirut, where he aided in establishing the station which became the center of the Syrian mission. In 1828, on account of threatened war between England and Turkey, the missionaries returned to Malta, where he printed literature for the mission. Later, in Constantinople, he started the Armeno-Turkish mission.

In 1828, the missionaries removed to Malta, where William continued to prepare and print books for the mission. In 1831, the way having been opened by the destruction of the Turkish fleet at Navarino, he went to Constantinople (Istanbul) where he opened the Armenian-Turkish mission.

During his missionary life he and his wife cheerfully endured many trials and perils and had to move their residence 33 times in 29 years. One of his chief labors was a 20-year effort to translate the Bible into Armeno-Turkish (Turkish written in Armenian letters), a task in which he collaborated with his fellow ABCFM missionary, Simeon Howard Calhoun.

William left the mission field in his retirement, returning to the United States, and died on February 18, 1867, in the home of his son, Dr. William Goodell, a noted specialist in obstetrics and gynecology, and the discoverer of the Goodell Sign, a clinical observation used to diagnose pregnancy in its early stages. **...was a Congregationalist?**

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400 YEARS OF *Faith* AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALISM SINCE 1620

Call To Worship

L: Hear ye hear ye, descendants of the Pilgrims

C: This is the appointed time to assemble in this meetinghouse

L: To praise God in the remembrances of our spiritual ancestors

C: So shall we sing and pray this hour, in thanks-giving for the men and women of our past

L: God continues to give us a pilgrim's heart

C: Praise the Lord!

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Sarah Lanman Huntington Smith...

Sarah Lanman Huntington Smith was born June 18, 1802, in Norwich, Connecticut. At twenty-five she distributed tracts to nearby Mohegans, bringing along an Indian girl to interpret. She started a Sabbath school, and served as its teacher. She petitioned state and federal government agencies to fund a native school and took up the cause of the Choctaw and Pequot who were being forcibly removed from their land. She also engaged in benevolent work, though she also expressed discontent at being unable to preach.

In 1833, she married Eli Smith, a veteran ABCFM missionary on his way back to Beirut. Her previous mission experience with the Native Americans prepared her for her new mission context. Sarah learned Arabic, French, and Italian, studied the culture, and helped her husband with translation work.

She looked for opportunities to evangelize, so she founded a school for girls from Christian, Druze, Muslim, and Jewish families, and started prayer meetings for women. Believing that Christian ministry should focus more on deeds than words, she developed a ministry of hospitality and service to the poor. After only three years in the field, Smith died on September 20, 1836.

Despite her short missionary tenure, Smith offers us some of the most thoughtful and culturally-sensitive, female mission theory of the period.

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Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher (Adapted from articles by Anneke Helen Stasson and Carol W. Kimball, with thanks to Rev. Rae Munsell)

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



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Did you know Abigail Adams...

Born Abigail Smith, our second First Lady was the first to live in the White House. Like her husband, she is often labeled a “Unitarian,” but for most of her life she would have been known as a Congregationalist.

She was descended from seventeenth-century Puritan settlers, and her father was a Congregational pastor. Abigail was baptized at North Parish Congregational Church in Weymouth, Massachusetts. She and John Adams were third cousins who had known each other since they were children.

Although education for women was not highly valued in her childhood, Abigail was taught by her mother and other family members. She read widely, and she became an eloquent writer. She made a serious study of French and English literature (with a strong taste for Shakespeare and for our most famous Congregationalist writer—John Milton), and she was unafraid to express her opinions on government and on other issues, such as the rights of women.

President Adams valued her advice very highly—so highly that some of his critics referred to Abigail as “Mrs. President.” Often, Abigail’s political views were different from her husband’s, and she did not hesitate to tell him so. In 1818, at age 73, Abigail died leaving her husband and best friend a widower for the last few years of his life.

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C: When hearty pilgrim souls measured the cost

L: And made the long voyage with hopes of something new

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Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Henry Obookiah...

Originally named Opukaha'ia, the man who came to be known as Henry Obookiah was never able to fulfill his dream of returning to his native Hawaii to preach the Gospel, but he had an influence in New England, including his inspiring other New Englanders to evangelize in the Hawaiian Islands.

Henry was born about 1792 and soon orphaned. Raised by an uncle to be a kahuna, Henry decided he would rather leave Hawaii. Serving on an American ship and traveling all around the world for two years, Henry finally ended up living with the ship's captain and his family in New Haven, Connecticut. Edwin Dwight, a Yale student who was the son of Yale's president, tutored Henry and taught him to read English. His reading taught him that the "gods" of his native land were no more real than those ridiculed by the Old Testament prophets. Soon, Henry was living with the Dwight family and participating in their daily family prayers.

Working on New England farms, Henry would witness to the farmers about his faith in Jesus. He also kept studying in his spare time. Connecticut churches began inviting him to speak in their worship services. Meanwhile, Henry began a translation of the Bible into the Hawaiian language and also started writing a grammar and dictionary of that language. Attending classes at Yale, Henry studied Latin, Hebrew, geometry, and geography. During the same period of time, he also completed his autobiography. In 1817, Henry enrolled in the Foreign Mission School that had been organized by Congregationalists. Before he could return to Hawaii to evangelize there, he died in 1818 of typhus. However, he had strongly influenced Hiram Bingham, a Congregational pastor who went to Hawaii in his place.

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Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



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Did you know Harriet Beecher Stowe...

Some would say Harriet could write her own story since she became a famous writer. In 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It focused on slavery and energized the anti-slavery forces of our nation. Many people named their daughters Eva after one of the characters.

Most of Harriet's family had been involved in church and anti-slavery activities. Her father was a minister. Brother Henry was a great preacher in Brooklyn. Brother Edward was with Elijah Lovejoy when the mob killed him and destroyed his abolitionist press in Alton, Illinois. Edward went on to pastor the Congregational Church in Galesburg, Illinois, and inspire Mother Bickerdyke in her nursing and organizing work during the Civil War. Her husband was a minister, too, and a college professor.

Harriet wrote a cookbook and about twenty books in total. She spoke all over the nation when many thought women should not speak in public. She met, laughed and joked with President Lincoln, relieving some of the sadness and fear of news of the War. She was grateful for the development of the railroads that got her "swiftly" around the country. Her books enabled her to have homes in Hartford and Florida for winters.

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Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



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Did you know Gordon Hall...

Gordon Hall was born on 8 April 1784 in Tolland, Connecticut. He graduated from Williams College and Andover Seminary, joining a group of students interested in foreign missions, including Adoniram Judson, Samuel John Mills, Samuel Newell, Samuel Nott, and Luther Rice. This led to the formation of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Having been appointed as a missionary under the new agency in September 1811, Gordon also attended medical lectures to assist his mission work.

In India, he preached in the English church, prepared literature in Marathi language, and gave medical treatments to English and Indians. He opened the first of thirty-five schools in 1814 and supervised their operation throughout his ministry. He did evangelistic work in Bombay and provided medical services in Hindu temples and in bazaars. In March 1826, he contracted cholera and died.

Together with Samuel Newell in 1818, he had written "The Conversion of the World, or the Claims of the Six Hundred Millions." In it, they "proposed a strategy whereby 30,000 missionaries could reach every person on earth," arguing "It is the duty of Christians to send forth preachers in sufficient numbers to furnish the means of instruction to the whole world."

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Call To Worship

L: Laus Deo.

C: Praise be to God .

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship.

