

The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

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

February 14th, 2021

The Order of Morning Worship

For assistance as we “gather” remotely and in-person to worship together.

February 14th, 2021

Ten-thirty

Welcome

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship

Psalm 86

Pastor: We will praise you, O Lord our God, with our whole hearts; we will glorify your name forever; for you have delivered us from the power of death.

Congregation: Bring joy to your servants, O Lord, for to you we lift up our souls. There is none like you; no deeds can compare with yours.

Pastor: All the nations you have made will come and worship before you. They will bring glory to your name, for you alone are God.

Congregation: Teach us now your way, O Lord, and we will live in your truth. Give us undivided hearts that we may fear and praise your great name.

❖ Hymn of Exultation

Number 100

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." Rev. 4:8

♩ D Bm A D G D

1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore thee,
 3. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though the dark - ness hide thee,
 4. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

A D Bm A E7 A

Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to thee.
 cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 though the eye of sin - ful man thy glo - ry may not see,
 All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.

D Bm A D G D

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore thee,
 on - ly thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side thee
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!

♩ Bm D G D G A7 D 7

God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 who wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 per - fect in pow'r, in love, and pur - i - ty.
 God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

Scriptural Call to Repentance

Psalm 46: 8 – 9

The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; He utters His voice, the earth melts. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire.

Collective Confession

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 You.

Proclamation of Forgiveness

Psalm 130: 3, 7 – 8

If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? O Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with Him is full redemption. He Himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 4: 1 – 7

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

Pastoral Prayer

All Creatures of Our God and King

1. All crea - tures of our God and King, lift up your voice and
 2. Thou rush - ing wind that art so strong, ye clouds that sail in
 3. Thou flow - ing wa - ter, pure and clear, make mu - sic for thy
 4. And all ye men of ten - der heart, for - giv - ing oth - ers,
 5. Let all things their Cre - a - tor bless, and wor - ship him in

with us sing al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Thou burn - ing
 heav'n a - long, O praise him, al - le - lu - ia! Thou ris - ing
 • Lord to hear, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Thou fire so
 take your part, O sing ye, al - le - lu - ia! Ye who long
 hum - ble - ness, O praise him, al - le - lu - ia! Praise, praise the

sun with gold - en beam, thou sil - ver moon with soft - er gleam,
 morn in praise re - joice, ye lights of eve - ning, find a voice,
 • mas - ter - ful and bright, that giv - est man both warmth and light,
 pain and sor - row bear, praise God and on him cast your care,
 Fa - ther, praise the Son, and praise the Spir - it, three in one,

O praise him, O praise him, al - le - lu - ia,



Francis of Assisi, ca. 1225
Tr. by William H. Draper, 1926
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LASST UNS ERFREUEN L.M.al.
Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Glogne, 1823

The Sermon

Pastor Doug Warren

“The Church Council’s Ruling”

Acts 15: 12 – 29

¹² All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

¹³ After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, “Brethren, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. ¹⁵ With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

¹⁶ ‘AFTER THESE THINGS I will return,
AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS
FALLEN,
AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS,
AND I WILL RESTORE IT,

¹⁷ SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD,
AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,’

¹⁸ SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM LONG
AGO.

¹⁹ Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, ²⁰ but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. ²¹ For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

²² Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, ²³ and they sent this letter by them,

“The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.

²⁴ “Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with *their* words, unsettling your souls, ²⁵ it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ “Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word *of mouth*. ²⁸ “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: ²⁹ that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell.”

