



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

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

January 29th, 2023

The Order of Morning Worship

January 29th, 2023

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship Psalm 118:1-4 Pastor

❖ Hymn of Exultation #94 *How Firm a Foundation* Congregation

Scriptural Call to Repentance Hebrews 4:14-16 Pastor

Prayer of Collective Confession Congregation

Almighty and most merciful Father, we are thankful that Your mercy is higher than the heavens, wider than our wanderings, deeper than all our sin. Forgive our frivolous attitude toward life, our callousness toward suffering, our envy of those who have more than we have, our obsession with creating a life of constant pleasure, our indifference to the treasures of heaven, our neglect of Your wise and gracious law. Help us to change our way of life so that we may desire what is good, love what You love, and do what You command, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness Acts 13:38; Eph 1:7 Pastor

Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

Pastoral Prayer Pastor

❖ Creedal Song *Gospel Song* Congregation

❖ Scripture Reading Joshua 24:11-28 Pastor

❖ Hymn of Reflection *How Deep the Father's
Love for Us* Congregation

The Sermon Ruth 1:6-10 Pastor
 "Which Way to Turn?"

❖ Hymn of Response #585 *Take My Life, and Let It Be* Congregation

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

Postlude

Prelude: Foundation (Held)
Offertory: Before the Throne of God Above (Bancroft/Cook)
Postlude: O God Beyond All Praising (Cherwien)

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Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight  
at 6 pm in the church library.

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## Nursery Volunteers Needed

Can you give one Sunday this spring to help minister to the youngest members of our church family? We have a full-time nursery attendant, but we need a volunteer to help her each Sunday from 10-12. If you are willing to help one Sunday or more, or if you have questions, please contact Karis Warren at [karis.warren@gmail.com](mailto:karis.warren@gmail.com) or (207) 329-4190. Thank you!

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An Evening of Encouragement

BCE Supper Talk: February 23, 2023
“The Glorious Church”

Have you noticed? Being a dedicated member of a church is no longer a normal part of American culture. “Church people” stand out now more than ever before. Of course, standing out can be a very good thing, but in some ways it makes being a member of a church more difficult. The culture no longer supports us or the time we commit to church activities, because it no longer sees church as a meaningful, important part of life.

On Thursday, February 23, the Board of Christian Education invites you to a supper talk that intends to rekindle our love of church. We've titled it, "The Glorious Church." It's for all of us - those who need a reminder of why church is so important, those who are a bit tired of the commitment, and those who love church and just want to hear more ways to describe it to others.

After sharing dinner at 6:00 pm, we'll watch a video and engage in discussion. The video is of a plenary talk given last year at the CCEF New England conference. The conference was about living effectively as the body of Christ. In this plenary, Robyn Huck describes the beauty of the church that God has given us. In this talk we hear that God has required that we be unified to act as Christ's ambassadors, He has provided that unity for us, and He glories in our church unity. This is an uplifting, no-guilt-trip, 40-minute video of pure encouragement.

Please sign up on the Billings Room bulletin board and bring a side dish or dessert of your choosing. Main course will be supplied.

We could all use a bit more uplifting encouragement. We hope you'll join us on Thursday, February 23 at 6:00 pm.

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## Send a Valentine's Day Card!

You will find a variety of cards waiting to be filled out and brought to the kiddos at the Dartmouth Children's Hospital. Please take a moment to sign a card and make a little one's day. See Karis for details.

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Mid Vermont Christian School

*Educating for Impact*

### **Calling missionaries to MVCS!**

We are seeking qualified and enthusiastic individuals who have a passion for Christian education!

MVCS has full-time and part-time (pt)\* positions available:

Elementary School Teacher

Physical Education Teacher (pt)

Athletic Director (pt)

Instrumental Teacher (pt)

JSH Foreign Language Teacher (pt)

JSH Mathematics Teacher (STEM teacher would be ideal!)

\*could be full time if combined with other positions

Please contact Vicky at [headofschool@mvcs.info](mailto:headofschool@mvcs.info) or 802-295-6800.

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## **Which Way to Turn?**

**1. They Set Out to the Promised Land (6-7).**

**2. Naomi Blesses Her Daughters-in-Law (8-9).**

**3. Both Women *Make an Initial Pledge* to Naomi & YHWH (10).**

Conclusion: We have seen how Naomi's family trusted in *what they could see* rather than in God and His promises to provide for them. Their faithlessness led to death as sin always does. Now Naomi *begins* her way back. Her daughters-in-law are now faced with a decision. Will they return with her or take comfort in the familiar among their own people? Either way, Naomi blesses them as God's people are to extend the grace He has lavished on us to others. It is obvious that they care for Naomi and she for them. So they commit to stay with Naomi and return with her to her people and her God.