C: Laus Deo. We gather to praise and thank God for this hour.

L: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher



Did you know Donald Mullen...

The Reverend Donald Mullen was a gentle giant in modern Congregational history. Throughout his long ministry, Don remained active in the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches from 1990 until his death in 2019.

A passionate advocate of the practice of silence, meditation and mindfulness, Don was often found leading prayer and healing services at pastoral spiritual retreats. He was a pastor's pastor, who served numerous Congregational churches; including Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Texas.

Don was especially concerned about the issues of mental health and chronic homelessness in Terre Haute, Indiana. He worked with his church and the community to find solutions. As efforts to seek funding for the needed housing grew, Mental Health Partners of America became a partner. He helped begin and complete the construction of many apartment buildings including one created exclusively for military veterans who are chronically homeless and with disabilities.

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Historical story by: *The Congregationalist*, vol. 171, no. 2. June 2019.

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Emma Darling Cushman...

Emma Darling Cushman was born in Burlington, New York. At a time when few women attended school, Emma studied nursing in college and, in 1900, joined the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions.

Emma went to Central Turkey where she helped run the American Hospital at Konya for several years. When the Ottomans ordered all foreigners to leave, Emma refused, though the rest of the American staff left during WWI. She continued to operate the hospital and was granted the title "Acting Consul of the Allies and Neutral Nations."

Starting in 1915, the Ottoman government carried out the systematic extermination of 1.5 million Armenians in what became known as the Armenian Genocide, leaving countless children orphaned. Emma began rescuing Armenian orphans from the streets and placing them in safe homes and basements. When she ran out of hiding places, she turned her hospital into an orphanage, which eventually held over 1,000 children who would have otherwise faced near-certain death.

The war raged on for three more years and so did Emma's tireless humanitarianism. In addition to managing the hospital and operating the orphanage, she oversaw prisoner exchanges and millions of dollars in relief funds.

As the war came to a close, Emma's efforts only expanded. She worked with the Near East Relief agency and newly formed League of Nations to reclaim orphans from Turkish homes. More than 60,000 children were rescued by Emma and others. She died of black water fever in 1930 in Cairo, Egypt.

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Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know John J. Shipherd...

John Jay "Father" Shipherd co-founded both Oberlin and Olivet Colleges. He envisioned an idealistic Christian community. He had the radical idea of admitting both men and women to college without regard to race. Oberlin was the first co-educational college in the United States.

Shipherd was inspired by the evangelist Charles G. Finney. With his friend Philo P. Stewart he ventured into northern Ohio to found a colony and educational institute based on idealistic Christian beliefs. They received support from the Tappan brothers in New York for their work. It was the Tappans who insisted that students be accepted "without regard to race."

Even with support from the East money was tight. From the Oneida Institute in western New York they adopted the idea of being a manual labor college where the students did many of the chores of daily life to keep costs down.

John Jay Shipherd became so central to the efforts he came to be called Father Shipherd. He wanted many similar schools to be created and left Oberlin to found Olivet in Michigan.

...was a Congregationalist?

Celebrating 400 Years of American Congregationalism
Learn more about our Congregational History at naccc.org

Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God, we come

C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls

C: And set us on the path again, of redemption

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will

C: To continue this journey toward the community of heaven

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ's new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know John Winthrop...

In 1630 John Winthrop, a lawyer and layman, preached one of the most influential sermons ever preached because of the lasting influence it has had over America's vision of itself. Winthrop was the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

He delivered his sermon on the eve of a voyage that brought 1000 Puritan colonists to the shores of Massachusetts where they founded the city of Boston. Winthrop gave it the title, A Model of Christian Charity. It was intended to inspire and warn the colonists as they were about to embark on this new venture in America.

The sermon set forth the godly vision which the Puritan colonists brought with them to America. Participation in the Bay colony meant that each family had entered into a covenant with God. If they were faithful, God would bless them. If they were unfaithful, they would suffer adversity. Therefore, he said, they must be "knit together" by the "bond of love."

To thrive in their dangerous venture, they must work together to make the Massachusetts Bay Colony a "Model of Christian Charity". They must bear one another's burdens, bound together by one purpose, committed as a whole to the common good rather than chasing after selfish interests. If they succeeded, they would become a shining city on a hill that other nations would admire and imitate. John Winthrop's sermon is one of the greatest examples of Congregationalism's legacy to the American spirit.

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Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing.

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known.

L: The world's constant oppressors will cease from distressing

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God's pilgrim people.

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people.

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ's new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson L

liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Mary Richardson Walker...

Mary Richardson Walker was a prominent American missionary. Having attended Maine Wesleyan Seminary, Mary wanted to be a missionary, but was initially turned down by the ABCFM, because she was not married.

Through a friend, William Thayer, she met Elkanah Walker, who also wanted to be a missionary. He proposed marriage within 48 hours of their meeting! That wedding took place March 5, 1838, just in time to depart for the Pacific Northwest with other missionaries on March 7.

The trip took five months, the missionary party arriving on August 29, 1838. Mary Walker was pregnant and traveled side-saddle for most of the 1900 miles. Her son, Cyrus Hamlin Walker, born December 7, 1838, was the first white male born in the Oregon Territory.

Over the next 14 years, she had seven more children, and she was the grandmother of Ruth Karr McKee (1874–1951), a women's civic leader in the state of Washington for many years, and for several years a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Washington.

Mary served among the Spokane tribal people at the Tshimakain Mission, and later settled in Forest Grove, Oregon, where she died at age 86.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Call To Worship

L: Laus Deo.

C: Praise be to God.

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship.

C: Laus Deo. We gather to praise and thank God for this hour.

L: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know James O’Kelly...

James O’Kelly apparently never called himself a Congregationalist, but without him and his associates we would not be called the National Association of Congregational *Christian* Churches.

O’Kelly was a patriot during the American Revolution, a lay preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and later ordained. O’Kelly opposed the episcopal form of church government, and he tried to lead a reformation in the Methodist movement, urging that they adopt a congregational polity. Unsuccessful, O’Kelly and his allies organized the Republican Methodist Church. He wrote these words: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, who by a gracious Providence hath placed me in a free country, where I am secure from the rage of Kings and Bishops.”

O’Kelly and his followers rejected prescribed creeds, teaching that Christians ought to be governed only by the Bible. Uniting with former Baptists and Presbyterians who had similar views, the “Christian” churches formed what would become known as the Christian Connexion.

In all but name, these churches were congregational, so it seemed natural that they would join the Congregational movement. In 1931, the National Council of Congregational Churches (which already absorbed the Congregational Methodist Church and the German Evangelical Protestant Church) welcomed the Christian Connexion into the renamed General Council of Congregational Christian Churches.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord’s blessing

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known

L: Come, let us worship as God’s pilgrim people

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God’s pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ’s new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Elizabeth Hopkins...

Elizabeth Hopkins bore her son Oceanus while on the Mayflower on their way to “New” England. She was Steven Hopkins' second wife. With her step children, Constance and Giles and her little daughter, Damaris, she endured the rigors of the first years in the new world. Along came her other children, Caleb, Ruth, Deborah and Elizabeth.

She helped manage the large estate of servants and cattle. Her household was criticized for letting men drink in their house on the Lord's Day, both before and after the meeting, and allowing servants and other to drink more than for ordinary refreshing and play games, too.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way .

