



The \_\_\_\_\_  
**First Congregational Church**  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Woodstock \_\_\_\_\_

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

*February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023*  
*Baptismal Service*

# *The Order of Morning Worship*

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Ten-thirty

Welcome

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship                      Psalm 67 and 1 Chronicles 16                      Pastor

❖ Hymn of Exultation #598                      *Guide Me, O Thou  
Great Jehovah*                      Congregation

Scriptural Call to Repentance                      Ephesians 4:1-2                      Pastor

Collective Confession                      On Receiving New Members                      Congregation

**Lord God, as we prepare to receive new members, we are mindful of the ways we together as a congregation fail to love one another as we should. Forgive us, we pray. Enable us to take these vows together by faith in You, Lord Christ, and empower us to keep them. Help us to reflect on our own baptism and live according to the cleansing it both signifies and seals to us.**

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness                      Jeremiah 33:8                      Pastor

Offering                      (collected from back to front)                      Congregation

Reception of New Members                      Pastor

*Justin & Stephanie Sterling, Logan & Evelyn*

Vows for Professing Believers

Profession of Faith

***I now confess my faith in Jesus as the Christ and acknowledge Him as my Lord and Savior.***

Questions for Converts

1. Will you also resolve to learn the will of God, known or to be made known, as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and to walk in the ways of the Lord? **We will.**
2. Do you covenant with this church to attend its services, to support its activities and missions, to pray and labor for its growth in grace, and to walk worthily with you in its communion of worship and work? **We do.**

## Congregational Vows

1. **We the members of this church, receive you into our fellowship, and welcome you with joy. We promise to pray for you, to watch over you, and to help you so long as you shall abide with us.**
2. **May God grant that, loving and being loved, serving and being served, blessing and being blessed, we may be prepared while we dwell together on earth for the perfect fellowship of the saints in heaven.**

## Questions for Parents of Covenant Children

1. Do you acknowledge that our children are conceived and born in sin and therefore deserve condemnation and so are in need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit? **We do.**
2. Do you believe the doctrine of this congregation to be what is taught in the Old and New Testaments and therefore the truth of God Himself? **We do.**
3. Do you hereby exclusively commit your children to Christ and promise in humble reliance upon His Holy Spirit that you will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? **We do.**

## Questions for Congregation

Do you, the members of FCCW, promise to receive these children as your own and to love and care for them as you are able, and do you promise that by God's grace you will endeavor to pray for and assist these parents in their fulfillment of the covenant?

## Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism

Words of Institution

Matt 28: 18 – 20; Acts 2: 39; Col 2: 9 – 12

I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

Introduction to the Congregation

Pastor

Prayer of Reception

Elder Dennis Snider

- |                           |  |              |
|---------------------------|--|--------------|
| ❖ Baptismal Hymn #131     | <i>Children of the Heavenly Father</i> | Congregation |
| ❖ Scripture Reading       | Romans 8:1-11                          | Pastor       |
| ❖ Hymn of Reflection #591 | <i>Jesus Calls Us</i>                  | Congregation |

The Sermon

Ruth 1:1-22

Pastor

“The Backstory to Naomi’s Bitterness”

❖ Hymn of Response #168

*I Great Thee, Who My  
Sure Redeemer Art*

Congregation

❖ Benediction

John 14:27

Pastor

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

Postlude

*~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~*

*~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~*

*Prelude: I Know That My Redeemer Liveth (Handel/Rawsthorne)*

*Offertory: Faith of Our Fathers (Lau)*

*Postlude: Allegro Vivace (Handel/McKinley)*

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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!

### Flower Committee

The Flower Committee would like to encourage our members to contribute flowers for Sunday services. This is a wonderful way to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special event. Please contact Christine Morton or Alison Briggs, or sign-up in the Billings room.



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## Intro to FCCW Workshop

Interested in knowing more about FCCW? Want to explore questions about the Bible in a small group? What does it mean to be a member? What opportunities are there to serve at FCCW? Consider attending the *Intro to FCCW Workshop* being offered Friday night, March 3, from 6-9 pm and Saturday morning, March 4, from 9 am-noon. This two-part workshop will give insight into how FCCW functions and the importance of membership. Please contact Kristen at [fccwinfo@gmail.com](mailto:fccwinfo@gmail.com) to register.

