

First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

November 26, 2023



Our Purpose Statement

It is our purpose to joyfully celebrate Christ's presence and God's grace in our lives; to respect one another in love, actively seeking and embrace those who wish to grow with us in faith, hope and love; to follow the example of Jesus, as we minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the community. *Through service we flourish.*



The First Congregational Church in Worcester

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

Greeting

Prelude

Pastorale ~ Wesley

Ringling of the Chimes

Call to Worship

For the risk of heartbreak, as we attempt to offer others your love,

We rejoice, give thanks and sing!

For rejections experience as we offer others your Shalom,

We rejoice, give thanks and sing!

For annoyances and frustrations as we attempt to live out your vision of a community of loving mutual support and extravagant welcome to strangers,

We rejoice, give thanks and sing!

For all our flaws, deficits and weaknesses that you are able to use fruitfully for the good, beyond all logic or reason,

We rejoice, give thanks and sing!

For the mystery of joy in the midst of trusting you as death approaches, trusting your love even beyond death,

We rejoice, give thanks and sing!

Prayer of Invocation

Speak to us in silence. Speak to us as the chimes ring. Let the subtle mystery of their reverberating tones be a holy whisper to be interpreted in love if not reason. Speak to us in the awe inspiring sounds of the organ. Let the awe itself be received as Holy Love speaking an emotional and spiritual language that can only be interpreted when we focus our souls. Despite the Pastors flaws in reasoning, elocution, and interpretation may his words nevertheless, inspire us by the prompting and intervention of your Spirit. May we encounter your Spirit in the love expressed when friends and relatives express their prayer concerns for loved ones in distress. May we genuinely call on your Spirit to comfort and intervene for those loved ones and those in peril throughout the entire world. Speak to us in the inspiring example of those sitting beside loved ones who care for them and those who give cheerfully and readily to support you work done by us frail, humble servants. Come join us in our hearts and minds and souls and do the work that is beyond us but can be done with our willingness. Spirit come, and be our strength as we Love together. Amen.

O worship the King, all glorious above, O gratefully sing His power and His love;
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might, O sing of His grace, Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space,
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form, And dark is His path on the wings of the
storm.

The earth with its store of wonders untold, Almighty, Thy power hath founded of old;
Established it fast by a changeless decree, And round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end, Our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.

Epistle Lesson

Ephesians 1:15-23

Gospel Reading

Matthew 7: 7-12

Sermon

"Seeing God, Hearing God"

Rev. Jack Jones

*Hymn ~ *Insert*

Open My Eyes, That I Might See

Open my eyes that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear,
and while the wave notes fall on my ear, ev'rything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth and let me bear gladly the warm truth ev'rywhere.
Open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my mouth, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

**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.

Prayer Response

Open My Eyes

Silently now, on bended knee, ready I wait your will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit Divine!

Giving of our Offerings

Offertory

Andante ~ Zöllner

Doxology

Kremser

We praise Thee, O God, our Redeemer, Creator,
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring;
We lay it before You, we kneel and adore You,
We bless Your holy Name, glad praises we sing.

Hymn ~ #247

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Holy God, we praise Your name; Lord of all, we bow before You.
Saints on earth Your scepter claim; all in heav'n above adore You.
Infinite, Your vast domain; everlasting is Your reign.

Hark, the glad celestial hymn angel choirs above are raising;
cherubim and seraphim, in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heav'ns with sweet accord: "Holy, holy, holy Lord!"

Lo, the apostolic train joins Your sacred name to hallow;
prophets swell the glad refrain, and the white-robed martyrs follow;
and from morn to set of sun, through the church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit, three we name You,
though in essence only one; undivided God, we claim You,
and, adoring, bend the knee while we own the mystery.

*Benediction & Benediction Response

Ar Hyd Y Nos

Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; you are my own.
In my love's baptismal river, I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing - You are my own.

*Postlude

Postludium ~ Young

**Please stand in body, or in spirit.*

We are glad you joined us today. All are welcome to attend Coffee Hour immediately following our worship service in the Parlor. Not sure where to go? Just ask. Any one of us would be delighted to help you! Thank you to Nancy Taylor for this week's treats and coffee.

Want 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 this morning.

**Large print bulletins are available in the Narthex as well as hearing assistance devices for those who may need them.*

The First Congregational Church in Worcester
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



1070 Pleasant Street
Worcester MA 01602
508-752-4635

www.fcc-worcester.org



Rev. Jack Jones, Pastor
pastor@fcc-worcester.org

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

Shelly Hoyle, Administrative Assistant
office@fcc-worcester.org

Prayer Requests

We would like to keep Hampton Bagdasarian in our prayers as he is having trouble with one of his eyes; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda and friend Marie Samuelson who is very ill; Judy Mitchell requests prayers for her granddaughter, Ellanora; Sue & Norman Anderson request prayers for their daughter, Melanie Anderson, Sue's brother, Danny Waskevich who is healing from a leg amputation and is back in the hospital for another infection, and their friend, Roger Waite. Dawn & Matt Ahaesy request prayers for Gina Ahaesy who is battling cancer. The Deacons request prayers for Betty Dalbeck who is also now in hospice, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell, and Joyce & Armand Thienel. Our prayers are also with Normairis Rivera's son, Joey. Kristin Olson requests prayers for Mitch Bourque. Prayers also continue for Erika Vecsey, who is battling cancer. We would also like prayers to continue for Doug Perkins. Greg Waters and Cindy MacLaurin request prayers for Cindy's mother, whose cancer has returned in her other lung.

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

Fellowship ~ Join us this Wednesday for BINGO in the Parlor at 10am.

Carty Cupboard Food Pantry Collection/ Deacon's Fund Collection ~ Next Sunday, December 3, 2023 ~ On the first Sunday of every month, donations of non-perishable, shelf-stable items are collected for the Carty Cupboard in Worcester. Funds are also collected monthly to provide one-time, emergency assistance to a neighbor in need.

Carpet Fund Collection ~ Our new carpet fund is growing! Please continue to add whatever you can spare to the Teddy Bear jar in the narthex. Thank you!

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed ~ We would love to have you help us provide hospitality. Sign-up any Sunday after worship in the Parlor. Thank you.

WEEKLY CALENDER

Today	10:00am	FCC Worship (Sanctuary)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
	11:30am	Council Meeting (Conference Room)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
Monday	7:00pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
Tuesday	6:30pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
Wednesday	10:00am	Fellowship ~ Bingo (Parlor)
Thursday	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
Saturday	10:00am	New Hope SDA (Sanctuary & Parlor)
	12:00pm	Church of God (Hall)
Sunday	10:00am	FCC Worship/Carty Cupboard (Sanctuary)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)