C: We come, aware of our place as 21st Century pilgrims.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

Invocation (in unison)

Let Your holy presence be among us, O Lord, in this year of remembrance, that we, being made aware of the conviction and character of those before us, may enter into our inheritance, standing firm in the convictions for which they ventured to this new world freedom. Let our forebears' dedication to freedom and righteousness be their gift to us this day, and all our tomorrows. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Francis Nathan Peloubet...

Francis Nathan Peloubet was born December 2, 1831, in New York City and grew up in Bloomfield, New Jersey. He was an American Congregational clergyman and Sunday School promoter.

A graduate of Williams College and Bangor Theological Seminary, he considered becoming a missionary (he even studied the Tamil language for several months) but decided to be a pastor.

He was ordained in 1857 and served several churches in Massachusetts from 1857 to 1883, with a brief stint as a chaplain during the Civil War. During his first pastorate, he married Mary Abby Thaxter, whom he had known in Maine. They had five daughters.

His notes on quarterly Sunday School lessons gained wide acceptance. By his death in 1920 Peloubet's *Notes* (known as *Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lesson*) numbered 44 volumes. His other work included a Sunday school hymnal and a revision of Smith's *Bible Dictionary*.

He once wrote, "Jesus went away not only to prepare a place for us so that it will be ready for us as one by one we go home, but also to prepare us for the place, to fit us for heavenly employments and heavenly service." He died on March 27, 1920.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call to Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future.

Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed.

Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Mary Dyer...

"In obedience to the will of the Lord I came, and in his will I abide faithful unto death." These were Mary Dyer's final words to the General Court before she was taken to the Boston Commons and hanged for heresy.

Mary Dyer's tumultuous religious life was a circuitous spiritual sojourn which took her from Old England, where she was persecuted for her Puritan beliefs, to New England where she was persecuted and eventually martyred at the hands of American Puritans for her Quaker beliefs. Mary and William Dyer joined thousands of other Puritans seeking freedom and opportunity in a Great Migration that took them to New England. They arrived in Boston in 1635 just as the Antinomian Controversy was breaking out. At its center was the charismatic and articulate Anne Hutchinson, with whom Mary formed a fast friendship. Over the next two years Anne acquired a large following.

Official opposition mounted leading to a heresy trial ending in Anne's conviction. Anne and her sympathizers, which included the Dyers, were exiled. The Dyers settled in Narraganset Bay. In 1651, they moved back to England, which was then ruled by Puritans. This was a time of religious ferment which saw the rise of many radical sects, and Mary was converted to Quakerism. Its doctrine of God's Inner Light in everyone was abhorrent to Puritanism. In 1656, Quakers were banned from the Bay Colony. But the ban attracted Quakers like moths to a flame. Mary Dyer was such a one, whose repeated returns to Boston after several severe warnings resulted in her execution.

A statue of Mary Dyer is located on the grounds of the Massachusetts State House. Its inscription reads, "Witness for Religious Freedom Hanged on Boston Common 1660."

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way.

C: We come, aware of our place as 21st Century pilgrims.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

Invocation (in unison)

Let Your holy presence be among us, O Lord, in this year of remembrance, that we, being made aware of the conviction and character of those before us, may enter into our inheritance, standing firm in the convictions for which they ventured to this new world freedom. Let our forebears' dedication to freedom and righteousness be their gift to us this day, and all our tomorrows. Amen

Contributed by Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Lemuel Haynes...

Lemuel Haynes was born in Connecticut in 1753, son of a Scottish indentured servant woman and an African-American slave. Abandoned by his parents, he became an indentured servant for John Haynes until age twenty-one. After reaching his majority, Haynes built his own house. In 1775, after the battles at Lexington and Concord, he enlisted in the Minutemen as a private. He served during the siege of Boston and later was a member of Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys. When the Revolution was over, Haynes returned to his farm and to his studies in theology, Latin, and Greek. Licensed to preach in 1780, he was called to the Congregational Church of Middle Granville, Massachusetts, the African-American pastor of an all-white congregation.

Ordained in 1785 and soon afterward married to a white schoolteacher named Elizabeth Babbitt with whom he would have ten children, Haynes stayed in Granville until he was called to the West Parish Church in Rutland, Vermont. He served as pastor there for thirty-one years, finally being dismissed from that church because he supported the Federalist Party and opposed the War of 1812.

Haynes was a Calvinist and an evangelical by reputation who was a strong opponent of slavery. His sermons and essays were published and distributed in the United States and other countries. He served two other Congregational churches in the remaining years of his life, dying in 1833.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: We come, as 21st Century pilgrims, to be God's free children.

Invocation (in unison)

We thank You, good Lord, as we pray, for Your blessings on this day and this hour of worship. We thank You for the pilgrim spirit which You have instilled in us from the beginning of the Christian Church, through the time of the Pilgrims of our shores 400 years ago, and into this congregation. May our worship honor their faith and their spirit.

Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Oliver Otis Howard...

Oliver Otis Howard was a career U.S. Army officer and a Union general in the American Civil War. He lost his right arm at the Battle of Fair Oaks/Seven Pines in June 1862, which later earned him the Medal of Honor. As a corps commander, he suffered two humiliating defeats at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg in 1863, but went on to be a successful corps commander in the West.

A member of the Congregational church in Washington, D.C., he was known as the "Christian general" because he tried to base his policy decisions on his deep religious piety. He led the Freedmen's Bureau in mid-1865, with the mission of integrating the freed slaves into Southern society and politics during the second phase of the Reconstruction Era.

Howard's Bureau was primarily responsible for the legal affairs of the freedmen. He attempted to protect freed blacks from hostile conditions, but lacked adequate power, and was repeatedly frustrated by President Andrew Johnson, who strongly disliked the welfare aspects of the Freedman's Bureau, and especially tried to return political power to Southern whites.

Howard was also a leader in promoting higher education for freedmen, most notably in the founding of Howard University in Washington and serving as its president 1867–73. The school is nonsectarian and is open to both sexes without regard to race.

He also founded Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee, in 1895 to help the people of East Tennessee, a majority of whom remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War in spite of the greater state's secession.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

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C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God's pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

Gracious God, we thank You for Jesus Christ, who inspired our ancestors to be who they became, and for each like revelation of Yourself in the hearts of all who followed them in the last four centuries. Teach us to know that Christ can inspire us this and every hour to be what we ought to be ourselves. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Gaius Glenn Atkins...

Gaius Glenn Atkins attended Ohio State University Law School and Yale Divinity School. He was honored by doctorates from Dartmouth, the University of Vermont and Ohio State. He became an important American writer and preacher.

Along with Fredrick Fagley he authored the *History of American Congregationalism*. It served for decades as the standard text for the History and Polity course hopeful Congregational ministers would study. He became the preaching professor at Auburn Seminary and served churches in Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island and was twice called to the pulpit of First Congregational Church of Detroit.

His interest were wide ranging. He wrote on religious movements and cults, and feminism. Atkins traveled to Jerusalem and wrote about that, too. You can read his *Pilgrims of the Lonely Road*. In 1914 he was awarded the Carnegie Church Union Peace prize.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God, we come

C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls

C: And set us on the path again, of redemption

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will

C: To continue this journey toward the community of heaven

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ's new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Priscilla Mullins Alden...

Priscilla Mullins became an orphan the first winter in “New” England, but she survived. Priscilla became celebrated in romance and poetry. She was said to be well-born. Her father at his death was called “a man pious and well-deserving endowed with considerable outward estate.”

