

The First Congregational Church in Worcester

Sunday, June 22, 2025

10:00A.M.

Second Sunday after Pentecost

The service of worship begins with the music of the prelude. Through its power and brilliance, may you feel the majesty and glory of God; in its quietness, God's peace.

Prelude

Prelude I from Three Quiet Preludes~ Martin

Ring of the Chimes

***Call to Worship**

God is ready for us to seek what is eternal.

God wants us to find the truth beyond ourselves.

Our spirits long for God, as a deer longs for water.

We cry out for some evidence of God's presence.

God seldom comes as earthquake, wind, or fire.

Rather, in moments of sheer silence, God is revealed.

We come in quiet expectation to this holy place.

We approach the altar of God, hungering to be fed.

All are welcome here as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Here is a place to find healing and promise.

Our hope is in God, who gives us life and identity.

Our help is from God, who is in covenant with us.

***Opening Hymn Insert**

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God, my Creator; there is no shadow of turning with thee.

Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hast provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above

Join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hast provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;

Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine and ten thousand beside.

Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hast provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

***Invocation**

God, our refuge and our hope, come among us today to give us energy and purpose. Move us beyond the discipline of the law to the discipleship of faith. Free us from the shackles of fear and a sense of failure that keep us from stepping bravely into your future. Grant us the sense that we are not alone but are part of a great company of your faithful people of every nation and tongue. Amen.

Call to Transformation

When we ask to be delivered from deceitful and unjust people, we need to examine ourselves to see if we are completely honest and just. When we sense demonic forces in our world, we must ask if there is any evil in us. When we are tempted to exclude, we are met by an inclusive God who calls us to repentance

Prayer of Transformation

Almighty and Sovereign God, we confess that we have broken covenant with you, despised some of your children, and accused you of forgetting us. Our lives do not praise you, our actions deny you, and our work is carried out without reference to your will. We draw lines of distinction among ourselves rather than celebrating our common humanity. When we are zealous for the faith, we trample on others rather than learning to know and appreciate them. O God, forgive us and change us. Amen.

Prayer of Grace

When we want to be helped, God is ready to pardon us and equip us for new life. Wounded spirits are restored to wholeness. Enemies can become friends. We can grow in faith and love. God puts a song on our lips and confidence in our hearts. Praise God!

Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

The 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

St. Agnes

O hope of ev'ry contrite heart, O joy of all the meek,
To those who fall how kind thou art. How good to those who seek. Amen

Hebrew Scripture Reading

1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a

Isaiah 65:1-9

Psalms 42 and 43

Psalms 22:19-28

New Testament Reading

Galatians 3:23-29

Gospel Reading

Luke 8:26-39

Sermon

Pastor Ellis Quinonez

***Hymn Insert**

Near to the Heart of God

There is a place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God;
a place where sin cannot molest, near to the heart of God.
O Jesus, blest Redeemer, sent from the heart of God,
hold us, who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.

There is a place of comfort sweet, near to the heart of God;
a place where we our Savior meet, near to the heart of God.
O Jesus, blest Redeemer, sent from the heart of God,
hold us, who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.

There is a place of full release, near to the heart of God;
a place where all is joy and peace, near to the heart of God.
O Jesus, blest Redeemer, sent from the heart of God,
hold us, who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.

Invitation to Generosity

God has richly provided all we need for life's journey. What are we doing with God's bounty? How much of ourselves and the resources we command are we investing in the work God has called the church to do? May our dedicated dollars reflect a consecrated congregation.

Offertory

You are Mine ~ Haas/arr.Hayes

***Doxology**

Beecher

**Blest by Thee with gifts and graces, may we heed Thy church's call;
Gladly in all times and places give to Thee who giv'est all.
Thou hast brought us, and no longer can we claim to be our own;
Ever free and ever stronger, we shall serve Thee, Lord alone.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

God of all times and places, may our offerings reflect confidence, not cowardice; altruism, not egotism; inclusiveness, not exclusiveness. We devote them to bringing all humanity into harmony with your purposes. May the programs we undertake build up the body of Christ among us and far beyond us. Amen.

***Sending Hymn #414**

In Christ There is No East or West

In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
But one great fellowship of love thru'out the whole wide Earth.

In him shall true hearts ev'rywhere their high communion find.
His service is the golden cord close binding humankind

Join hands, then, children of the faith, whate'er your race may be!
Who serves my Father as a child is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;
All Christly souls are one in him, thru'out the whole wide Earth.

***Commission & Blessing**

God has come quickly to aid and instruct us.

Now we depart to help others and to listen to them.

We will share our stories with the congregation.

We will witness in God's name to one another.

God's family includes those outside the church.

With God, there are no outsiders or insiders.

We will carry the grace of God without distinction.

God's abundant steadfast love will sustain us.

Daily God asks, "What are you doing here?"

Moment by moment, God is with us to help us.

We will hope in God and sing God's praises.

We will look up with hope and confidence.

Amen. Amen.

***Benediction Response**

Bunessan

Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, King of my heart;

Christ within me, Christ below me, Christ above me, never to part.

Ringling of the Chimes

***Postlude**

Postludium ~ Young

* - Please stand in body or spirit

All are welcome to join us at Coffee Hour in the parlor immediately following the service.

Let us extend a warm welcome to **Pastor Ellis Quinonez**, who is officiating at our service this morning.