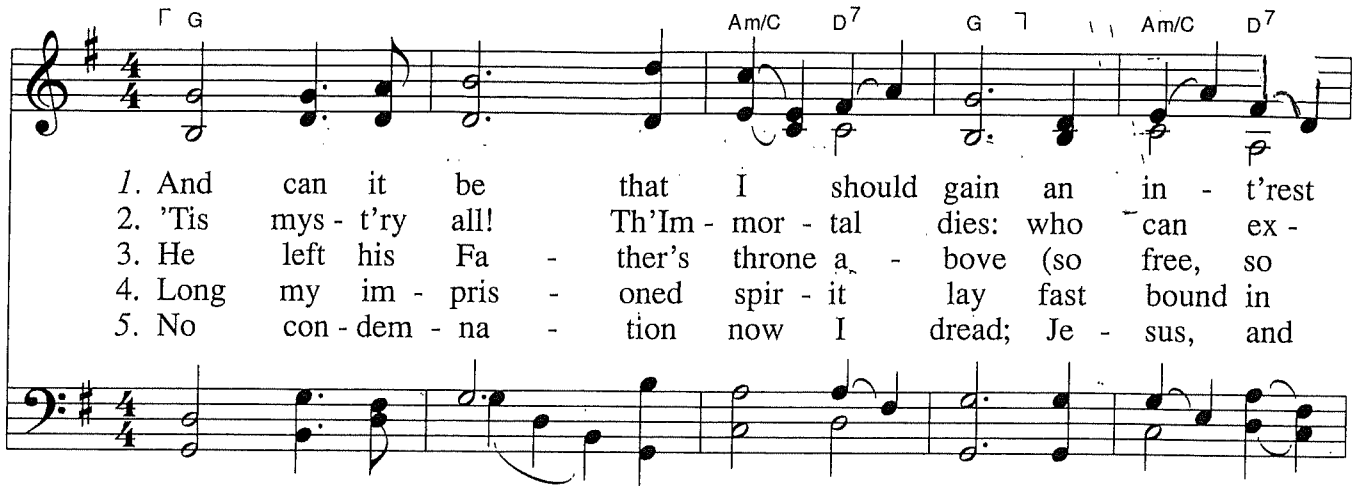
❖ Hymn of Response

Number 455

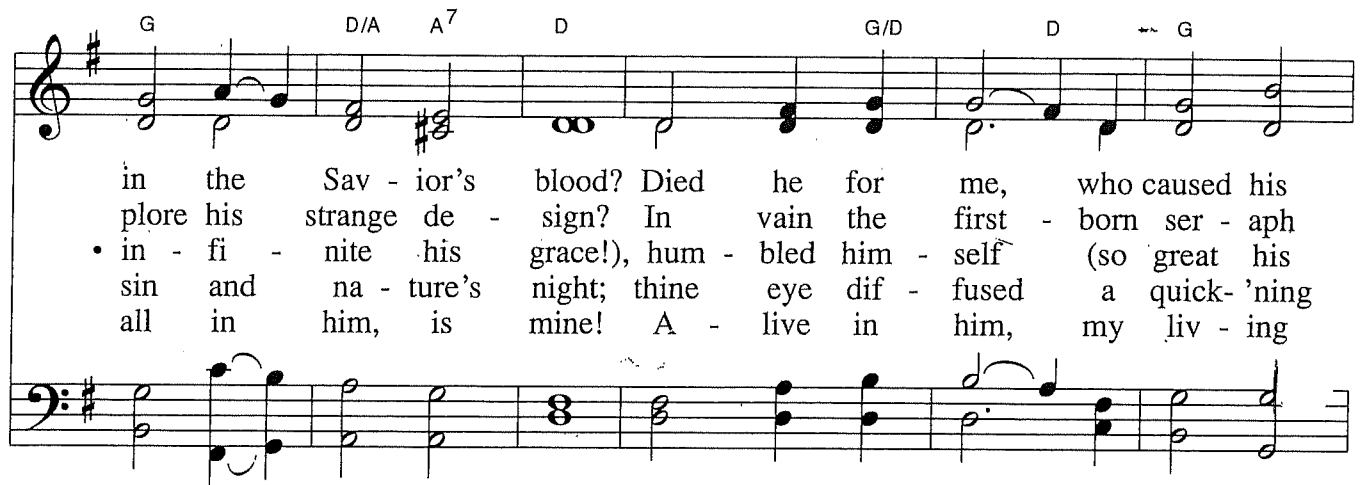
And Can It Be That I Should Gain

And Can It Be That I Should Gain

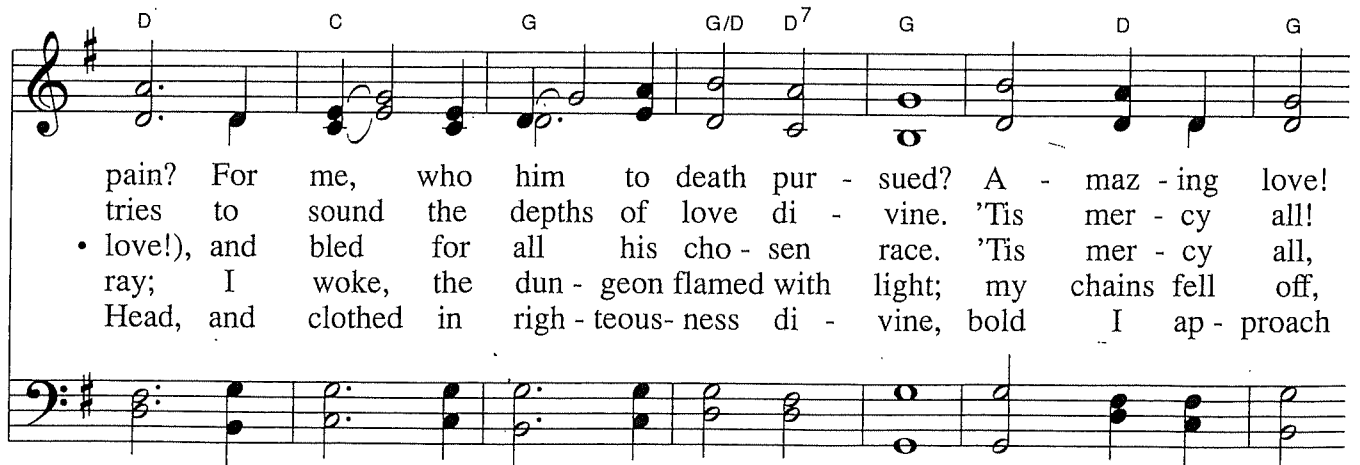
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. 5:8



1. And can it be that I should gain an in - t'rest
 2. 'Tis mys - t'ry all! Th'Im - mor - tal dies: who can ex -
 3. He left his Fa - ther's throne a - bove (so free, so
 4. Long my im - pris - oned spir - it lay fast bound in
 5. No con - dem - na - tion now I dread; Je - sus, and



in the Sav - ior's blood? Died he for me, who caused his
 plore his strange de - sign? In vain the first - born ser - aph
 in - fi - nite his grace!), hum - bled him - self (so great his
 sin and na - ture's night; thine eye dif - fused a quick - ning
 all in him, is mine! A - live in him, my liv - ing



pain? For me, who him to death pur - sued? A - maz - ing love!
 tries to sound the depths of love di - vine. 'Tis mer - cy all!
 love!), and bled for all his cho - sen race. 'Tis mer - cy all,
 ray; I woke, the dun - geon flamed with light; my chains fell off,
 Head, and clothed in righ - teous - ness di - vine, bold I ap - proach

How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst
 Let earth adore, let angel minds in-
 im - mense and free; for, O my God, it
 my heart was free; I rose, went forth, and
 th'e - ter - nal throne, and claim the crown, through

die for me?
 quire no more. A - maz - ing love! How can it
 found out me. A - maz - ing love! How
 fol - lowed thee. A - maz - ing love! How
 Christ, my own.

be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
 can it be that thou, my God,

Charles Wesley, 1738
 Alt. 1990

SAGINA L.M.D.
 Thomas Campbell, 1825

Benediction

Jude 24 – 25

Pastor: To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forever more.

Congregation: Thanks be to God. Amen.

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

Postlude

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

Deacons' Offering, Today, February 14

Our church receives many requests for help from not just within our church body but the community at large. The Deacons' have a great many opportunities to share God's love with folks in need, whether it is paying a bill for them or buying them a pair of glasses. This is a vital ministry that our church has to reach into our communities and share the gospel in a loving, gracious way. If you are in need or know someone who is, please contact Dan Bruce, the Deacons' Mercy Minister at 802-457-3975 or email him at rhondan08@myfairpoint.net.

The flowers today are given in loving memory of
Makenna Lee Joyce Dusik.

The 2020 Annual Report is available
on the table in the Billings Room.

The New Members and Friends Lists are
available on the table in the Billings Room.

Young Adult Fellowship Group tonight at 6 pm.

