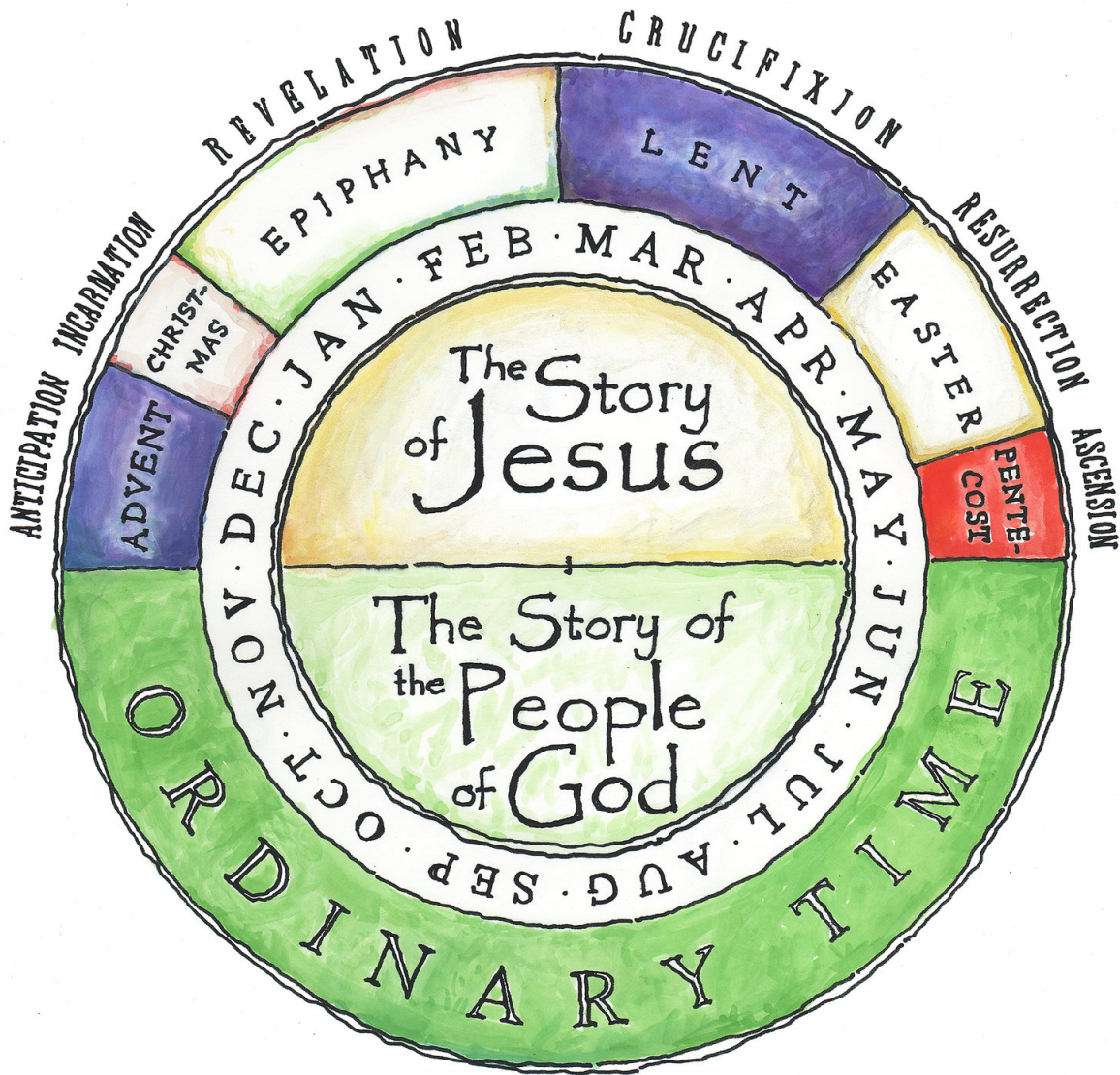


The First Congregational Church in Worcester

United Church of Christ



September 8, 2024

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*Enter reverently, Meditate Quietly,
Worship sincerely, Serve Christ faithfully*

Welcome

Prelude

Voluntary VII ~ Handel

Call to Worship

How majestic is God's name in all the earth!

We see God's glory in the expanse of the heavens.

All plants and animals are God's creation.

All that God has made reflects God's goodness.

We are created in God's image, to relate to God.

We receive great abundance and care from our Creator.

God blesses us day by day with good things.

We are given dominion over the works of God.

Gather to praise God and greet one another.

Celebrate all the ways God is revealed to us.

We worship the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

We rejoice in Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit.

*Hymn of Praise ~ #6

O Worship the King, All Glorious Above

Oh worship the King, all glorious above! O gratefully sing His power and His love—
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

Oh tell of His might! O sing of His grace! Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form, And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

The earth, with its store of wonders untold, Almighty! Thy power hath founded of old;
Established it fast by a changeless decree, And round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender! How firm to the end! Our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend!

Advent

A season of Spiritual Preparation

*Advent Hymn ~ #110

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orderest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our king of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Christmas

A season celebrating the Incarnation of God

*Christmas Hymn ~ #130

Joy to the World!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

Epiphany

Spread the Good News of Christ

*Epiphany Hymn #143

We Three Kings of Orient Are

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising, worshiping God on high.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Scripture Reading

Psalm 96 & 98

Offertory Invitation

Offertory

In the Chapel ~ O'Donnell

*Doxology

*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!*

Lent

A season of reorienting our lives toward God

Prayer of Confession

Great Shepherd, we thank you for finding us and bringing us to this time of prayer. We have wandered far from the paths of integrity, justice and peace that you have set before us. We are ashamed of some of the things we do when we think no one will find out. We are quick to judge others and excuse ourselves. We want to decide who is acceptable to you and who is not. Surely, we persuade ourselves, you prefer people like us and not those who appear, believe, or act differently. Even as we say those words, we know we are not in tune with your way. Forgive us, we pray, and help us to change. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

The goodness and mercy of God are always available to us. We can receive these gifts when we are truly sorry for our sin and open to the richness of God's grace. When we let God touch

our unseeing eyes, we gain new insights and can begin to view others with the compassion of Christ. Let us accept with joy the healing we are offered right here, right now.

Holy Week

Follow the footsteps of Jesus from his
triumphal entry into Jerusalem to the Cross

*Passion Hymn ~ #170

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded with thorns, Thine only crown.
O sacred Head, what glory, what bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression, but Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve Thy place;
look on me with Thy favor, vouchsafe to me Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest Friend,
for this, Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever! And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love for Thee.

Easter and Pentecost

A season celebrating the Resurrection of
Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit

*Easter Hymn ~ #193

Thine is the Glory

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away, kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb. Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing, for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life!! Life is nought without Thee; aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors, through Thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.

Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son; endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.

Ordinary Time

The Time of the Church

*Closing Hymn ~ Insert

Forth in Thy Name, O Lord

Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go, My daily labor to pursue;
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know In all I think, or speak, or do.

The task Thy wisdom hath assigned, O let me cheerfully fulfill;
In all my works Thy presence find, And prove Thy good and perfect will.

Thee may I set at my right hand, Whose eyes mine inmost substance see,
And labor on at Thy command, And offer all my works to Thee.

For Thee delightfully employ Whate'er Thy bounteous grace hath given;
And run my course with even joy, And closely walk with Thee to Heaven.

*Benediction

***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.*

*Chimes

*Postlude

Rondeau ~ Mouret