Priscilla was about twenty years old when she came to Plymouth. She was called handsome, witty, deft and skilful as spinner and cook. John Alden, a cooper (barrel maker), joined the Pilgrims at Southampton. He promised to stay a year in the colony. John brought a Bible, printed in 1620.

The poet Longfellow, a descendant of Priscilla (Mullin) Alden, wrote down the story of Miles Standish's asking John Alden to be his proxy in asking for Priscilla's hand. Priscilla chose Alden instead: “Why don't you speak for yourself, John?” Their daughter Elizabeth, son Jonathan and nine other children were born to Priscilla and John.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We come to worship, celebrating 400 years since the landing of the Pilgrims.

C: They founded a life together based on faith in God and Christ's constant care.

L: They dared to rise up and create a country based entirely on leaning on God.

C: And so we come week after week, but especially this year thanking God for our life together as God's Pilgrim people.

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Neesima Shimeta...

Neesima Shimeta (Joseph Hardy Neesima) was born on February 12, 1843. He left his native Japan, working as a cabin boy on an American ship. He traded his samurai sword for a Chinese New Testament and came to the Lord through John 3:16. In the U.S., the ship owner sponsored his education through Philips Academy and Amherst College. He was baptized in 1866 and went on to study at Andover Seminary.

He is known for being the first Japanese person to receive a Bachelor's Degree. He was also the first Japanese to be ordained as a Protestant minister.

In 1874 he was commissioned a missionary to his homeland. In the same year, Neesima attended the 65th annual meeting of Congregational churches in Rutland, Vermont, and made an appeal for funds to start a Christian school in Japan. With American support, he founded a school in 1875 for the training of ministers, now known as Doshisha University in Kyoto. Thirty young samurai entered the school. Many went on to be Christian leaders in Japan. Neesima served as president of the university from 1875 to 1890.

Ill health cut his work short, and he was not yet 47 when, on January 23, 1890, he spoke his last words, "peace, joy, heaven."

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: Redeem the time, O God, before its gone and lost.

C: When hearty pilgrim souls measured the cost.

L: And made the long voyage with hopes of something new.

C: We come to worship expecting something new!

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty God, who was before all that is, who remains beside us, one who fills our lives with blessings, we celebrate this day the lives of the men and women known as Pilgrims. In Your singularity, they found commonness; in multiplicity of their world, they found diversity; in their chords and discords, they experienced a harmony in life. In their worship, they found strength and courage and hope. So may we worship You, knowing You expect the same from us. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know James Pennington...

At the age of nineteen, James Pennington escaped from the Tilghman plantation in Maryland. He was Yale's first black student, though he was required to sit in the back of the room and not ask questions. Upon finishing his studies, Pennington was ordained to the ministry of a Congregational Church on Long Island.

In 1840, the Talcott Street Church (now called Faith Congregational Church) in Hartford, Connecticut, called him to serve as minister. In 1841 he wrote *The Origin and History of the Colored People*, considered the first history of blacks in the United States. He also wrote *The Fugitive Blacksmith*, his personal history, in 1849.

Before the Civil War, Pennington was an abolitionist, and among the American delegates to the Second World Conference on Slavery in London. In 1850, he happened to be in Scotland when the Fugitive Slave Act was passed by the US Congress. As it increased the risk for fugitive slaves in the North, Pennington stayed in the British Isles while friends worked to buy his freedom from his former master and then from his estate. Pennington raised funds for the abolition movement on the public lecture circuit in England.

During the war, though he identified as a pacifist, he helped recruit black troops for the Union Army. When the war was over, he returned to the South, serving churches in Natchez, Mississippi, and Jacksonville, Florida. In 1849, the University of Heidelberg awarded Pennington an honorary doctorate of divinity. The university has created the James W.C. Pennington Award in his honor. It is given to scholars who have done distinguished work on topics important to Pennington.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known

L: The world's constant oppressors will cease from distressing

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God's pilgrim people

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

Gracious God, we thank You for Jesus Christ, who inspired our ancestors to be who they became, and for each like revelation of Yourself in the hearts of all who followed them in the last four centuries. Teach us to know that Christ can inspire us this and every hour to be what we ought to be ourselves. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Anne Hutchinson...

Born in 1591, Anne Hutchinson had a very colorful history, by almost all standards. A strong, brave, unstoppable woman, she lived her life with integrity. She caused a lot of trouble within Congregational churches and the Plymouth Colony itself. She cared greatly for the best interpretation of the Bible, and for a woman's right to speak her interpretation and be heard. In 1638, she was excommunicated from the colony for "heretical religious beliefs."

Although she won the public's support throughout her trial, she was banished to Rhode Island. Her legacy and truths live on. Anne Hutchinson died in 1643.

In 1976, Massachusetts Governor George Dukakis read his egalitarian exoneration of Hutchinson, in which he said the pardon signified "an end to all discrimination against women and to mark the beginning of a new era of recognition of the value of all people in the life of the Commonwealth. **...was a Congregationalist?**



Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way.

C: We come, aware of our place as 21st Century pilgrims.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

Invocation (in unison)

Let Your holy presence be among us, O Lord, in this year of remembrance, that we, being made aware of the conviction and character of those before us, may enter into our inheritance, standing firm in the convictions for which they ventured to this new world freedom. Let our forebears' dedication to freedom and righteousness be their gift to us this day, and all our tomorrows. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know William Bradford...

One of the most famous of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony was William Bradford, born in Yorkshire in 1589. As a teenaged orphan, he was influenced by William Brewster (the Separatist postmaster of the village of Scrooby), who was like a surrogate father to him.

The longest-serving governor of Plymouth Colony and its best-known historian, Bradford had joined the Separatist congregation at Scrooby and moved to the Netherlands with them in 1608 where he married Dorothy May. By 1620, Bradford was one of the leaders of the congregation who supported the planned journey to the New World.

He wrote, "They discussed the advantages and disadvantages of going to one of those vast and unpeopled countries of America. Although these countries were ... fruitful ... they had ...only savage brutish men who ranged up and down like wild beasts. ... Those who desired to move to America argued that all great and honorable actions are always accompanied with great difficulties. ... All of those difficulties ... might through the help of God ... be borne and overcome."

We now call our spiritual ancestors "the Pilgrims" because of these words from William Bradford, describing the departure from the Netherlands: "So they left that goodly and pleasant city which had been their resting place twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims..."

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people

C: One voice, and heart, and will we are God's pilgrim people

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing

C: Make your divine will be known to us as we celebrate who we are and who You made us to be.

Invocation (in unison)

We remember this day our Pilgrim forebears, whose constant prayers and unshakable courage brought them to this land we now call home. They brought their sins, their cares, their temptations, too, and found their help and strength from You. We approach You with the same needs and the hope that this hour may be for us a time of grace and empowerment to live with courage as Christ's new pilgrims. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Catharine Beecher...

Catharine Beecher possessed a passion for learning from an early age. She was the daughter of Lyman Beecher and an older sister to Henry Ward Beecher. When she began attending school she soon learned that there were restrictions on what she was allowed to learn because she was a girl. Fortunately, as a daughter of Lyman Beecher she had opportunities to learn about subjects at home that were not offered to girls or women in school. Catharine trained to become a teacher, and after a few years started a school for young women that included all the subjects that were offered to young men. Her aim was to expand career opportunities for women.

