



First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC

September 12, 2021, Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost 10am

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. — Harriet Tubman

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MUSICAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

(Based on Psalm 116)

Leader: I love the God, who has heard my voice and my supplications.

People: God's ear was inclined to me; therefore, I will call on the Holy One as long as I live.

Leader: The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me.
I suffered distress and anguish.

People: Then I called on the name of God: "I beseech thee, save my life!"

Leader: Gracious is Our God, righteous, and merciful.

People: What shall I render to the Holy One for all God's bounty to us?

All: We will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of our God.

We will keep our promises to the Eternal One in the presence of all people.

HYMN *God of Grace and God of Glory* TWC#669 v.1,2,4
God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power.
Crown your ancient Church's story, bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn your Christ, assail his ways!
Fears and doubts too long have bound us - free our hearts to work and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the living of these days,
For the living of these days.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore.
Let the gift of your salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore,
Serving you whom we adore.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION (unison)

God of mountain and mustard seed, you give us every breath and every moment. There is nowhere we can go that is not filled with your Spirit. Today we gather to hear your Word, and to remember your goodness and mercy. We long to understand what you ask of us and seek the courage to answer. Yet we hold back. We remain captive of the petty dramas of our lives, and we are possessed by our possessions. We place our desires above the needs of others. Forgive us, we pray. Create in us compassionate hearts and willing spirits. Open our hearts to the movements of your Holy Spirit in the silence we now offer...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

SHARING THE PEACE OF GOD

Leader: May the peace of God
be with you.

People: And also, with you.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

LORD'S PRAYER (Trespases)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN *Holy Presence, Holy Teacher*

Holy Presence, Holy Teacher ...S. Murray, New Z.
2004/BEECHER 1870

Holy Presence, Holy Teacher, light illumining our lives,
In the compass of your wisdom all our work and worship thrive:

God, we pray for understanding in our study, in our goals,
Concepts that will change and challenge, vision to inspire our souls,

By our nurture and by culture every life is shaped to grow,
Fed by long tradition's learning, formed by mentors as we go.

Tune our ears to hear the Gospel, questioning accepted thought,
Ready to respect each other, see the gifts that each has brought.

Yours this world of power and beauty, ours the task to learn its needs,
Day by day in cheerful service growing faith like mustard seeds,

Lead us as we sense your calling till we find our chosen field,
Following your hand's direction, honoring your truth revealed!

Holy Presence, Holy Teacher, light illumining our lives,
In the compass of your wisdom all our work and worship thrive:

God, we pray for understanding in our study, in our goals,
Concepts that will change and challenge, vision to inspire our souls,

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Mark 8:27-38

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: For the Word in Scripture, for the Word among us,
 for the Word within us:

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SUNG RESPONSE (2 Times)

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path

SERMON

PRAYER FOR SEPTEMBER 11TH

Leader: Merciful God, we gather today with vivid memories of a bright morning twenty years ago.

People: We recall loved ones lost, and honor those heroes struck down as they rushed to save others.

Leader: O God, we offer you our still-broken hearts as we navigate mixed emotions, that sometimes overwhelm us, leaving us numb and confused.

People: May our hearts remain open to hope and compassion, even in the face of fear and hatred.

Leader: Even in the confused aftermath of tragedy, we recall acts of kindness, proclamations of love, comfort shared in the midst of tragedy and uncertainty.

People: We know that our shared humanity is common ground and the seedbed of common purpose.

Leader: Diversity is reality. It is for us to embrace it as a blessing or live cursed lives of isolation in a complicated world. May we offer and accept friendship from neighbors far and near, in the knowledge that our lives are meant to be shared.

People: We share our loss with people of good will around the world.

Leader: As we remember the past, we embrace hope for the future and seek to share the work of building community. May our yearning for security never eclipse our zeal for justice or our defense of liberty.

People: We pray for strong resolve, that never hardens our hearts. God grant us such courage that terror has no meaning.

All: O God, as we recall the tragic loss of life in New York City, Washington DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania twenty years ago yesterday. We pray that the bereaved know comfort, the wounded know healing, and that we discover resolve, inspiration, and wisdom by examining the past and honoring the fallen. May the past enlighten us, even as we face the future with open hearts and clear vision, in a world without end. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY *O God, Our Words Cannot Express* C. Gillette 2011/ST. ANNE 1708

O God, our words cannot express the pain we felt that day.

Enraged, uncertain, we confessed our need to bow and pray.

We grieved for all who lost their lives and for each injured one.

We prayed for children, husbands, wives whose grief had just begun.

O Lord, we're called to offer prayer for all our leaders, too.

May they, in times of great despair, be wise in all they do.

We trust your mercy and your grace; in you we will not fear!

May peace and justice now embrace! Be with your people here!

DOXOLOGY

(Old Hundredth)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**Praise God, the Word in flesh born low;****Praise God above, you heavenly host;****Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.****PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)**

God, we thank you for the opportunity and ability to give. We ask to you bless this offering and every gift of time, talent, or money. Sanctify the work of our hands and the meditations of our hearts so others may know your steadfast love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HYMN *O God of Every Nation* TWC#422 v.1,2,4

O God of every nation, of every race and land,

Redeem the whole creation with your almighty hand.

Where hate and fear divide us and bitter threats are hurled,

In love and mercy guide us and heal our strife-torn world.

From search for wealth and power and scorn of truth and right,

From trust in bombs that shower destruction through the night,

From pride of race and nation and blindness to your way,

Deliver every nation, eternal God, we pray!

Keep bright in us the vision of days when war shall cease,

When hatred and division give way to love and peace,

Till dawns the morning glorious when truth and justice reign,

And Christ shall rule victorious o'er all the world's domain.

BENEDICTION**BENEDICTION RESPONSE "GO NOW IN PEACE"**

Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong, and true. Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others

so all the world can see.

God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

POSTLUDE

Music Director: Amy Cann
Zoom Director: Paul Looney
Liturgist: Janet Wilson
Scripture Reader: Kathy Reilly
Ushers and Greeters: Chuck and Ellie Shaw

Church Staff:

Pastor, The Reverend Richard Malmberg
Office Administrator, Jane Vesper
Treasurer, Tracey Martin

Church:

Office Hours M-F 9 am -12 noon
Telephone: 603-756-4075
Email: walpolechurch@yahoo.com
Website: www.walpolenhucc.org

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for the following people: **Cheri Watson** and **Bob Rhodes**.
Please contact Jane Vesper with your prayer requests at 603-756-4075.

Members living in retirement homes.
Patsy Campbell, Gina Nason, Rick Prentiss, Virginia Putnam
Maplewood, 201 River Road, Westmorland, NH 03467

Our sister church in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe

September 12, 2021, Scriptures

Isaiah 50:4–9a

The Lord GOD has given me

the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard.
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

The Lord GOD helps me.
therefore, I have not been disgraced.
therefore, I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.

It is the Lord GOD who helps me.
who will declare me guilty?

Mark 8:27–38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Leader: For the Word in Scripture, for the Word among us, for the Word within us:

All: **Thanks be to God!**