



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

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

September 10th, 2023

❖ Creedal Song	<i>Barocha</i>	Congregation
❖ Scripture Reading	1 Peter 1:13-25	Pastor
❖ Hymn of Reflection	<i>He Will Hold Me Fast</i>	Congregation
The Sermon	Exodus 20:1-2 <i>“Entering Into Formal Relationship”</i>	Pastor
❖ Hymn of Response #650	<i>I Will Sing of My Redeemer</i>	Congregation
❖ Benediction	2 Thessalonians 2:16-17	Pastor

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

Postlude

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~

~~ Bells: Heidi Tucker & Jonathan Denham ~~

~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

Prelude: Prelude in C Major (J. S. Bach)

Offertory: A Mighty Fortress (J. C. Bach)

Deacons' Offering: Were You There (Trad., Arr. Sharik)

Postlude: Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (Haan)

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## Vespers Today

We will meet at the Woodstock Terrace at **3:00 pm**, the Homestead at **3:30pm** and Mertens House at **4:00 pm**. There will be hymn singing, prayer and visiting with residents. Jonathan Denham will lead us in music and Pastor Doug will give a short Gospel message. It is a blessed time and anyone is welcome!

If you have any questions please talk to Rhonda Bruce or Rosmarie Vanderhoof.

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

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Deacons' Offering – Today, September 10th, 2023

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 home (802) 457-3975, at his cell number (802) 345-8870, or email him at rhondan08@myfairpoint.net.

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### Save the Date!

**Tuesday, September 12** — 10:00 am Ladies' Bible Study resumes

**Saturday, September 16** — Family Hike up Mt. Ascutney

**Friday, September 22** — 5:00-7:00 pm COT Hot Dogs & S'mores on the FCCW lawn

**Sunday, October 29** — Missionary Visit with the Klassens (stay tuned for details!)

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We are still hoping to run a Sunday School program for teens - please contact Robyn Huck at robynhuck@gmail.com if you're interested in helping out!

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Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School begins at **9:00 AM**, with a special 12 lesson study “Who is the Holy Spirit?” from Ligonier Ministries. In this video-based lecture series, Dr. Sinclair Ferguson will deepen our understanding of this Person of the Holy Trinity in such a way that we may come to know, not only the mighty works that He has done, but also how we may have fellowship with Him as He continues to work in the lives of God’s children. The nature and character of the Holy Spirit is wonderful to behold; please join with us, for this amazing study is sure to be of great benefit to the Christian.

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## Tuesday Morning Ladies’ Bible Study

The Ladies’ Bible Study will be resuming this Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, after their summer hiatus. The study meets in person at 10:00 am at the Thompson Senior Center and via Zoom. Contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or [bonhope2@gmail.com](mailto:bonhope2@gmail.com) for more information.

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Join the WCCC Teaching Team!

Are you looking for rewarding work with young children, part or full time? Woodstock Christian Child Care (WCCC) has immediate openings for part-time or full-time Trainees, Teacher Assistants, or Teachers for our full-day program for ages 6 weeks to PreK, and our After School Program for PreK to Grade 2. This is a great opportunity for college students interested in ECE, nursing, or human services to gain experience. WCCC has been serving children and families in the area for 29 years. If you are 18 years old or older, enjoy children, or would like to explore a career in early childhood education, please contact the WCCC Executive Director Ruth Brisson at rbrissonwccc@gmail.com. Thank you!

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## Family Hike

A family hike is being planned for September 16th up Mount Ascutney Vermont. Please let Joe Trottier or Dan Bruce know if you would like to join. Joe's number is 603-729-7104. Dan's number is 802-345-8870. Ascutney is a small mountain but depending on age, experience and the shape you are in, it will get your attention.

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Entering Into Formal Relationship

And God spoke all these words, saying,

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

1. God/Israel Make Their Relationship Official.

2. God Reveals His Character in His Requirements.

3. God’s Merciful Provision Shows How Our Hearts Work.

CONCLUSION: The Lord has revealed Himself to us, His treasured people. He has made promises to us. He called us to Himself and taught us what it means to walk by faith in Him alone. We have His words to guide us to walk side-by-side with Him. He entered into formal covenant with us. We have been shown the gospel and given His Spirit. So let us walk in the power of the Spirit in newness of life to His praise!