She developed an expanded curriculum for her students and wrote the textbooks herself. In 1829 Catharine organized the first ever national women's campaign. It arose in response to President Jackson's request that Congress pass an Indian Removal Bill that authorized the forcible removal of the Cherokee nation from their homelands in Georgia. Ms. Beecher appealed to Christian women everywhere in an open letter, "It has become almost a certainty that these people are to have their lands torn from them, and to be driven into western wilds and to final annihilation, unless the feelings of a humane and Christian nation shall be aroused to prevent the unhallowed sacrifice." Sadly, the bill became law, clearing the way for the tragedy known as the "Trail of Tears." Throughout her life Catharine was a champion for teachers and equal education opportunities for girls and boys.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: Laus Deo .

C: Praise be to God.

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship..

C: Laus Deo! We gather to praise and thank God for this hour

L: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future.

Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed.

Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Horace Bushnell...

Horace Bushnell had a gift for deep and original thought that made him a prophet without honor in his lifetime. He was greatly loved by his congregation in Hartford, Connecticut, but viewed skeptically by many of his Congregationalist colleagues. As a result, he was a lonely, embattled figure throughout his life. Only in the decades after his death did his ideas about Christian nurture and education of children become appreciated. He proved to be a visionary on the subject of Christian education. In *Christian Nurture*, Bushnell's most popular and influential book, he argued that children in Christian homes should be reared according to the principles of Christian nurture, love, acceptance and forgiveness, on the assumption that they would grow up as Christians.

The prevailing Christian belief was that children were enemies of God, born with a rebellious spirit which parents must break with a regimen of stern discipline that included corporeal punishment. Parents were told that only after a conversion experience would their children have a teachable nature. Bushnell disagreed. He drew upon the old Congregational tradition of covenant that included children among the elect. Children, he said, "should grow up Christian, and never know themselves as being otherwise." They should be tenderly nurtured on the presumption that they are already children of God. He taught that family and church are complementary institutions, and each has an important role in providing a nurturing Christian education that leads naturally to regeneration. Bushnell's insights on child nurture eventually gained wide acceptance among educators and parents alike.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God, we come
C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son.

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls
C: And set us on the path again, of redemption.

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will **C:**
To continue this journey toward the community of heaven.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
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Did you know Horace Bushnell...

Horace Bushnell was born in 1802, in Litchfield, Connecticut. He attended Yale College where he earned degrees in Arts, Law, and Theology. In May 1833, the North Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, ordained him. He served as pastor there for more than 20 years. He married Mary Apthorp in 1833 and the couple had three children.

As a preacher, author, and theologian, Horace stood between the conservative traditions of American Puritans and later liberal views. He held the Bible to be the source and norm for doctrine, but proposed that the lack of historical context for the language of the Bible prevented its readers from truly understanding the work.

Though he affirmed his belief in the deity of Christ, he was critical of traditional presentations of the Trinity. He opposed the substitutionary, penal atonement, but felt that the Bible did not teach any single theory of atonement, that all such theories were more descriptive than definitive.

Conservative preachers criticized him for the threat they perceived he posed to orthodoxy, but his congregation withdrew from the local association to prevent any formal action against him.

...was a Congregationalist?

Call To Worship

L: Lift up our hearts and sing praises to the Lord

C: Praise be to God

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship

C: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
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CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Elizabeth Babbitt Haynes...

Elizabeth Babbitt Haynes was born in Dighton, Massachusetts, on February 28, 1763. She married Rev. Lemuel Haynes on September 22, 1783, the first African American minister to serve as pastor of a white congregation, Haynes ministered first to Hemlock Church (now 1st Congregational Church) of Torrington, Connecticut, in 1785 and then Rutland's West Parish for thirty years starting in 1793.

Their interracial marriage of 49 years produced 10 children who went on to live productive and prominent lives. When Elizabeth died at age 73 on Feb. 8, 1836, her obituary read: "She possessed an amiable character as a wife, a mother, and a Christian."

Her grave at Lee-Oatman Cemetery, South Granville, Washington County, New York, is inscribed: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

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Call To Worship

L: Hear ye hear ye, descendants of the Pilgrims

C: This is the appointed time to assemble in this meetinghouse

L: To praise God in the remembrances of our spiritual ancestors

C: So shall we sing and pray this hour, in thanks-giving for the men and women of our past

L: God continues to give us a pilgrim's heart

C: Praise the Lord!

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
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Did you know John Davenport...

John Davenport is remembered as the founder of the Colony of New Haven and for his strict Puritan spirit. He studied at Oxford and became an Anglican vicar in London.

Through his association with John Cotton he adopted Puritan views. He followed John Cotton to Boston in 1637 but found no opportunity to fulfill his ambitions there. He soon traveled south along Long Island Sound with a band of settlers to establish a new colony, which they named New Haven. Davenport became pastor of the church at New Haven where he served for the remainder of his life.

Davenport was a man of strong convictions who held uncompromising religious and political views. He developed a loyal following that enabled him to exercise a powerful influence over New Haven's religious and civil life. He insisted that all civil and ecclesiastical practices and questions conform to biblical precedents and principles.

He went so far as to require that the design of the town of New Haven be modeled on the plan of the encampment of the Israelites in the wilderness, the Temple of Solomon, and the New Jerusalem as described by John in the Book of Revelation. Even the layout of the town was intended to be a reflection of biblical values.

When the monarchy was restored, New Haven was incorporated into the Colony of Connecticut. Davenport was invited to be the pastor of the prestigious First Church in Boston but died shortly after he accepted the position.

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Call To Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour.

C: Lead us on, help us stand.

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Philo Parsons...

When you Google Philo Parsons you find several sites that tell you about the steam boat that the Confederate agents seized on Lake Erie to use to free Confederate officers imprisoned on an island in Lake Erie. Someone else owned the boat, but probably named it after him for loaning them the money to buy it.

But who was Philo Parsons? Philo's family came early in the Puritan migrations to "New" England. Like many others from "New" England, they continued west into upstate and western New York. As a young man he moved to Detroit in 1844 and became an active member and officer of the new First Congregational Church.

He started out as a grocer, made enough money to start the First National Bank of Detroit with others. He was successful enough that he bought out the library of a German Professor Rau and donated it to the University of Michigan. . .its largest gift to that date. He was also interested in church colleges. He paid off the debt of the young Olivet College in Michigan and contributed a substantial building, Parson's Hall.

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Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known.

L: The world's constant oppressors will cease from distressing

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be d's pilgrim people.

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

Gracious God, we thank You for Jesus Christ, who inspired our ancestors to be who they became, and for each like revelation of Yourself in the hearts of all who followed them in the last four centuries. Teach us to know that Christ can inspire us this and every hour to be what we ought to be ourselves. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Abigail Goodrich Wittelsey...

Abigail Goodrich Wittelsey was born in 1788. She was the daughter, sister, and wife of Congregational ministers. She received some formal education in local schools.

In 1808 she married the Reverend Samuel Whittelsey, and from 1824 to 1828, they lived in Canandaigua, New York, where she served as matron of the Ontario Female Seminary, headed by her husband. The couple moved to Utica, New York, where they established their own girls' seminary in 1828.

In her own right, Abigail was an American editor who provided in her magazine information and instructions on the role of mothers.

Abigail became active in the Maternal Association of Utica and was chosen to edit its new magazine. *The Mother's Magazine* first appeared in January 1833, published by the Maternal Association of Utica. It was aimed at educating women about the responsibilities and potentialities of motherhood. The magazine quickly proved a success.

