

# *First Congregational Church*

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

*October 13, 2024*



## **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*

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

Welcome

Rev. Jack Jones

Pastor: No matter where you are on life's journey,  
**Congregation: you are welcome here.**

**Prelude**

*Finale ~ Mendelssohn*

**Ringing of the Chimes**

**Call to Worship**

*Pastor:* Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, O God, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

***Congregation:* The Holy One meets us in the stillness of our thoughts, in the joy of our laughter, in the spontaneity of our encounters, in the hope of our presence.**

*Pastor:* Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, O God, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

***Congregation:* The Creator sustains us with mercy, reassures us with compassion, and challenges us with grace.**

*Pastor:* Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, O God, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

***Congregation:* Let us worship our Maker in spirit and in truth, through pain and despair, with the fullness of our being.**

**Hymn of Adoration ~ #1** *(please stand)*

*Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*

Our God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,  
our Shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal Home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,  
from everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the op'ning day.

Our God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,  
be Thou our Guard while life shall last, and our eternal Home!

**Invocation**

*(Everyone)* Everlasting God, we come before you with questions, and you question us in return. We declare that you are good, and you have declared us good. May we acknowledge that you make all things new, you redeem our days, and you empower us to be your people. In your presence, there is joy, and there is struggle. Peace surpasses understanding, and our hearts break. This defines the fullness of human community and experience in companionship with you. We give thanks for your presence and trust that you continue to transform the impossible into the possible. Make it so in us and through us in your precious name. Amen.

### **Prayer of Transformation**

*(Congregation)* Just God, we confess our attachment to things of this world, to our possessions, and to objects of status. We acknowledge the pride we take in doing good things that require little of us while turning away from the needed thing that challenges our wants and desires. Make us repairers of brokenness and restorers of lost. Help us to discern that life in full pursuit of your kingdom is rich, full, and freeing. Even as you test us, help us meet the moment with abounding love and abiding faith. Amen.

### **Prayer of Grace**

*Pastor:* Dear One, God is with you. Hear these words of assurance from 1 Corinthians 10:13, "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful and will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing God will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it."

*Pastor:* The peace of the Lord be with you.

*Congregation:* And also with you.

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Epistle**

*Hebrews 4:12-16*

**Gospel Lesson**

*Mark 10:17-31*

**Sermon**

*"Synthesis"*

Rev. Jack Jones

**Hymn ~ #218** *(Please Stand)*

*O Jesus, I Have Promised*

O Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;  
be Thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend;  
I shall not fear the battle if Thou art by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if Thou wilt be my Guide.

O let me hear Thee speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control!  
O speak, and make me listen, Thou Guardian of my soul!

O Jesus, Thou hast promised to all who follow Thee  
that where Thou art in glory there shall Thy servant be;  
and, Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;  
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend!

## Sharing Celebrations and Concerns for Community Prayer

### Pastoral Prayer

### Moment of Silence for Personal Prayer

### Lord's Prayer (*Everyone*)

**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 (*Everyone*)

*Lemmel*

**Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.**

### Invitation to Generosity

Generosity is a spiritual gift that may be cultivated, grown, and nurtured. Let us plant seeds today with our gifts that will bloom and provide a harvest beyond our expectation or imagination.

### Giving of our Offerings

### Offertory

*Little Rondo ~ Blake*

### Doxology (*Everyone & Please Stand*)

*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

*Pastor:* Gracious God, may the gifts we bring be magnified and do miracles in our community. Use them for restoration and hope as your kingdom is demonstrated before us all. Amen

### Announcements

### Sending Forth Hymn ~ #404 (*Please Stand*)

*Take My Life and Let It Be*

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in endless praise,

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee,

Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne,

Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee,

**Benediction** *(Please Remain Standing)*

Be strengthened in God's love.

Be held in God's goodness.

Be enriched in God's generosity.

Do the hard thing by the power of the Spirit.

Love our neighbors with the love of Jesus Christ.

And, repair and restore the Holy One's good creation. Amen.