From the Flower Committee

It's always nice to see fresh flowers or a flowering plant in the front of the church on Sundays. If you would like to place memorial flowers during these winter months or late fall, please contact one of the flower committee members or sign up on the Flower calendar in the Billings Room. You can provide flowers by yourself or join with a friend.

Committee Member	Month's Responsible for	Contact Information
Carol Powell	January, March	carolruthpowell@hotmail.com
Alison Briggs	May, December	briggsboat@gmail.com
Rhonda Bruce	February, August, November 21 & 28	rhondan08@myfairpoint.net
Christine Morton	April, October	cstine3@aol.com
Harriet Stehouwer	July, November 7 & 14	harrietstehouwer@gmail.com
Marilyn Sutherland	June, September	marilynsutherland@comcast.net

Intro to FCCW Workshop

Want to understand FCCW's Statement of Faith? What does it mean to be a member? What opportunities are there to serve at FCCW? Looking for the answers to these questions and more. Consider attending the Intro to FCCW workshop being offered Friday night, February 19 and Saturday morning, February 20. This two-part workshop will give an insight into how FCCW functions and the importance of membership. Please contact Terri at fccwinfo@gmail.com to register.

Session One—Worship

- a. Wired for Worship
- b. Gathered Worship

Session Two—Joyous Knowledge

- a. Knowing The Redeemer Within His Church
- b. Our Catholic Beliefs
- c. Our Historic Practices
- d. Our Evangelical Convictions
- e. Our Reformed Beliefs
- f. Our Congregational Heritage

Session Three—Radical Love for One Another

- a. Charity Born of Character
- b. Christian Sanctification
- c. Living Together with Differences

Session Four— Extending His Grace

- a. Two Parables and A Command
- b. You Can't Serve What You Ain't Cookin'
- c. What Does It Mean To Extend Christ's Grace?

Session Five— Belonging to His Community

- a. Understanding the Church
 - b. The Church as a Worshipping Community
 - c. The Church as a Worshipping Community
 - d. The Biblical Concept of Church Membership
 - e. Membership & Stewardship
 - f. Summary
-



It's that time of year again! Time to explore your children's Fall educational options!

Mid Vermont Christian School (MVCS) was formed by Christian families in the Upper Valley to provide an excellent Christian Worldview education and to disciple children to follow God as they serve Him in the secular world. Visit our website (www.mvcs.info).

We understand your concerns. Is MVCS the right place to integrate Biblical truth into your child's education?

Does MVCS provide a quality education? Christian education runs much deeper than a few "ornaments" like prayer, chapels, and Bible classes. We are committed to strengthening the Biblical foundation you have been cultivating in your family. We instruct all subject areas through the "spectacles of Scripture." Our students consistently score above VT, NH, and National averages on the SAT's. Our new "LIVE" online opportunity allows any student (full-time, part-time, or just a class) to join from home and truly be part of their class.

Does MVCS just shelter students from the world? MVCS is not a "safe house" - there is not a guarantee against sin and many students have not accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. MVCS is a mission field that disciplines by teaching students about God's demands, and His forgiveness, grace, and mercy.

Can I afford to send my kids to MVCS? Due to the consequences of COVID on our families and community, last summer we slashed our tuition rate. Through a network of supporters and donors, if a family is in need and qualifies, we offer a **Variable Tuition Program**, where we aim to keep tuition contributions to 10% of annual household income. *Example, a family with \$45,000 annual income may contribute \$4,500 for all their children to attend MVCS. We work with every family to ensure affordability.*

Homeschooling? MVCS can supplement your homeschool curriculum with physical education, art, music, and band or Junior and Senior high classes.

Book a tour! See MVCS in action! Email mvcs@mvcs.info or call 802-295-6800 to schedule a visit.

The Church Council's Ruling

1. The Council Interprets Their Experience *By Scripture*.

2. God *Always Planned* to Include the Nations in His People.

3. Inclusion in God's Family Should *Change Our Actions*.

CONCLUSION: When there was a serious theological dispute at the church in Antioch, the congregation sent elders to confer together prayerfully with the other elders in Jerusalem. Together they investigated what was going on and sought direction from the Scriptures. Their ruling was sent back with elders to the congregation in Antioch, in accordance with God's Word. We too should be seeking Christ's direction for our lives from His Scriptures together with His appointed elders.

