

The First Congregational Church in Worcester

Sunday, February 2, 2025

10:00A.M.

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

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

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring ~ Bach/arr. Wells

Ringing of the Chimes

*Call to Worship

In the Holy One, we take refuge; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

In your righteousness deliver us and hear our cries for justice and peace.

In the Holy One, we draw strength; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

Be a rock of refuge for the vulnerable, a strong fortress to save creation, for you are our rock and fortress.

In the Holy One, we receive courage; let us never be put to shame. Our praise is continually of you.

Rescue us, O God, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel, for you, Holy One, are our hope and trust. ~ Based on Psalm 71

*Opening Hymn #363

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe does seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing.

You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same; and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed his truth to triumph through us.

The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure; one little word shall fell him.

That Word above all earthly powers no thanks to them abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth.

Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
the body they may kill: God's truth abideth still; his kingdom is forever!

*Invocation

Holy One, we welcome you in our midst. You amaze and inspire, challenge and convict, comfort and fortify. May we be open and receptive to your voice and presence among us. Let your words encourage us to be prophetic, passionate, and public in our ministry as we praise and honor your name. Amen.

Call to Transformation

God of Love, we pray that you form and shape us anew. Remind us who we are and draw us back to you. Transform us in love, correct us with compassion, and lead us with clarity into the paths of righteousness, truth, and peace. Forgive us for the ways that we reject your presence, your guidance, and your will. Redeem and restore us as your beloved creation that we might be active citizens of your kin-dom. In Jesus, we pray. Amen

Prayer of Grace

Beloved, love never ends. You reflect the goodness, creative work, and imagination of God. The Holy One knows you well and calls you good. Receive the grace of God to live a life that ever transforms and renews through the power of God's abiding, constant, and tangible love.

Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns

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

Sursum Corda

**Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day;
Help me to see your purpose and your will
Where I have failed, what I have done amiss;
Held in forgiving love, let me be still.**

Hebrew Scripture Reading

Jeremiah 1:4-10

New Testament Reading

I Corinthians 13:1-13

Gospel Reading

Luke 4:21-30

Meditation

The Refusal

***Hymn #288**

Let Us Break Bread Together

Let us break bread together on our knees. Let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees. Let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees. Let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord have mercy on me.

Invitation to Generosity

The generous life responds to the goodness of God and the needs of the world. There is no need that our collective human resources cannot meet because of the abundance of creation. May we celebrate

and honor creation by giving without fear as an act of faith and trust in the Holy One and in one another.

Offertory

In the Chapel ~ Haueisen/arr. Troutman

*Doxology

Old 100th

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

*Prayer of Dedication

Holy One, may the gifts we give reflect your abundance and generosity. Use our time, talent, and treasure to serve our faith community and the world. May each offering be a seed that will grow, spread, and fill the atmosphere with the sweet scent of faith, hope, and love. Amen

Sacrament of Holy Communion ~ Insert

*Sending Hymn ~ Insert

Here I Am, Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have born my peoples pain.
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them, Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide, Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them, Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.

*Commission & Blessing

Go forth with faith to move mountains.

Reach out with love that transforms the world.

Love is patient and kind, not jealous or boastful.

Love rejoices in all that is right, not in wrong.

Let the Scripture be fulfilled by your faithfulness.

Let the Word take flesh in all you do.

Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures.

We participate in the love of God that never ends.

God promises to be our rock and our refuge.

God is ever with us to deliver us.

God's Word will be in our mouths.

God's love will warm our spirits.

Amen.

***Benediction Response**

Sicilian Mariners

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;

Let us each your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.

O direct us and protect us, traveling through this wilderness.

Ring of the Chimes

***Postlude**

Solemn March ~ Widor/arr. Blake

* - Please stand in body or spirit

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

Welcome.....Rev. Linda Michel