**Benediction Response** *(Please Remain Standing)*

*Ellers*

**Grant us Thy peace upon our homeward way;  
With Thee began, with Thee shall end the day.  
Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,  
That in this house have called upon Thy name.**

**Chimes**

**Postlude**

*Prelude in A Minor ~ J.S.Bach*

*Please Join us at Coffee Hour*

*Connect With Us ~ Would you like 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 basket this morning. We are glad you joined us today!*

**Prayer Requests**

Please continue to hold Pastor Jack in your thoughts and prayers as he works through his health issues. We would like to continue our prayers for Hampton Bagdasarian; Ellen Dalbeck requests prayers for her nephew, Tyler McDermott and his family. Tyler is undergoing treatment for cancer. Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; Sue & Norman Anderson request prayers for their daughter, Melanie Anderson, who has COVID, Sue's brother, Danny Waskevich, who is back in the hospital with an infection, and their friend, Roger Waite. Please also pray for their doctor, Dr. Phillip Fournier, as his cancer has returned in several places. Dawn & Matt Ahaesy request prayers for Gina Ahaesy; The Deacons request prayers for Ann Scherdell, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell, and Joyce & Armand Thienel. Kristin Olson requests prayers for Mitch Bourque. Prayers also continue for Erika Vecsey, and also for Jane Boggs as she transitions into her new way of life.

*If you would like to add a prayer concern or update our list, please email the church office at [office@fcc-worcester.org](mailto:office@fcc-worcester.org) or call the office at 508-752-4635.*

## Announcements

**Hospitality** ~ Please join us in the parlor for coffee and goodies every Sunday after worship. If you are able to host a coffee hour, there is a sign-up sheet on the table. If you bring the goodies, we provide the coffee and other beverages, and the paper goods. If you'd like, two or more people can sign up together to make it a little easier. **Our thanks go out to Sue Anderson for hosting Coffee Hour today.**

**Carpet Fund Collection** ~ With our carpet funds continuing to grow, thanks to YOU we've been able to choose the carpeting and are working on having it installed! Thank you for your continued contributions to the Teddy Bear! Please don't stop, as this is a costly project but needs to be done ASAP, for the safety of us all.

**Friendly Messenger** ~ If you would like a copy of our newsletter, you can pick one up from the table in the narthex.

**Church Directory** ~ Directories are available in the church office.



## Stewardship Corner

Stewardship Sunday is quickly approaching. Here is some food for thought, while you're making your decisions.

"All too often we regard stewardship simply as a matter of our giving to God, but this aspect is secondary. Before we can give, we must possess, and before we possess, we must receive. Therefore, stewardship is, in the first place, receiving God's good and bounteous gifts. And once received, those gifts are not to be used solely for our own good. They must also be used for the benefit of others, and ultimately for the glory of God the giver. The steward needs an open hand to receive from God and then an active hand to give to God and to others." - Murray J. Harris

*1Peter 4:10 says that "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace"*



## Weekly Calendar

<b>Today</b>	10:00am	FCC Worship Service (Sanctuary)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
	1:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (Sanctuary)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
<b>Monday</b>	7:00pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
	10-2pm	Church Office Open
<b>Tuesday</b>	2-4 pm	ESL Class ~ Tom Jones, & Pastor Ketelie Altena (Chapel)
	6:30pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
<b>Wednesday</b>	10:30am	Fellowship ~ Outing to 🍏 Brookfield Orchards 🍏 with lunch to follow at The Black & White.
	6:00pm	Deacons Meeting (Parlor)
	7:00pm	Pastoral Relations Meeting (Parlor)
	7:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (Sanctuary)
<b>Thursday</b>	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
	10-2pm	Church Office Open
	3-4 pm	ESL Class ~ Tom Jones, & Pastor Ketelie Altena (Chapel)
	4:00pm	Worship Meal (Hall)
<b>Friday</b>	10-2pm	Church Office Open
	7:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (Sanctuary)
<b>Saturday</b>	10:00am	New Hope SDA (Sanctuary & Parlor)
	12:00pm	Church of God (Hall)
<b>Sunday</b>	10:00am	FCC Worship Service (Sanctuary)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
	1:00pm	Iglesia Pentecostal Casa de Vida (Sanctuary)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)