## **Genesis 35:1-5**

God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.”<sup>2</sup> So *Jacob said to his household* and to all who were with him, “*Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments.*”<sup>3</sup> Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to *the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.*”<sup>4</sup> So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.<sup>5</sup> And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

## **First Timothy 5:3-8**

<sup>3</sup> *Honor widows* who are truly widows. <sup>4</sup> But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. <sup>5</sup> She who is truly a widow, *left all alone*, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, <sup>6</sup> but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. <sup>7</sup> Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. <sup>8</sup> But *if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household*, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

## **James 1:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

## **Ezekiel 14:6-11**

<sup>6</sup> “Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: *Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.*”<sup>7</sup> For *any one of the house of Israel*, or of the *strangers who sojourn in Israel*, who separates himself from me, taking his idols into his heart and putting the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to a prophet to consult me through him, I the Lord will answer him myself. <sup>8</sup> And I will set my face against that man; I will make him a sign and a byword and *cut him off from the midst of my people*, and you shall know that I am the Lord. <sup>9</sup> And if the prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. <sup>10</sup> And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the prophet and the punishment of the inquirer shall be alike—<sup>11</sup> *that the house of Israel may no more go astray from me*, nor defile themselves anymore with all their transgressions, but *that they may be my people and I may be their God*, declares the Lord God.”

# Taking Gathered Worship Home

What does it mean that God works through households? How is that lived out in our text with Naomi and her daughters-in-law? Who is in your household? How are you together trusting in Christ? From what do you need to turn and repent?

*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 **Ruth 1:6-10; Joshua 24:11-28; Genesis 35:1-5; Matthew 13:1-23; First Timothy 5:3-8; James 1:26-27; Ezekiel 14:6-11.** DISCUSS What does Naomi do when she gets to rock bottom? Why is turning so difficult? What makes it hardest for you to admit you're wrong? MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16.** PRAY "Jesus, reveal any evil way in me and my household. Enable me to turn from it to You. Thank You for welcoming sinners like us."

## Sunday Evening

The *Young Adults' Fellowship* will meet at **6pm** in the FCCW Library.

## Monday

READ **Ruth 1:6-10; Genesis 18:18-19; 35:1-5; Acts 10:1-8; 11:13-14; 16:14-15; 30-34; 18:8.** DISCUSS How does God work in households? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16.** PRAY, "Father, renew our household to faithful service of You as our King and our God."

## Tuesday

READ **Ruth 1:6-10; Genesis 18:18-19; Matthew 13:1-23; 35:1-5.** DISCUSS How do people respond when they receive the "seed"? Why? How do Naomi's daughters-in-law react? Is there any difference between the two at this point? SERVE by considering someone else's needs *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16.** PRAY, "Lord God, thank You for revealing Yourself to us. Thank You for Your work in others to present us with Your good news."



### Wednesday Colby's birthday

READ **Ruth 1:6-10; First Timothy 5:3-8; James 1:26-27**. DISCUSS How are we to care for widows? Why is this so difficult? SERVE by *calling one of the widows in the FCCW church family. Demonstrate care for them more than yourself!* MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16**. PRAY, “Lord, forgive us our neglect of the widows among us.”

### Thursday

READ **Ruth 1:6-10; Ezekiel 14:6-11; Acts 3:17-21; 2:38-39; Psalm 51:1-19**. DISCUSS What are you holding on to that you need to turn away from and repent? Do not wait. Turn now and then tell someone who can help keep you accountable. SERVE by putting someone else’s interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16**. PRAY, “Lord, You are holy. Change our hearts, we pray.”

### Friday

READ **Ruth 1:6-10; Joshua 24:11-28; Genesis 35:1-5; Matthew 13:1-23; First Timothy 5:3-8; James 1:26-27; Ezekiel 14:6-11**. DISCUSS, What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Joshua 24:14-16**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *truly delight in God’s holiness together*.

### Saturday

PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Ruth 1:1-22**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the *worship service @ 10:30*. Ask Jesus to *help us adore Him through obedience as we gather*.

## Joshua 24:14-16

“Now therefore *fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness*. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and *serve the Lord*. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, *choose this day whom you will serve*, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. *But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*”