In 1834 it was transferred to New York City after the Whittelseys moved there. The magazine reached a circulation of 10,000 in 1837. Her husband died in 1842 and Abigail was assisted by Reverend Darius Mead, her brother-in-law who was an editor of *Christian Parlor Magazine*.

After *Mother's Magazine* merged with the *Mother's Journal and Family Visitant* in 1848, Abigail resigned. She then launched with the help of her son Henry in 1850, *Mrs. Whittelsey's Magazine for Mothers*, which she kept up for two years.

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Call to Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future.

Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed.

Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Queen Kaahumanu...

King Kamehameha I, who united the Hawaiian Islands into a single nation, had twenty-one wives. Kaahumanu was his favorite. She was hardly more than a little girl when she married the king, but by the time of his death in 1819 she was six feet tall and weighed about three hundred pounds. As regent after her husband's death, Kaahumanu ordered the destruction of all idols representing the "gods" that Hawaiians had worshiped for thousands of years. She also allowed women to eat with their husbands, and she abolished the prohibition against women eating pork and bananas. When the crown prince died, Kaahumanu became the first reigning queen of Hawaii.

After crushing a brief civil war, Kaahumanu presided over a nation with no religion at all. When Congregational missionaries came, the queen became a Christian. She established churches and schools and fought against adultery and prostitution. Requesting baptism, Kaahumanu was at first refused by Hiram Bingham, who said that she was "not yet born from above with the power of the Spirit of God." After a serious illness, throughout which Mrs. Bingham cared for her, the queen's heart was humbled, and she was baptized in 1825.

A brilliant woman, Kaahumanu was able to learn to read in only a few days! After reading the whole Bible, the queen announced, "The law of Jehovah is the law of the land." New laws were based on the Ten Commandments. Under the new legal system, the queen was the judge. Education became mandatory. Only Congregational churches were allowed, however, and Catholic missionaries were driven away. Reportedly, Kaahumanu's last words in 1832 were from a hymn: "Lo, here am I, O Jesus; grant me Thy gracious smile."

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
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Call To Worship

L: Redeem the time O God, before it's gone and lost

C: When hearty pilgrim souls measured the cost

L: And made the long voyage with hopes of something new

C: We come to worship expecting something new!

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Elkanah Walker...

Elkanah Walker was born August 7, 1805, near North Yarmouth, Maine. He attended Bangor Theological Seminary. He wanted to serve in Africa under the ABCFM, but unrest there led the board to direct him towards the Oregon Territory.

He married Mary Richardson, who also wanted to serve as a missionary. The Walkers traveled to the Oregon Country where he and Mary started the Tshimakain Mission, studying the local language and bringing their faith to the Spokane People. Elkanah printed a Salish language primer, the first book written in Washington.

Elkanah and Mary had planned to be at the Whitman Mission in the fall of 1847, but Elkanah fell ill. As a result, they were not able to make the trip, and so missed the massacre of the Whitmans and their associates by the Cayuse Native American tribe on November 29, 1847. As the Cayuse warriors spread out across the country, the Walkers and their associates sought safety at Fort Colville, an outpost of the Hudson Bay Company. The Oregon Volunteer militia escorted them to Oregon City in June of 1848.

The Tshimakain Mission at Chewelah was later reestablished, and a church was built there. The area is still known to this day as "Walker's Prairie" in honor of Elkanah and Mary.

The Walkers themselves never returned, but moved to Forest Grove, Oregon, where they established Tualatin Academy (Pacific University). The Walkers donated land for the campus, and Elkanah was a university trustee until his death in 1877.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith* AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALISM *SINCE 1620*

Call To Worship

L: Each day will have its trials

C: Each day we'll see God's grace

L: For God has promised surely

C: To bless us in our place

L: May we live with a pilgrim's spirit

C: This hour and every day

L: To cast our lot upon the Lord

C: In work, in worship, and in play

Invocation (in unison)

We thank You, good Lord, as we pray, for your blessings on this day and this hour of worship. We thank You for the pilgrim spirit which You have instilled in us from the beginning of the Christian Church, through the time of the Pilgrims of our shores 400 years ago, and into this congregation. May our worship honor their faith and their spirit. In Christ's name, we pray, Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Marcus Whitman...

Marcus Whitman was born September 4, 1802, in Federal Hollow, New York. As a young man, Marcus dreamed of becoming a minister but did not have the money for such schooling. He returned to New York and studied medicine for two years with an experienced physician under the form of apprenticeship approved then, and received his degree from Fairfield Medical College in New York.

He practiced medicine for a few years in Canada but was interested in going to the west. In 1836, having been appointed a missionary by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Marcus led an overland party by wagon to the West.

Whitman and his wife Narcissa, along with other missionaries, founded a mission at present day Walla Walla, Washington, in an effort to convert local Indians to Christianity. In the winter of 1842, Whitman returned east, returning the following summer with the first large wagon train across the Oregon Trail.

The new settlers encroached on the Cayuse Indians living near the Whitman Mission and were unsuccessful in their efforts to Christianize the Tribe. Following the deaths of a large number of nearby Cayuse from an outbreak of measles, some remaining Cayuse accused Marcus Whitman of murder, suggesting that he had administered poison and was a failed shaman.

In retaliation, a group of Cayuse killed the Whitmans and twelve other settlers on November 29, 1847, an event that came to be known as the Whitman Massacre.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
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SINCE 1620

Call To Worship

L: We are keepers of the Way

C: We come, aware of our place as 21st Century pilgrims.

L: May we bring to this worship hour and to our very lives, a commitment to refashion this world for Christ.

C: May we renew and cherish our life together, as God's free people.

Invocation (in unison)

Let Your holy presence be among us, O Lord, in this year of remembrance, that we, being made aware of the conviction and character of those before us, may enter into our inheritance, standing firm in the convictions for which they ventured to this new world freedom. Let our forebears' dedication to freedom and righteousness be their gift to us this day, and all our tomorrows. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Samuel Sewall...

Samuel Sewall was a member of the nine-judge panel that presided over the Salem witch trials. His father was a prosperous merchant who came to the Bay Colony in 1635. He attended Harvard and served briefly as its librarian. Samuel kept a diary his whole life and it is one of the very best sources on colonial life in New England.

He served on the Colony's governing council for many years, and in his later years as Chief Justice of its Superior Court. Samuel lived to regret his rulings in the witchcraft trials which resulted in the torture and execution of 19 men and women. His diary provides vivid descriptions of court scenes and the executions.

Sewall soon came to believe that the courts' rulings against the accused were based on insufficient evidence. He was convicted by the words of Jesus, "If you had known what this means, 'I want mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent." He repudiated his role in the trials by standing before his congregation and confessing his guilt.

Samuel Sewall also wrote *The Selling of Joseph*, which is the earliest protest against the practice of slavery in the American colonies. He denounced slavery as a crime against liberty to which every human being has a right, and because all people, regardless of race, are sons and daughters of God.

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Call To Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Mary Chilton...

Mary Chilton was reported to be the first woman who stepped upon the rock of landing at Plymouth harbor. She was orphaned when her father James died at Cape Cod, December 8, 1620. He was a tailor and became a Freeman. We know little of Mary's mother except that she died with an infection in 1621. By 1627 she was married to John Winslow, brother of Edward. They had ten children. Their grandson John became a Brigadier General in the Revolutionary War.

