



Peace

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

—HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

ON EARTH PEACE. LUKE 2:14

The First Congregational Church in Worcester

*United Church of Christ
Second Sunday of Advent*

You are invited to a time of quiet preparation during the Prelude

Welcome

Rev. Jack Jones

Pastor: No matter where you are on life's journey,
Congregation: you are welcome here.

Prelude

O Little Town of Bethlehem ~ arr. Call

Ringing of the Chimes

Call to Worship

Pastor: Underneath life's expanding shadows,

Congregation: We call out "Pave the way for our God!"

Pastor: On the dusty roads of life's wilderness

Congregation: We call out "Pave the way for our God!"

Pastor: As we near the top of mountains, rejoicing under the sunlight,

Congregation: We call out "Pave the way for our God!"

Hymn of Adoration ~ #103 (please stand)

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Invocation (Everyone)

Holy Fountain of Compassion, Deep in the heart of this journey, we search for peace-filled moments of contemplation. We crave the joy that is found in the stillness of prayer. As we share this time with you, may we experience your beloved joy, knowing that our petitions bring us closer to you and our neighbors. Amen.

Prayer of Transformation (Congregation)

God of Blissful Serenity, As you move about your Realm on Earth, you desire our prayers to come alive. Knowing the hopes of our hearts, you call us to create action that will help our neighbors. Yet, there are times we continue to pray in mind only, never fulfilling our calling to care for our neighbors. What we forget is that joy abounds when we can transform a prayer from thoughts to concrete actions, blessing our siblings across our world. Amen.

Prayer of Grace (*Pastor*)

When we bring alive our prayers, we experience Christ in our midst. May we embrace the grace of God and initiate opportunities to care for God's children with open hearts.

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you.

Congregation: **And also, with you.**

Passing of the Peace

(Please refrain from shaking hands during this season of viruses, flus, colds and such.)

Old Testament Lesson

Malachi 3:1-4

New Testament Lesson

Philippians 1:3-11

Gospel Lesson

Luke 1:68-79

Sermon

"The Light"

Rev. Jack Jones

Hymn ~ Insert (*Please Stand*)

Blessed Be the God of Israel

Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free;
he visits and redeems us, he grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill his promise and bring his people peace.

He from the house of David a child of grace has given;
a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.
Before him goes his herald, forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation, the harbinger of Day.

On prisoners of darkness the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes.
He guides the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace.
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease.

Used by Permission. CCLI #1480719

Sharing Celebrations and Concerns for Community Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Moment of Silence for Personal Prayer

Lord's Prayer (*Everyone*)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, and fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath by Greg Waters & Cindy MacLaurin: Peace on Earth.

Invitation to Generosity

As we share in God's grace, we seek ways to share our gratitude with God and our neighbors. Through prayer and pondering, we discover new ways to give our offerings of talents, treasures, and time with a joyful spirit.

Giving of our Offerings

Offertory

In Dulci Jubilo ~ arr. Weber

Doxology (*Everyone & Please Stand*)

W Zlobie Lezy

**Glory be to God the Father, glory be to Christ the Son,
Glory to the Holy spirit, glory to the Three in One.
Here we offer to you gladly all the gifts that you impart,
As we glory in your Presence, giving from a grateful heart.**

Prayer of Dedication (*Pastor*)

God of All Joy, we give thanks each time we remember your gifts in our lives. Our gratitude extends to the ways we can use our gifts of time, talent, and treasures. May your boundless wisdom compel us to use our energies in ways that will share the most love in our world. Amen.

Announcements

Sending Forth Hymn ~ #117 (*Please Stand*)

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

Saints, before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear;
suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

Benediction *(Please Remain Standing)*

May the Spirit of Light,
And the God of Joy
Infuse our souls with peace and a song of thanksgiving
As we seek the presence of God in our world.