Session One—Worship

Session Two—Joyous Knowledge

Session Three—Radical Love for One Another

Session Four— Extending His Grace

Session Five— Belonging to His Community

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## Women's Ministry Craft Morning

Please join us on March 18th from 9-12 in the Billings Room. We are going to take a few hours to do some crafts together and be encouraged by a message. There will be light refreshments. Bring whatever craft or project you like to work on! If you don't have anything in mind to bring, there will be paper, colored pencils, paints, yarn, and other supplies available to use. Come learn something new or teach someone else what you know!

If you have any questions, please text or call Anne Denham at 607-838-3334 or email at [a.denham356@gmail.com](mailto:a.denham356@gmail.com)

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## **The Backstory to Naomi's Bitterness**

### **1. Naomi's Hard Fall**

### **2. Where Do You Turn to Find Rest?**

### **3. Empty Handed in the House of Bread**

Conclusion: In this fallen world there are lots of hardships. What will you do with yours? *Christ has promised us something better than just recovery—redemption.* For Naomi and Ruth that meant waiting on the promised Messiah and His provisions in the present. How are we called to cling to Christ and His people? God gives us the stories of Ruth, Naomi, and Orpah as *our* stories. The account of who we are together as a people. The collective memories of God's faithfulness and lovingkindness. He has patiently nurtured countless Naomies. We need to wait on the Lord together in faith and we will see His redemption to fullness in Christ.

## **Romans 8:1-11**

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup> For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup> For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. <sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup> You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

## **Ephesians 4:1-6**

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to *walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,* <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, *with patience, bearing with one another in love,* <sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> *There is one body and one Spirit*—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, *one baptism,* <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

## **Colossians 3:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> Put on then, as *God's chosen ones,* holy and beloved, *compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,* <sup>13</sup> *bearing with one another* and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

## **Romans 12:9-13**

<sup>9</sup> *Let love be genuine.* Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup> Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup> *Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.* <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

# Taking Gathered Worship Home

We are going to see how God radically transforms Naomi's life from a bitter emptiness to a rejoicing fullness. But first she is brought low and has to wrestle with her bitter disappointment with God. Can you relate?

*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 1:1-22; Romans 8:1-11; Ephesians 4:1-6; Colossians 3:12-14; Romans 12:9-13**. DISCUSS Naomi is struggling with grief. How does this record of her struggle help us? How is there good news for us personally? For those we know and love? How are we together remembering our stories of God's grace and lovingkindness? MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY "Jesus, You came just as You promised. *You've demonstrated Your trust-worthiness*. Enable us to rejoice."

## Sunday Evening

**Young Adult Fellowship** meets tonight at 6pm in the library.

## Monday

READ **Ruth 1:1-22; Romans 8:1-11; Psalm 37:1-24**. DISCUSS How do you relate to Naomi's struggle? Let us *cling to Christ in whom there is no condemnation*. SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY, "Father, protect us from bitter hearts. Teach us to love You and give You thanks each day."

## Tuesday

READ **Ruth 1:1-22; Ephesians 4:1-6; Second Corinthians 6:3-13; Psalm 37:25-40**. DISCUSS God keeps patiently reminding us to be patient with ourselves and one another. How is that message evident in these passages? SERVE by considering someone else's needs *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY, "Lord God, You have placed our condemnation on Christ. Teach us not to take it back on ourselves, but to rest in You."

### Wednesday

READ **Ruth 1:1-22; Colossians 3:12-14; Psalm 37:1-40**. DISCUSS How do these passages help us understand how we as God's people are to act? How does this Psalm walk us through patient waiting on Christ by faith? What is difficult about it? How are we to encourage one another in this kind of radical, faith-filled waiting here and now? SERVE by *contacting someone from FCCW you haven't seen in a while. Demonstrate care for them more than yourself!* MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY, "Lord, protect us from impatience and disbelief. Renew us in faith and lovingkindness."

### Thursday

READ **Ruth 1:1-22; Romans 12:9-13; Ephesians 4:1-6; Psalm 37:1-40**. DISCUSS How does "loving one another with brotherly affection" help us "walk in a manner worthy" of our calling? How is this related to patiently waiting upon Christ's return? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY, "Lord, make us grateful to You for all Your blessings and to seek You more than them."

### Friday

READ **Ruth 1:1-22; Romans 8:1-11; Ephesians 4:1-6; Colossians 3:12-14; Romans 12:9-13**. DISCUSS, What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Romans 8:1**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *truly delight in God's mercy together*.

### Saturday

PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Ruth 2:1-23**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the *worship service @ 10:30*. Ask Jesus to *help us trust Him instead of giving into bitterness and doubt*.

## Romans 8:1

"There is therefore now *no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*."