



The _____
First Congregational Church
_____ of Woodstock _____

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

March 3rd, 2024

The Order of Morning Worship

March 3rd, 2024

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Elder Peter Vanderhoof

Prelude & Silent Prayer

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|
| ❖ Call to Worship | Psalm 34:1-3 | Elder |
| ❖ Hymn of Exultation #164 | <i>O For a Thousand
Tongues to Sing</i> | Congregation |
| Scriptural Call to Repentance | Isaiah 55:5-7 | Elder |
| Prayer of Collective Confession | from Psalm 25 | Congregation |

Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of our youth or our transgressions; according to Your steadfast love remember us, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD! Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way. For Your name's sake, O LORD, pardon our guilt, for it is great. Turn to us and be gracious to us, for we are lonely and afflicted. The troubles of our hearts are enlarged; bring us out of our distresses. Consider our affliction and our trouble, and forgive all our sins.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness Colossians 2:13-14 Elder

Pastoral Prayer Elder

Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

Affirmation of Faith *The Apostles' Creed* Congregation

Elder: Christian, what do you believe concerning God, the Father?

Congregation: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

Elder: What do you believe concerning Jesus?

Congregation: I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the

virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Elder: Christian, what do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit and His work?

Congregation: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic¹ church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

❖ Creedal Song #731	<i>Doxology</i>	Congregation
❖ Scripture Reading	Isaiah 42:1-9	Elder
❖ Hymn of Reflection #253	<i>There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood</i>	Congregation
The Sermon	Mark 1:29-45	Pastor Doug Warren
	<i>“The God of Compassion”</i>	
❖ Hymn of Response #264	<i>Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross</i>	Congregation
Communion		Congregation
❖ Communion Hymn #420	<i>At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing</i>	Congregation
❖ Benediction	Romans 15:13	Pastor

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

Postlude

*~~ Organist: Anne Hablitzel ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~*

¹ The term “catholic” is used here in its generic sense of the universal church, not to refer to a denomination.

~~~~~  
Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight at 6 pm  
~~~~~

Save the Date!

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

Sunday, March 31 — Easter Sunday

7:00 am Sunrise Service on Mount Tom (meet at Faulkner Park at 6:00)

8:00-9:00 am Breakfast in the Billings Room

10:30 am Morning Worship Celebration

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

Thursday, May 30, 6:00 pm — Supper Talk: Beyond "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God": Who was Jonathan Edwards and why should you know about him? Meal at 6 pm followed by the presentation given by Paul Hoehner

~~~~~

## 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.

~~~~~

The March prayer letter is available on the back table.

~~~~~

## Nursery Staff Position

We are looking to hire someone 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. For more information or to apply, please contact Karl Huck at [karlhuck@gmail.com](mailto:karlhuck@gmail.com). 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.

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.

~~~~~

~~~~~

Deacons' Fund

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!

~~~~~

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

10:30 Morning Worship Service:

Mark 1:29-45

### **The God of Compassion**

*Jesus Is the King Who Leads Us by the Hand.*

- 1. Jesus Blesses Simon's Household with His Presence (29-31).**
- 2. He Demonstrates His Authority over Demons & Diseases (32-34).**
- 3. Jesus Models Connection between Praying and Preaching (35-39).**
- 4. Jesus Makes a Leper Clean with a Touch of His Hand (40-45).**

Conclusion: Jesus and His disciples return from Sabbath services to Simon and Andrew's home, but instead of a meal they find the encroachment of fever and the fear of death. Jesus relieves this widow's fever by simply taking her by the hand. He goes on to care for many who were sick or oppressed by demons. But the incarnate Christ is truly man and needs uninterrupted, intimate time in prayer with His Father in order to preach with power. When a leper kneels before His King seeking mercy, Jesus takes him by the hand too and makes him clean. Do you know this compassionate King? Are you serving Him joyfully or resisting His leading?

## Isaiah 42:1-9

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup> He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street;

<sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,

and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will *faithfully bring forth justice*.

<sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it,

who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:

<sup>6</sup> “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;

*I will take you by the hand and keep you;*

I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,

<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup> I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.

<sup>9</sup> Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

## Matthew 6:5-6

<sup>5</sup> “And *when you pray*, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

## Exodus 22:21-24

<sup>21</sup> “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. <sup>22</sup> You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. <sup>23</sup> If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, <sup>24</sup> and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.



# Taking Gathered Worship Home

The Kingdom that Jesus is restoring on earth reflects His perfect character, including His boundless mercy. As He has been calling His people for centuries to show compassion to the widows and orphans, to the oppressed and downcast, He comes with healing in His hands.

*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 1:29-45; Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 6:5-6; Exodus 22:21-24; Acts 6:4; Psalm 147:1-20.** DISCUSS How is King Jesus' Kingdom evident in this passage? How is it manifest in your life? At FCCW? SERVE someone in need. MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a.** PRAY "Father God, please make us as compassionate as Christ. Holy Spirit, enable and empower us to be merciful agents of Your Kingdom."

## Sunday Evening

Young Adult Fellowship meets at **6pm** in the church library (back door).

## Monday

READ **Mark 1:21-28; Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 147:1-20.** DISCUSS How is Isaiah's prophesy fulfilled in Jesus? How does Christ's display of mercy demonstrate His Kingship? How are you rejoicing in Christ's Kingdom today? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a.** PRAY, "Jesus, Thank You for coming to begin Your Kingdom. Make us Your joyful subjects."

## Tuesday

READ **Mark 1:21-28; Matthew 6:5-6; Psalm 147:1-20.** DISCUSS If Jesus needed prayer time with the Father, how much more do we? How is your prayer life? How can you demonstrate faith in your prayers? SERVE by considering someone else's needs *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a.** PRAY, "Holy One, I want intimacy with You. I know that takes time, but I struggle to make the time for prayer that I need. Please change me. Make me more diligent in prayer!"

### Wednesday

READ **Mark 1:21-28; Exodus 22:21-24; Psalm 147:1-20**. DISCUSS How are God's people to treat widows? How are you doing that by faith in Christ? SERVE by *caring about someone else* more than yourself! MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a**. PRAY, "Holy Spirit, enflame our hearts for the things that You love. Compel us to care for the oppressed, lonely, hurting, and downcast!"

### Thursday

READ **Mark 1:21-28; Acts 6:4; Psalm 147:1-20**. DISCUSS What is the relationship between praying and preaching? How are you praying in preparation for hearing the Word of God preached? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a**. PRAY, "Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, work through Your Word preached to change us!"

### Friday

READ **Mark 1:29-45; Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 6:5-6; Exodus 22:21-24; Acts 6:4; Psalm 147:1-20**. DISCUSS, What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Isaiah 42:6a**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *be transformed together by God's Word through Mark*.

### Saturday

PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Mark 2:1-28**. 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—Isaiah 42:6a

"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;  
I will take you by the hand and keep you ..."