

# *First Congregational Church*

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

*October 1, 2023*



## **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*

*Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

*October 1, 2023*

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

Prelude

Ringling of the Chimes

Call to Worship (*based on Psalm 25*)

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

**O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame.**

Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths

**Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation.**

Good and upright is the LORD, who instructs sinners in the way.

**The Lord leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble God's way.**

Invocation and Lord's Prayer

**We who have come to know your love, O Lord, are here to worship you. We ask your blessing upon us in this offering of our praise, and we ask your presence in every act of our lives, that we...your Church...may be confirmed in our faith, and give glory to your son Jesus Christ, who invites us to pray as he taught . . .**

**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.**

\*Hymn of Adoration ~ #8

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

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, fill us with the light of day!

All Your works with joy surround You, earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,  
Stars and angels sing around You, center of unbroken praise;  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are thine;  
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus, which the morning stars began;  
Father love is reigning o'er us, brother love binds man to man.  
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;  
Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

Unison Reading

*Nicene Creed*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father, through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Sharing of Announcements, Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response

*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.

New Testament Reading

Philippians 2:1-13

Giving of Our Offerings

Offertory

\*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

**O God, you call us into a life of generosity. May these gifts and every gift we share embrace your love, justice, and compassion for the world. Amen.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 21:23-32

Meditation

*On Whose Authority?*

Rev. Linda Michel

\*Hymn ~ *Insert*

*Come Share the Lord*

We gather here in Jesus' name, His love is burning in our hearts like living flame;  
For through His loving Son the Father makes us one:  
Come take the bread, come drink the wine, come share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here, everyone belongs;  
finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

He joins us here, He breaks the bread, the Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead;  
The One we love the most is now our gracious host:  
Come take the bread, come drink the wine, come share the Lord.

We are now a family of which the Lord is head;  
though unseen he meets us here in the breaking of the bread.

We'll gather soon where angels sing; we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King;  
Now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:  
Come take the bread, come drink the wine, come share the Lord

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation

Communion Prayer

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to God, most high.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Word of Institution

Sharing of the Elements

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Dear God, we give you thanks for this simple and sacred meal. Through it, may we find strength and courage to lead with love. Amen.**

\*Sending Hymn ~ *Insert*

*Go, My Children, with My Blessing*

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.

Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.  
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
Here you heard my dear Son's story;  
here you touched him, saw his glory.  
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.

Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me;  
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.  
Here my Spirit's power filled you;  
here his tender comfort stilled you.  
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.

\*Benediction & Benediction Response

*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

*\*Please stand in body, or in spirit.*

***We are glad you joined us today! All are welcome to attend Coffee Hour immediately following our worship service in the Parlor. Not sure where to go? Just ask. Any one of us would be delighted to help you! Thanks to Matt Ahaesy & Sue Anderson for Coffee Hour treats.  
We welcome Rev. Linda Michel to the Pulpit today!***

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*The First Congregational Church in Worcester*  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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### **Prayer Requests**

*We would like to keep Hampton Bagdasarian in our prayers as he is having trouble with one of his eyes; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda and friend Marie Samuelson who 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 who is healing from a leg amputation and is back in the hospital for another infection, and their friend, Roger Waite. Dawn & Matt Ahaesy request prayers for Dawn's dad, Francis Lajoie and also for Gina Ahaesy; Donna Spaulding requests prayers for Dave H. and his caregiver, Cindy. Dave has cancer and is now in hospice. The Deacons request prayers for Betty Dalbeck who is also now in hospice, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell, and Joyce & Armand Thienel. Our prayers are also with Normairis Rivera's son, Joey. Kristin Olson requests prayers for Mitch Bourque. Prayers also continue for MaryKay McGrail as she recovers from cancer and for Erika Vecsey, who is also battling cancer. We would also like prayers to continue for Doug Perkins. Greg Waters and Cindy MacLaurin request prayers for Cindy's mother, whose cancer has returned in her other lung. Our prayers are with Russ Goliger, who is recovering from an injury. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Steven Coy, Jr. who has just gone Home to Jesus.*

*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**

**FELLOWSHIP** ~ Meetings will be held on WEDNESDAYS at 10am in the Parlor. This week join us for a guest speaker.

**NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8** ~ The service is to be led by pastoral candidate, **Rev. Jack R. Jones**. **SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** will be held in the Sanctuary immediately after service for election of the next pastor of First Congregational Church. The vote will be counted by a show of hands; two-thirds majority is required for election.

**Carpet Fund Collection** ~ Our new carpet 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

## 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	6:30pm	AA Meeting (Hall)
Wednesday	11:00am	Fellowship ~ Fellowship ~ Guest Speaker (Parlor)
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/SPECIAL MEETING (Sanctuary)
	10:00am	Family Christian Church of God (Hall)
	11:00am	Ghanian Resurrection Ministries (Upper level)
	11:30am	Trustees Meeting (Conference Room)
	6:45pm	AA Meeting (Hall)