Scripture Passages to Explore This Week

Genesis 15:1-21	God seals His covenant with Abram.
Exodus 6:2-8	God summarizes His covenant with His people.
Leviticus 26:40-45	Yahweh will remember His covenant.
Deuteronomy 4:9-14	Moses reminds the people to keep covenant.
Matt. 22:34-40	Jesus summarizes godly living.
John 14:15-24	“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”
First Peter 1:13-25	“You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
First John 4:13-21	Love for God will necessarily include love for man.

Westminster Larger Catechism *Helpful Explanation of Scripture*

Q. 98. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The *moral law* is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon mount Sinai, and written by him in two tables of stone; and are recorded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The four first commandments containing our duty to God, and the other six our duty to man. *See Deut. 10:4; Ex. 34:1-4; Matt. 22:37-40.*

Q. 101. What is the preface to the ten commandments?

A. The *preface to the ten commandments* is contained in these words, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* Wherein God manifests his sovereignty, as being Jehovah, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivered us from our spiritual [captivity]: and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments. *See Gen 17:7; Ex. 20:2; 3:14; 6:3; Lev 18:30; 19:37; Is 44:6; Luke 1:74-75; Acts 17:24-28; Rom 3:29; 1Pet 1:15-18.*

Taking Gathered Worship Home

The Law. Stiff, rigid, harsh, unloving. We have many misconceptions about the law of God. Yes, the law of the Pharisees was railed upon in the New Testament, but not the law of God. It was and is God's gracious provision for His people. Evidence of His grace. Testament to His righteous character. Explore the Ten Commandments in their biblical context and discover anew the grace of Yahweh—Jesus Christ.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ.

Sunday Morning

READ Exodus 20:1-21; 6:2-8; Matthew 22:34-40; Genesis 15:1-21; First John 4:13-21; Leviticus 26:40-45; First Peter 1:13-25; Deuteronomy 4:9-14; John 14:15-24. DISCUSS What difference does the prologue make in understanding the words of God here? MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2.** PRAY "O Lord, You are *our* God. Teach us what it means to be Your treasured possession."

Sunday Evening

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

Monday

READ Exodus 20:1-21; 6:2-8; Matthew 22:34-40. DISCUSS Who gets to define godly living? Why? How is your relationship with God defined? Why? **SERVE** by taking time to help someone! MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2.** PRAY, "O Lord, thank You for saving us! Teach us to live like You have already saved us."

Tuesday

READ Exodus 20:1-21; Genesis 15:1-21; First John 4:13-21. DISCUSS In cutting the covenant between Abram and God, who walked through the pieces? How has Christ fulfilled this promise? Why does love for God necessarily include love for man? MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2.** PRAY, "O Lord, You have rescued us. You have delivered us. We have contributed nothing to our salvation, but You have been faithful to secure it absolutely. We praise and thank You."

Wednesday

READ **Exodus 20:1-21; Leviticus 26:40-45; John 14:15-24**. DISCUSS Why does God keep His covenant when all we have done is break it again and again? Why is He faithful to us? MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2**. PRAY, “O Lord, forgive us our forgetfulness. Teach us to remember Your faithfulness and righteousness in all our prayers.”

Thursday

READ **Exodus 20:1-21; Deuteronomy 4:9-14; First Peter 1:13-25**. DISCUSS What do you need to confess today? What does repentance mean that you need to do? SERVE by putting someone else’s interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2**. PRAY, “Mighty King, forgive us our faithlessness. Make us more like Christ in our faithfulness to You.”

Friday

READ **Exodus 20:1-21; 6:2-8; Matthew 22:34-40; Genesis 15:1-21; First John 4:13-21; Leviticus 26:40-45; First Peter 1:13-25; Deuteronomy 4:9-14; John 14:15-24**. DISCUSS What has God been teaching you this week? SERVE by *caring for someone in need!* MEDITATE on **First John 5:1-2**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *trust Christ together*.

Saturday

PREPARE today for *gathered Sunday worship tomorrow*. CONSIDER Why has God called us to gather with God’s people tomorrow? READ **Exodus 20:1-21**. *Invite others to join you tomorrow for the worship service @ 10:30 am*. PRAY, “Lord, gather us together *to delight in You*.”

First John 5:1-2

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and *obey his commandments*.”