Benediction Response *(Please Remain Standing)*

Greensleeves

**This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

Chimes

Postlude

Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts ~ Saint-Saëns

*Please join us at Coffee Hour in the parlor immediately following the service.
Our thanks go out to **Ruth Nickerson** for hosting Coffee Hour today!*

Pledge envelopes for 2025 are in the narthex. If you don't see yours there, please let Sue Anderson know and she will be happy to get them for you

Prayer Requests

Ellen Dalbeck requests prayers for her nephew, *Tyler McDermott* and his family. Tyler is undergoing treatment for cancer. Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece *Linda*, and for *Russell Mohamed*, who is home and recovering from an auto accident. Mark Leslie requests prayers for his wife, *Carol*. Sue & Norman Anderson request prayers for their daughter, *Melanie*; Sue's brother, *Danny Waskevich*, and their friend, *Roger Waite*. Please also pray for their doctor, *Dr. Phillip Fournier*, as he continues cancer treatment. Dawn & Matt Ahaesy request prayers for *Gina Ahaesy*; The Deacons request prayers for *Ann Scherdell*, *Dolores Trzcinski*, *Jeanne Fassett*, *Paul Scherdell*, and *Joyce & Armand Thienel*. Kristin Olson requests prayers for *Mitch Bourque*. Prayers also continue for *Erika Vecsey*, and also for *Jane Boggs*.

If you would like to add a prayer concern or update our list, please email the church office at office@fcc-worcester.org or call the office at 508-752-4635.

Announcements

Hospitality ~ Please join us in the parlor for coffee and goodies every Sunday after worship. If you are able to host a coffee hour, there is a sign-up sheet on the table. If you bring the goodies, we provide the coffee and other beverages, and the paper goods. If you'd like, two or more people can sign up together to make it a little easier. Our thanks go out to **Ruth Nickerson** for hosting today's Coffee Hour.

Christmas Eve ~ Please plan now to join us for our Christmas Eve Service, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2024, 7:00 p.m., for candles, candle lighting, Silent Night, more special music, and the Service of Lessons and Carols.

Hats & Mittens ~ Please bring your donations of hats, mittens and/or scarves and place them either on the Christmas tree in the narthex or on the one in the parlor. These will be donated to Tatnuck Magnet School for students who need them.

Poinsettias ~ The poinsettia order form is included with your bulletin today. Please print all the information just as you would like it written up in the bulletin. Be sure to leave us your contact information!

Carpet Fund Collection ~ Our new carpeting looks beautiful! Please continue your contributions to our teddy bear so we can finish the carpeting in the sanctuary.

Friendly Messenger ~ If you would like a copy of our newsletter, you can pick one up from the table in the narthex.

Church Directory ~ Directories are available in the church office.

Connect With Us

Would you like to get more connected with the happenings at First Church? Simply fill out one of our "Welcome Home!" cards located in the pew back in front of you and place it in the offering basket this morning. Thank you for joining us today!

The First Congregational Church in Worcester

United Church of Christ

Rev. Jack Jones, Pastor
jackfitzelljones@gmail.com

Scott M. Yonker, Minister of Music
music@fcc-worcester.org

Sue Anderson, Administrative Assistant
office@fcc-worcester.org



1070 Pleasant Street
Worcester MA 01602
508-752-4635
www.fcc-worcester.org



Weekly Calendar

Today	10:00am	FCC Worship Service (<i>Sanctuary</i>)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (<i>Hall</i>)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (<i>Upper level</i>)
	11:30am	Trustees Meeting (<i>Conference Room</i>)
	1:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (<i>Sanctuary</i>)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (<i>Hall</i>)
Monday	7:00pm	AA Meeting (<i>Hall</i>)
	10-2pm	Church Office Open
	7:00pm	Bible Study (<i>Conference Room</i>)
Tuesday	6:30pm	AA Meeting (<i>Hall</i>)
Wednesday	10:30am	Fellowship ~ Meet in the church parking lot for Lunch at Barber's Crossing in Leicester
	7:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (<i>Sanctuary</i>)
	7:00pm	Autobiographical Writing (<i>Conference Room</i>)
Thursday	6:45pm	AA Meeting (<i>Hall</i>)
	10-2pm	Church Office Open
Friday	10-2pm	Church Office Open
	7:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (<i>Sanctuary</i>)
Saturday	10:00am	New Hope SDA (<i>Sanctuary & Parlor</i>)
	12:00pm	Church of God (<i>Hall</i>)
Sunday	10:00am	FCC Worship Service (<i>Sanctuary</i>) There will be a special congregational meeting immediately following the service.
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (<i>Hall</i>)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (<i>Upper level</i>)
	1:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (<i>Sanctuary</i>)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (<i>Hall</i>)