



The _____
First Congregational Church
_____ of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

February 11th, 2024

The Order of Morning Worship

February 11th, 2024

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship based on Psalm 86 Pastor

❖ Hymn of Exultation #498 *Jesus! What a Friend
for Sinners!* Congregation

Scriptural Call to Repentance Psalm 46:8-9 Pastor

Prayer of Collective Confession Congregation

Holy Father, we long to have You change our hearts. We confess to You that we do not obey You as we should. We don't think Your thoughts, speak Your truth, or do the good that You command. We do not love our neighbors as You have loved us. We bend the truth to our own purposes. We harbor bitterness when we don't get our own way. We neglect and leave the oppressed with no defender. We break Your holy law and delight in what You have forbidden. Merciful Lord, we humbly ask that You would forgive us and change our hearts. Conform us to the image of Your Son. Holy Spirit, work in us we pray, that we might be like Christ.¹

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness Psalm 130:3, 7-8 Pastor

Pastoral Prayer Pastor

Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

Affirmation of Faith *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*² Congregation

Pastor: What is the chief end of man?

Congregation: Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Pastor: What rule has God given to direct us in how to glorify and enjoy Him?

¹ Written by Pastor Doug Warren

² A catechism is a question and answer format for teaching the truths contained in Scripture. The Westminster Shorter Catechism was written in 1647 in England primarily as an aid for teaching children. It has been used by congregations and families in both worship and instruction for the past 350 years.

Congregation: The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us as to how we may glorify and enjoy Him.

Deacons' Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

❖ Creedal Song #735 *Gloria Patri* Congregation

SERVICE MUSIC:

735

Gloria Patri

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. Ps. 29:2

Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the

Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in

the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er

shall be, world with - out end. A - men, a - men.

❖ Scripture Reading	Isaiah 40:1-5	Pastor
❖ Hymn of Reflection	<i>God Be Merciful to Me</i>	Congregation
	<i>Sermon Series in the Gospel of Mark</i>	
The Sermon	Mark 1:1-11	Pastor
	<i>"The King's Highway"</i>	
❖ Hymn of Response #55	<i>To God Be the Glory</i>	Congregation
❖ Benediction	Jude 24-25	Pastor

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~

~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

Prelude: My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (Young)

I Love You, Lord (Klein)

Offertory: He Who Began a Good Work in You (Mohr)

Deacons' Offering: Voluntary II (Handel)

Postlude: "Postlude" in D Major (J. S. Bach)

~~~~~

## Vespers Today

Vespers will be held this afternoon at Woodstock Terrace at 3pm and the Mertens House at 3:30 pm. All are welcome to join in this time of worship and encouragement.

~~~~~

Deacons' Offering – Today, February 11th

The Deacons' Fund enables the deacons to minister to and provide assistance to people in need, both within our congregation as well as in the broader community. While the deacons never provide money, they do help with things like, but not limited to, gas and grocery cards, rental assistance, auto repairs, and help with medical bills. Due to increased need the Deacons' Fund balance is extremely low. We are asking for your prayers for wisdom and stewardship as well as your consideration of making a donation to the Deacons' Fund to allow us to continue to meet the growing need in our community. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

~~~~~

~~~~~

Young Adult Fellowship & Super Bowl Party Tonight

The Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight at 5 pm at Karis's house. We will eat, sing, and study God's Word together. All are welcome to stay after and watch the Super Bowl.

~~~~~

### Save the Date!

**Today! 5 pm** — Young Adult Fellowship and Super Bowl Party

**Sunday, February 18** — Visit from Teen Challenge Women's Ministry

**Friday, March 8, 6:30-8:00 pm** — Concert of Prayer

**Sunday, March 31** — Easter

**Saturday, April 20, 5:30-8:00 pm** — Community Barn Dance & Potluck

~~~~~

The February Prayer Letter is available on the back table.

~~~~~

### Concert of Prayer

Calling all members and regular attenders of FCCW! We will be gathering Friday night, **March 8**, at **6:30 pm** for a concert of prayer. Our focus will be asking the Lord to guide us as we reach out together by faith in Christ. We want to love our neighbors faithfully in word and deed to the honor of Jesus. This evening of prayer should be a great time in God's presence together with praise music and prayer.

~~~~~

Nursery Staff Position

We are looking to hire someone to hire as our Nursery Attendant. Please join us in praying for the Lord to raise up a mature, responsible adult (18+) who loves Jesus and children and who would be the anchor for caring for the little ones on Sunday mornings, assisted by volunteers from the congregation. Please contact Kristen Warren at fccwinfo@gmail.com for more details or to submit an application. Thank you.

~~~~~

~~~~~

Community Barn Dance & Potluck

Come to a community barn dance on **April 20** at First Congregational Church of Woodstock!

Come sample the hilarity and joy of moving through simple figures with neighbors in your community. Singles, couples, and children are all welcome. All dances taught in a walk through by dance leader Ruth Holleran (aka "Hootin' and Holleran"). No experience necessary. Smiles guaranteed!

Dance to the New England fiddle music of stellar contradance band recordings. These are the dances and fiddle tunes that have survived in rural pockets of New England from the days of English, Irish, and French-Canadian settlers. Foot-tapping good, they support upbeat cardio exercise and a cheerful social experience. Come join us for an evening of fun doing circles, easy contras, longways reels, and more!