Mary Chilton Winslow later moved to Boston and lived near Old South Congregational Church. As a matron, Mary had luxuries undreamed of in the days of 1621. Her will is one of the three original known wills of Mayflower passengers.

Made July 31, 1676, she bequeathed to her daughter Sarah her "Best gowne and Pettecoate and my silver beare bowl" and to each of her children "a silver Tankard," among many other gifts. Mary Chilton Winslow could not write her own name but made a very neat mark, M.

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Invocation (in unison)

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Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Henry Hugh Proctor...

Henry Hugh Proctor born December 8, 1868, near Fayetteville, Tennessee, to former slave parents, Richard and Hannah (Murray) Proctor. As a child, Henry was only able to take classes at local schools for three months out of the year to allow for time to help his parents on their farm. He eventually completed his schooling and became a teacher at Pea Ridge, Tennessee. He received his B.A. degree from Fisk University. In 1893, Henry married Adeline L. Davis, a fellow student he had met at Fisk. The following year, he received a Bachelor of Divinity Degree from Yale University, and in 1904, Clark University honored him with the Doctor of Divinity Degree.

Henry was ordained into the Congregational ministry and pastored the First Congregational Church in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1903, he, along with George W. Henderson, president of Straight University in New Orleans, came together to found the National Convention of Congregational Workers Among Colored People with the goal to help black Congregational Churches in the South become self-sufficient, employ more of their own graduates, promote Congregationalism among African Americans and strengthen the theological department of the schools in the American Missionary Association. After the bloody Atlanta race riot in 1906, Henry and white attorney, Charles T. Hopkins, brought together twenty Negroes and twenty white men to form the Interracial Committee of Atlanta. Convinced that social outreach would help quell the tensions, Henry used his church to provide such amenities as a library, a kindergarten, an employment bureau, a gymnasium, a ladies' reading parlor, a music room, counseling services and a model kitchen and sewing room for girls. He also helped open the first housing facility for young, employed colored women who had no other dwelling.

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Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Owen Lovejoy...

Rev. Owen Lovejoy traveled across the U.S. frontier, starting Congregational churches. His abolitionist views and activities led him to use his home as a station on the Underground Railroad, and to speak in schools, churches and open air meetings in a crusade against slavery.

Owen was present on the night of November 7, 1837, when his brother Elijah was murdered while trying to defend the printing press of the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society from an angry mob.irate slave holders denounced him as a 'Negro stealer.' He later became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives where, as a freshman congressman, took to the floor of the House to answer his opponents:

"Yes, I do assist fugitive slaves to escape! Proclaim it on the house-tops, write it on every leaf that trembles in the forest; make it blaze from the sun at high noon, and shine forth in the radiance of every star that bedecks the firmament of God. Let it echo through all the arches of heaven, and reverberate and bellow through all the deep gorges of hell, where slave catchers will be very likely to hear it! Owen Lovejoy lives at Princeton, Illinois, and he aids every fugitive that comes to his door and asks it. Thou invisible demon of slavery! Dost thou think to cross my humble threshold, and forbid me to give bread to the hungry and shelter to the houseless? I bid you defiance in the name of God!"

Profoundly objecting to Lovejoy's anti-slavery remarks, the Democrats, brandishing pistols and canes, threatened him with physical harm. In response to the Democrats' threats, Lovejoy stood firm and responded, "I will stand where I please" and "Nobody can intimidate me."

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C: This is the appointed time to assemble in this meetinghouse

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C: So shall we sing and pray this hour, in thanks-giving for the men and women of our past

L: God continues to give us a pilgrim's heart

C: Praise the Lord!

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know John Wise...

John Wise, pastor at Second Parish Church in Ipswich, Massachusetts, found himself in opposition to Increase Mather and Cotton Mather on an important issue. He was not intimidated by their prominence in the Congregational movement, because he knew that they were wrong on Congregational principles.

According to a pamphlet published by the NACCC, the Mathers wanted to subject local churches to the authority of ecclesiastical councils. Pastor Wise correctly perceived that this would be a violation of the Congregational Way. Even as early as the late 1680's, Wise looked like one of the patriotic firebrands of a hundred years later. Governor Andros wanted to bring the Massachusetts colony to heel and to establish a central government for all New England, doing the bidding of his master, King James II (who would abdicate his throne later in what the English call their Glorious Revolution). Using his moral authority as pastor, Reverend Wise led the town of Ipswich to refuse to pay any of the new taxes imposed by the governor.

Wise was a strong advocate of individual rights and "government by social contract." He firmly opposed both monarchy and aristocracy, believing that all important political decisions needed to be decided by the electorate. His outspoken views caused him to be "imprisoned, fined, and temporarily suspended from his ministry."

Regrettably, perhaps, in the eyes of some of us, Wise seemed to elevate logical reasoning above the revealed wisdom of Scripture—although he did acknowledge that both reason and revelation are good gifts of God.

...was a Congregationalist?

Celebrating 400 Years of American Congregationalism
Learn more about our Congregational History at naccc.org

400 YEARS OF *Faith* AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALISM *SINCE 1620*

Call to Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future.

Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed.

Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Robert Hellam

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Harvey Denison Kitchel...

Harvey Denison Kitchel was the minister of the First Congregational Church of Detroit during its most formative years. The church, gathered in 1844, grew under his leadership. Under his care it built a new, much larger Meeting House.

It, like their first Meeting House, was on the river crest road so that you went up a few steps to enter, and the ground fell away at the back towards the river, allowing them to have a full hall on the lower level. It was here that many self-emancipated former slaves waited to dash to the nearby river to boats that took them to Canada and freedom.

Rev. Kitchel and his wife Ann did as much as they could to feed and clothe them. More than that, he was active in local anti-slavery activities and was a leader in the Refugee Aid Society. The Society aided former slaves not only with food and clothes, but bought land in Ontario that they could own and farm to become self-sufficient. Rev. Kitchel later became President of his alma mater, Middlebury College in Vermont.

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Call To Worship

L: Laus Deo..

C: Praise be to God.

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship.

C: Laus Deo. We gather to praise and thank God for this hour.

L: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries ago, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
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SINCE 1620

Did you know Frank C. Laubach...

Rev. Frank C. Laubach was a Congregational missionary sent to the Philippines by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He made friends with the Moro people and taught at the Union Theological Seminary in Manila.

In northern Mindanao, Dr. Laubach founded Folk Schools. It was here that he began to develop a written form of their language and taught the adults to read. During this time, he also developed his idea of “each one, teach one” to extend literacy among adults throughout the Philippines, as well as in Mexico, the West Indies, Central and South America. Today his idea and his method is widely accepted and used around the world.

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Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known

L: The world's constant oppressors will cease from distressing

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God's pilgrim people

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

Gracious God, we thank You for Jesus Christ, who inspired our ancestors to be who they became, and for each like revelation of Yourself in the hearts of all who followed them in the last four centuries. Teach us to know that Christ can inspire us this and every hour to be what we ought to be ourselves. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Isaac Watts...

Our Congregational forebears in England were variously known as Independents, Dissenters, and Non-Conformists. These terms also included Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. Later, Free Church became a more positive nomenclature.

Isaac Watts (who identified as an Independent) was one of our own. Born on July 17, 1674, in Southhampton, England, Watts wrote approximately 600 hymns, and was known as the "Father of English hymnody."

