

First Congregational Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS



"The richness, beauty and depths of love can only be fully experienced in a climate of complete openness, honesty and vulnerability." – Anthony Venn Brown

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 embracing 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

Communion Sunday

June 4, 2023

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

Prelude

Largo ~ Handel/arr. Bish

Ringling of the Chimes

Call to Worship

God, Creator, instilled God's image in all of Humanity.

We gather to seek that image in ourselves.

God, Redeemer, calls us to build community with ALL people

We gather to be attentive and bravely go when called.

God, Sustainer, inspires compassion for ALL.

We gather to feel our hearts break open for ALL.

Our Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, God, eternally loving and love itself, commissions us to bring this message of love to ALL humanity, no matter the person, no matter the struggle.

We gather seeking God's image, listening for God's call, and yearning for God's compassion that we may share news of God's eternal love with ALL, no matter the person, no matter the struggle. Let us worship our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons, One Holy and Eternal God. Amen.

*Hymn of Adoration #251

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty! God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea; cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee, which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee, though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see, only thou art holy; there is none beside thee, perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! All thy works shall praise thy name in earth, and sky and sea. Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty! God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (Confession)

Loving God, often in our quest to do the work that we are called to do we miss the mark. At times we doubt even as we worship. Sometimes in the same day that we offer gratitude for answered prayers and blessings received we think thoughts of apprehension and utter words of uncertainty concerning those same blessings. Occasionally we forget that the peace, love, hope, and joy of the Divine extends beyond the walls of our churches and the hearts of those who identify as Christians. Frequently we forget how the Divine and Jesus have moved in our own lives. Help us to push through our doubt. Help us to move past our selfishness and fear of "other people." Help us to truly love our neighbors as ourselves – all of our neighbors. Please change our hearts God. Please help us to muster the bravery to put into practice the

light and love of Jesus. Help us to love boldly without hesitation. All humans are worthy of experiencing the Love of Christ. Please change our hearts and minds. Please show us how to love all. We confess that we get it wrong all the time and we pray that you help us to do better.

Assurance of Pardon

Assuredly God forgives us of all of our wrongdoings – those committed consciously and unconsciously. Thank you God for your forgiveness. Let us forgive others as God continuously forgives us as we work to do better starting now. Amen

Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response

Into My Heart

Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus;
come in today, come in to stay; come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

Scripture Readings

Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 1:26-2:4a

Paul's letter to the Church in Corinth

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Invitation to Generosity (Call to Offering)

Offertory

Loure, from Olde English Suite ~ Penfield

*Doxology

Kremser

We praise You, 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.

Offering Dedication Prayer

We offer these gifts to the God of all people. We cheerfully give our treasure to bring love, peace, hope, joy, justice, and healing to those who are hurting. May these gifts be blessed and used to provide ministry for those who are too often forgotten in our society. Let the generosity represented here be magnified and amplified to stretch beyond our mortal thought and imagination.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 28:16-20

Meditation

"Authority"

Russ Goliger

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face; here faith can touch and handle things unseen;
Here would I grasp with firmer hand Thy grace, and all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the Bread of God; here drink with Thee the royal wine of heav'n;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load; Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv'n.

This is the hour of banquet and of song; this is the heav'nly table spread for me;
Here let me feast, and, feasting, still prolong The brief bright hour of fellowship with Thee.

Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear; the feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here, nearer than ever still our Shield and Sun.

I have no help but Thine; nor do I need another arm save Thine to lean upon;
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed; my strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just to give our thanks and praise....

With your whole Church on earth and with all the company of heaven we worship and adore your glorious name.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Words of Institution

You are holy, O God of majesty.... Gracious God, his perfect sacrifice destroys the power of sin and death; by raising him to life you give us life evermore and therefore we joyfully proclaim the mystery of our faith.

Christ has died! Christ has risen! Christ will come again!

Prayer of Consecration

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and on these your gifts of bread and juice...through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns and is worshipped and glorified with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever.

Amen, Amen, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (First Congregational Church uses the Trespasses/Trespass version, but please use the that is most comfortable for you.)

Service of the Bread

The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?

Service of the Cup

The cup of salvation which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?

Concluding Prayer of Thanksgiving

God, we have gathered at this table representing all people in all places in our world. We have blessed and passed the bread and cup as Christ passed it to his friends. May these elements nourish and inspire us to do the good that Christ calls us to do. May we leave this table revived and refreshed having sipped from the cup of bold courage so that we may challenge all forms of injustice and pain. In Christ name we pray. Amen

Sending Hymn #247

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Holy God, we praise thy name; Lord of all, we bow before thee;
all on earth thy scepter claim; all in heaven above adore thee.
Infinite thy vast domain; everlasting is thy reign.

Hark the glad celestial hymn angel choirs above are raising;
cherubim and seraphim, in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heavens with sweet accord: Holy, holy, holy Lord.

Lo! the apostolic train joins thy 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 thee,
though in essence only one; undivided God we claim thee,
and adoring bend the knee while we sing our praise to Thee.

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.

Chimes

Postlude

God of Grace ~ Manz

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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Prayer Requests

Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda and friend Marie Samuelson whom 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 and their friend, Roger Waite. Dawn & Matt Ahaesy request prayers for Dawn's dad, Francis Lajoie and Gina Ahaesy. The Deacons request prayers for Betty Dalbeck, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell, and Joyce & Armand Thienel and Erika Vecsey. Prayers for Normairis Rivera's son, Joey as he awaits a kidney transplant. Kristin Olson requests prayers for Mitch Bourque. Prayers for Hampton Bagdasarian who is having trouble with one eye. Prayers for MaryKay McGrail and her cancer diagnosis

If you would like to add a prayer concern or update our list, please email the church office at office@fcc-worcester.org. Thank you for praying with us!

Announcements

Church Office this week ~Monday only, June 5th, 9am-1pm.

NEXT WEEK: Physical Office Closed - Shelly will be available remotely and reachable by email and through phone messages.

Fellowship ~ June 6 @ 10:00am ~ Join us for the TEN PENNY AUCTION in the Parlor. All are welcome to join. Fellowship meets in the Parlor at 10am on most Tuesdays.

Carpet Fund Collection ~ Our new carpeting 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!

We welcome Russ Goliger to the pulpit today. Russ holds a Master of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). He works as a hospital chaplain at St. Elizabeth's hospital in Brighton where he provides multi-faith spiritual care to patients, their families and friends, and staff members. His next step toward ordination will be in October when he presents his ordination paper to Central Mass Association Committee on Authorized Ministry. Among his credits, Russ served for twelve years as music director at First Church in Marlborough. He is a proud father of three, each having obtained or are pursuing graduate degrees in choral conducting. For fun, Russ likes to sing, dance, and take long walks enjoying God's glorious creation. Having converted from the Jewish tradition, Russ embraces an ecumenical and inter-religious perspective in his ministry. Russ will be leading Sunday worship services through the summer. For pastoral care, please call our office at 508-752-4635.

Weekly Calendar

Today

10:00am FCC Worship/ Carty Cupboard/Deacons Fund (Sanctuary)
10:00am Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
11:00am Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
6:45pm AA Meeting (Hall)

Monday

7:00pm AA Meeting (Hall)

Tuesday

10:00am Fellowship ~ TEN PENNY AUCTION (Parlor)
6:30pm AA Meeting (Hall)

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 (Sanctuary)
10:00am Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
11:30am Trustees Meeting (Conference Room)
11:00am Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
6:45pm AA Meeting (Hall)

