

The First Congregational Church in Worcester

Sunday, May 4, 2025

10:00A.M.

Third Sunday of Easter

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

God So Loved the World ~ Stainer/arr. Sewell

Ringing of the Chimes

*Call to Worship

Sing praises to God, O you saints of God.

Give thanks to God's holy name.

Praise God for the joyous gift of a new day.

Thank God for healing and ever-present help.

Extol the one who lifts us up from defeat.

Praise the one who upholds us when we are discouraged.

God sees and hears our weeping.

God lifts our souls from the pit of despair.

Give thanks to God who turns mourning into dancing.

Praise God who hears our cries and answers our prayers.

We have cried to you in our need, O God.

We believe you are working to make us whole.

*Opening Hymn Insert

Lift High the Cross

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod, our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

All newborn servants of the Crucified bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree, your death has brought us life eternally.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

So shall our song of triumph ever be: praise to the Crucified for victory.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

*Invocation

Come to us as a light from heaven, Sovereign God. Pierce the shadows of doubt and despair, anger and scorn, that we allow to rule in our lives. Turn us from ways that deny your rule among us. Awaken us from dull routines to worship that is 'alive with awe and wonder, spontaneity, and joy. Surprise us with a presence we cannot avoid, a summons we dare not evade, a mission we may not escape. We are gathered by the love of Christ, that we may feed others as we have been fed. Amen.

Call to Transformation

What questions is God asking us as we examine our faith and faithfulness? Have our attitudes been rigid or flexible? Have we been motivated by self-sacrificing love or self-serving lies? Do we live by a self-limited agenda or by a God-given mission? Surely we have much to confess.

Prayer of Transformation

Loving God, we admit to attitudes that exclude rather than embrace. We prefer to associate with others who think and act as we do. We turn away from those who are different from us. We identify some as enemies to be avoided or even destroyed. Forgive us, God, for seeking to limit your family. Awaken us to the limits of our understanding and the narrowness of our dealings. Show us the better ways you intend and make us bold to respond, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Words of Grace

Let the scales fall from your eyes. God has offered you new sight. Unplug your ears. God is claiming you as a beloved servant. Warm to the community that surrounds you. God has given you sisters and brothers to love. Reach out to feed and care and follow where Christ leads. You are forgiven and claimed and sent.

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

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.

Hebrew Scripture Reading

Psalm 30

New Testament Reading

Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)

Gospel Reading

John 2 I: 1-19

Sermon

"Seeing With New Eyes"

Rev. Noelle Dattilo

*Hymn insert

Eucharistic Hymn

Eucharistic Hymn



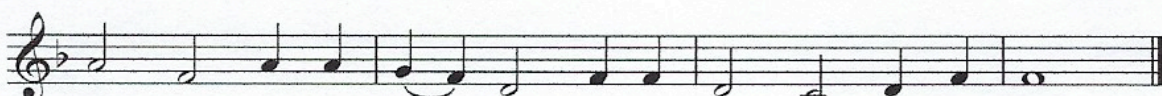
1. Cel - e - brate our Lord's Com mun - ion, sac - ra - ment of bread and wine. All God's
2. Cel - e - brate our Lord's Last Sup - per on that Ho - ly Thurs - day night. When our
3. Cel - e - brate our Sav - ior's tri - umph, life e - ter - nal is our gain. We re -
4. Cel - e - brate God's Son a - mong us, peo - ple come from ev - ery land. All are



child - ren come to - geth - er, church on earth and church di - vine. He is
fears ex - ceed our vis - ion; when we know not wrong from right. He is
mem - ber Je - sus' pas - sion, bro - ken bo - dy suf - fered pain. He will
wel - come at the ta - ble join - ing ev - ery heart and hand. He for -



call - ing; he will bless us. Eu - cha - ris - tic mys - ter - y pre - sent
pray - ing; he will save us. Eu - cha - ris - tic mys - ter - y pre - sent
heal us; he sus - tains us. Eu - cha - ris - tic mys - ter - y pre - sent
gives us; he u - nites us. Eu - cha - ris - tic mys - ter - y pre - sent



in our eat - ing, drink - ing. "Do this to re - mem - ber me."
in the blood and bod - y. "Do this to re - mem - ber me."
in our grief and sor - row, "Do this to re - mem - ber me."
in our car - ing, lov - ing. "Do this to re - mem - ber me."

WORDS: W. Richard Turner, 2007
MUSIC: Attr. to B. F. White, 1844

BEACH SPRING
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Invitation to Generosity

Who will carry the name of Christ into the marketplace? Who will try new ways of faithfulness? Our offerings involve all who give. They empower those who serve. They express our praise and thanksgiving while witnessing to the reign of love in our midst.

Offertory

O How I Love Jesus ~ arr. Walters

***Doxology**

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

***Prayer of Dedication**

We bring our offerings to feed your lambs and tend your sheep, gracious God. May these gifts extend love in the form of food, pure water, shelter, and acceptance Let them provide outreach to the world and opportunities for growth within this congregation. Help us focus on what is important, that we may work together to make a difference in the world. Amen.

***Sending Hymn #400**

More Love to Thee, O Christ

**More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee! Hear Thou the prayer I make on bended knee;
This is my earnest plea: more love, O Christ, to Thee, more love to Thee, more love to Thee!**

**Once earthly joy I crave, sought peace and rest; now Thee alone I seek, give what is best;
This all my prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to Thee, more love to Thee, more love to Thee!**

**Then shall my latest breath whisper Thy praise; this be the parting cry my heart shall raise;
This still its prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to Thee, more love to Thee, more love to Thee!**

***Commission & Blessing**

Rise and go where God directs.

Your caring may be the answer to someone's prayer.

We will extol our God in word and deed.

We will reach out to our neighbors with love.

Be alert to the needs of people you meet.

You may be God's chosen instrument of healing.

We will praise God's faithfulness day by day.

We will listen with compassion to those who suffer.

Blessed are those who believe without seeing.

Blessed are those who trust without proof.

We will follow where Christ leads us.

Blessing, honor, glory, and power be to our God.

Amen. Amen.

***Benediction Response**

Hymn to Joy

**Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You, Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, Hymn to Fill us with the light of day!**

Ringling of the Chimes

***Postlude**

Jubilation ~ Denton

*** - 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 **Rev. Noelle Dattilo**, who is officiating at our service today. **Thank you, Noelle!**

Scott, it's great to have you back! We've missed you!