Amos 9: 11 – 12

“In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,” declares the Lord who does this.

Leviticus 17: 1 – 16

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the people of Israel and say to them, This is the thing that the Lord has commanded. ³If any one of the house of Israel kills an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or kills it outside the camp, ⁴and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it as a gift to the Lord in front of the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people. ⁵This is to the end that the people of Israel may bring their sacrifices that they sacrifice in the open field, that they may bring them to the Lord, to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and sacrifice them as sacrifices of peace offerings to the Lord. ⁶And the priest shall throw the blood on the altar of the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting and burn the fat for a pleasing aroma to the Lord. ⁷So they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices to goat demons, after whom they whore. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.

⁸“And you shall say to them, Any one of the house of Israel, or of **the strangers who sojourn among them**, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice ⁹and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that man shall be cut off from his people.

¹⁰“If any one of the house of Israel or of **the strangers who sojourn among them** eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. ¹²Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall eat blood, neither shall any **stranger who sojourns among you** eat blood.

¹³“Any one also of the people of Israel, or of **the strangers who sojourn among them**, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. ¹⁴For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life. Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off. ¹⁵And every person who eats what dies of itself or what is torn by beasts, whether he is a native or a **sojourner**, shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening; then he shall be clean. ¹⁶But if he does not wash them or bathe his flesh, he shall bear his iniquity.”

Acts—Series Overview

The Expansion of the Gospel Witness with Power

Acts records God’s faithful accomplishment of all that He promised in taking the gospel to the nations. It lays the groundwork for all that will take place as His Church awaits His return. Just as Jesus lived and spoke as the Father commanded, we now are called to do in the power of His Holy Spirit. While Jesus did this perfectly, we will strive imperfectly, constantly in need of the Holy Spirit’s direction, power, and correction. Nevertheless, our faithful God will work even through our failing efforts and His gospel witness through us will prevail and penetrate every nation, tribe, & territory. For the praise of our King!

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Our unity is based on God's truth. We don't just get along through compromise. Rather we need to seek the Lord's leading through His Word and live together accordingly.

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 **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17-18; Amos 9:11-12**. DISCUSS, The elders all agreed. Gentiles do not have to be circumcised and become Jews to follow Jesus. In fact, God's Word had pointed to this reality all along. How does this challenge your thinking about following Jesus? PRAY "Jesus, Thank You for working through Your Church and leading Your elders to instruct us in Your ways."

Sunday Evening

Young Adults Fellowship at **6:00** pm. *Please come to FCCW's Library!*

Monday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17:1-9; Exodus 20:1-6**. DISCUSS, Why is worship of other gods forbidden? Why is God alone worthy of worship? How are you (we) tempted to engage in idolatry? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, "Thank You, God, we only want to worship You. Protect our hearts from delighting in any other."

Tuesday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17:10-16; Genesis 9:4-6**. DISCUSS, Why is the lifeblood of animals significant? How does bloodshed point us to Christ? How do we obey this today? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, "Jesus, thank You for shedding Your own blood for us. Teach us how to respect life and to join You as life-givers. We long to be like You in all our ways."

Wednesday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 18:1-5; John 14:15-24**. DISCUSS, What is the relationship between love and obedience? Are we saved by how much we love God? Why do we love Him? How does faith in Christ free us to love God as we should? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, “Lord Jesus, we long to love You fully as You love us. Change our hearts!”

Thursday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 18:1-30; First Corinthians 6:12-20**. DISCUSS, Why all these restrictions about nakedness? Why does God care about with whom we get naked? Why so specific? How does immorality defile us? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY, “Jesus, help us to order our affections according to Your Word.”

Friday

READ **Acts 15:12-29; Leviticus 17-18; Amos 9:11-12**. DISCUSS, How has God been teaching you from these passages this week? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 4:1-3**. PRAY for renewal and revival across our land.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the worship service tomorrow. *Both live-stream & in-person services are available.*

READ **Acts 15:1-41**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for either the *live-stream or in-person service*. Ask Jesus to help us love our neighbors well.

Ephesians 4: 1 – 3

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”