Potluck at 5:30 (food supplied by the church), Dance 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Chairs will also be available if you want to observe! Bring your water bottle and invite your friends to this fun and free event!

~~~~~

## Weekly Gathering Opportunities

**Sundays, 6:00 pm** — Young Adult Fellowship Group in the library

**Tuesdays, 7:00 am** — Middle School & High School Bible Study—meet at Maplefields to grab breakfast, then on to the church for study, discussion, and prayer.

**Tuesdays, 10:00 am** — Ladies' Bible Study meets in person at the Thompson Senior Center and via ZOOM, please contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [bonhope2@gmail.com](mailto:bonhope2@gmail.com).

**Tuesdays, 6:00 pm** — Prayer Meeting, in person in the library and via ZOOM

**Wednesdays, 6:15 am** — Men's Bible Study, in person in the library and via ZOOM, please contact Dick Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [rbatwood1@gmail.com](mailto:rbatwood1@gmail.com).

~~~~~

Mark's Gospel—Jesus' True Identity Reveals the Magnitude of His Sacrifice

10:30 Morning Worship Service:

Mark 1:1-11

The King's Highway

*This is an announcement of the new beginning of the
gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

- 1. God Is Making a New Beginning (Gospel) Through His Son (1).**
- 2. Isaiah and the Other Prophets Support This Announcement (2-3).**
- 3. John Came Preparing People Through Baptism for This New Beginning (4-8).**
- 4. The Father & Spirit Confirm Jesus IS God's Beloved Son (9-11).**

Conclusion: God's people have been waiting for Messiah, but they have *not* repented as they should. God had promised that He would send a messenger ahead of the Messiah *to prepare the way before the Lord*. In preparation, the Lord would move among His people and bring about a *great repentance*. In this passage God is doing that in and through Christ as He identifies with His people, being washed in the Jordan to herald a new work among His people. All three persons of the Godhead are engaged in this revelatory work declaring Jesus is the Messiah who has come.

Exodus 23:20-21

²⁰ “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Malachi 3:1-4

“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵ “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before* the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ⁶ And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

Taking Gathered Worship Home

God is doing something radically new in the Gospel of Mark. He is making all things new by preparing the way for the Messiah. This good news was a bombshell blasting away all the false façade that tradition had built up around the coming Day of the Lord.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ. Ask Jesus to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday Morning

READ Mark 1:1-11; Exodus 23:20-1; Isaiah 40:1-5; Malachi 3:1-4; 4:5-6; 2 Kings 1:5-8; Acts 13:16-25; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Psalm 84:1-12. DISCUSS Who is Jesus? Why is His identity so significant? What does His coming bring? How are you different because of His coming? SERVE someone in need. MEDITATE on **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY “Father God, Thank You for sending Your Son. Enable us to recognize Him properly.”

Sunday Evening

GATHER for Young Adult Fellowship at **5pm** at Karis’ home.

Monday

READ Mark 1:2-3; Exodus 23:20-21; Isaiah 40:1-5; Psalm 84:1-12. DISCUSS What does God promise in bringing prophets to the people? How do these point forward to John? SERVE by putting someone else’s interests *above your own!* MEDITATE **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY, “Jesus, Thank You for faithfully keeping Your promises to Your covenant people. We praise You for leading us every step of the way into Your presence.”

Tuesday

READ Mark 1:2-3; Malachi 3:1-4; 4:5-6; Psalm 84:1-12. DISCUSS How does the Old Testament close? What are they waiting for? How does the arrival of John fulfill that? SERVE by considering someone else’s needs *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY, “Holy Spirit, thank You for giving us Your Word and for fulfilling it in the right time. Teach us to walk with You and to follow Your lead with the whole of our lives.”

Wednesday

READ **Mark 1:4-8; Second Kings 1:5-8; Acts 13:16-25**. DISCUSS How did John continue Elijah's role? SERVE by *caring about someone else* more than yourself! MEDITATE on **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY, "Lord God, thank You for revealing Yourself to us through Your prophets. Enliven our hearts to hear Your Word and rejoice in Your coming, Jesus! We praise You as our Messiah."

Thursday

READ **Mark 1:9-11; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Malachi 4:5-6**. DISCUSS What similarities do you see between Creation and Christ's baptism? Do you see all three members of the Trinity? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own*! MEDITATE on **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY, "Triune God, thank You for the way You have shown us Your glory and loved us with Your whole self."

Friday

READ **Mark 1:1-11; Exodus 23:20-1; Isaiah 40:1-5; Malachi 3:1-4; 4:5-6; 2 Kings 1:5-8; Acts 13:16-25; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Psalm 84:1-12**. DISCUSS, What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Mark 8:27-29**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *be transformed together by God's incarnation and live together in the reality of His continued presence through His Spirit*.

Saturday

PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Mark 1:1-45**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the *worship service @ 10:30*. Ask Jesus to *reveal Himself to us in His Word by His Spirit*.

Meditate on this—Mark 8:27-29

"And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' And they told him, 'John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.' And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Christ.'"