He showed literary genius even as a boy: Latin at four, Greek at nine, French at ten, and Hebrew at thirteen. Noticing his abilities, a doctor and some friends offered him a university education, figuring that he would be ordained in the Church of England. Watts turned them down, instead attending the Nonconformist Academy under the care of Thomas Rowe, joining the Independent congregation at Girdlers' Hall in 1693.

Watts moved to London to tutor the children of a wealthy family of Dissenters. He joined Mark Lane Independent Chapel, where he was soon asked to be a teacher, then was hired as associate pastor. He preached his first sermon at the age of 24.

In 1702 he was ordained as senior pastor of the congregation, the position he retained to the end of his life. He was a brilliant Bible student and his sermons brought the church to life.

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400 YEARS OF *Faith* AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALISM *SINCE 1620*

Call To Worship

L: We come to worship, celebrating 400 years since the landing of the Pilgrims.

C: **They founded a life together based on faith in God and Christ's constant care**

L: They dared to rise up and create a country based entirely on leaning on God

C: **And so we come week after week, but especially this year thanking God for our life together as God's Pilgrim people.**

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Charles Chauncy ...

Charles Chauncy was the minister of “Old Brick,” the oldest and most prestigious Congregational Church in Boston. Like his church, he was the embodiment of old Puritan doctrine and traditional social values.

Throughout his long life Chauncy was the most influential voice of Puritanism in Boston. He frequently addressed religious and political issues from his pulpit. He led the opposition to the establishment of an Anglican diocese in the American colonies. He was also a leading advocate for independence from England. In the decade leading up to the Revolution he justified the case for independence politically and morally in sermons and pamphlets. However, Charles Chauncy is most often remembered as the great opponent of Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening. He was a leading critic of the revivals that swept through the colonies between 1739 and 1745. As a traditionalist and conservative, Chauncy saw no basis for the theatrics of revivalist preachers, and he equated their emotionalism with the ancient heresy of “enthusiasm.” He published his case against revivalism in, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743).

Chauncy was the leader of the anti-revivalist segment of Congregationalism that became known as “Old Lights.” In his final years he published a book in which he argued in favor of the idea of universal salvation on the basis of God’s sovereign love for everyone.

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Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God we come
C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son.

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls
C: And set us on the path again, of redemption.

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will
C: To continue this journey toward the community of heaven.

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord’s day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Mary Brewster...

Mary Brewster was seen by many as the “mother” of the matrons and maidens of Plymouth Colony. She survived the winters of 1621 and 1622. But by Gov. Bradford’s report became “weak and decayed state of body”. She shared the religious faith and zeal of her husband Elder Brewster. Mary lived until April 17, 1627 dying at age 57.

Bradford wrote that “her great and continual labours, with other crosses and sorrows hastened” her death before her time. Settling in “New” England her life was difficult, but she was a blessing to many of the other women. Her married life was fruitful; five of her children lived to maturity and two or more had died in Holland. Her daughters were called Fear and Patience, her sons Jonathan and Love.

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Call To Worship

L: We come to worship as a Pilgrim Family.

C: We bring one life together, in faith and in Christ’s care.

L: As our forefathers did, let us be a people of and for God.

C: Week after week, let us thank God for our life together as God’s Pilgrim people.

Invocation (in unison)

As we celebrate our heritage, gracious God, teach us to be people who move fences and walls. Teach us to open doors and hearts to You and to Your people; to those who are the other, the strangers. Teach us to see You in the faces of those who do not look like us, who worship and pray from different texts and in different postures, and in different sacred spaces than we do. Teach us to move or remove fences that we might truly know those beyond our borders, borders that are made by humanity. This we pray in order that we might truly know people, who, in all their differences, seek dignity and peace. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Did you know Josiah Bushnell Grinnell...

Rev. Josiah Bushnell Grinnell was the founder and benefactor of Grinnell College in Iowa. It is said that it was he who was directed by Horace Greeley to "go west, young man, go west." Advice that would not only shape his, but America's spirit.

Grinnell was pointedly anti-slavery and a convinced Abolitionist. He led Grinnell, Iowa, to be known as an Abolitionist town and stop on the Underground Railroad. Grinnell was a conductor on the Underground Railroad. He sheltered John Brown after his raids in Kansas and Missouri.

He became active in politics of the young Republican Party. He became a state Senator and Congressman. Grinnell practiced law and was involved in building the Rock Island Railroad line.

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Call To Worship

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L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

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Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Will Lange

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Eleazar Wheelock...

Eleazar Wheelock was an American Congregational minister, orator, and educator. He graduated from Yale College in 1733, and received a license to preach in May 1734. He married Sarah Davenport in 1735, and he managed a farm in addition to his ministerial duties. Sarah died in 1746, and he married again to Mary Brinsmead, a widow who brought with her two children from her previous marriage.

Besides his work for 34 years as pastor of Second Congregational Church of Lebanon, Connecticut, he also took part in the Great Awakening as a traveling preacher. He was also an advocate of the plight of Native Americans. He had tutored Samson Occom, a member of the Mohegan tribal group. Samson became a minister and was the first Native American to publish writings in English.

Eleazar was also very interested in education. He founded and operated the Moor's Charity School in Connecticut to educate Native Americans. He later founded Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and served as its president. The goal of this school was primarily to provide higher education for the sons of English colonists.

He died on April 24, 1779. Among his descendants are John Wheelock, second president of Dartmouth College; Col. Eleazar Wheelock, pioneer, soldier, adventurer, Texas Ranger, and founder of Wheelock, Texas; 20th Century poets John Hall Wheelock and Rachel Wheelock, and 21st Century scientist Michael Wheelock.

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C: Praise be to God.

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C: Laus Deo. We gather to praise and thank God for this hour.

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Invocation (in unison)

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Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard



Did you know Samuel Hopkins...

Samuel Hopkins was an influential minister and theologian during the Revolutionary period. He graduated from Yale in 1741, then studied theology under Jonathan Edwards during the Great Awakening. He became a leading proponent of revivalist “New Light” Calvinism.

Using Edwards’ thought as a starting point, and allowing for a measure of human free will, Hopkins created a revised form of Calvinism that was revival friendly. At first his innovative theological views were opposed as Arminian heresy. But the rising tide of democratic thought and personal freedom after the Revolution created a new social situation that made his ideas more appealing. During his long pastorate at the First Congregational Church in Newport, Rhode Island, he wrote *System of Doctrines*, (1793). In the early 19th Century it gave rise to a new school of theology, known as the New Divinity, that shaped Congregational beliefs during the Second Great Awakening.

He is also famous for advocating the doctrine of disinterested benevolence, which defined good works as the unselfish and unselfconscious working of love in the life of Christians to all people, especially “the least of these.” Hopkins was also one of the earliest Congregational clergymen to oppose slavery. His commitment to the lofty ethical principle of disinterested benevolence compelled him in 1776 to write, *Dialogue, Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, in which he argued that the institution of slavery was a violation of the law of love.

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Call To Worship

L: Each day will have its trials

C: Each day we’ll see God’s grace

L: For God has promised surely

C: To bless us in our place

L: May we live with a pilgrim’s spirit

C: This hour and every day

L: To cast our lot upon the Lord

C: In work, in worship, and in play

Invocation (in unison)

We thank You, good Lord, as we pray, for your blessings on this day and this hour of worship. We thank you for the pilgrim spirit which You have instilled in us from the beginning of the Christian Church, through the time of the Pilgrims of our shores 400 years ago, and into this congregation. May our worship honor their faith and their spirit. In Christ’s name, we pray, Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard