



**First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC  
September 17, 2023, 10:00 a.m.  
The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function  
regardless of the temperature of the heart.*

— Corrie Ten Boom

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (based on Psalm (103))

Leader: Bless God, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless God's holy name!

**People: Bless the Creator from the core of our being. Forget not God's benefits,  
who forgives all your iniquity and heals all.**

Leader: God redeems your life from the pit, and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.

**People: The Holy One satisfies you with good as long as you live,  
so that your strength is renewed like the eagles.**

Leader: God works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

**People: God made known divine ways to Moses, sacred acts to the people of Israel.**

**All: God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

**HYMN\*** NCH #307 *Glorious Things of You Are Spoken*

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION\*** (unison)

God of rippling pond and surging sea, you give us life and love in abundance. We praise you and thank you for all you give us. We hope to feel your spirit and follow your way. But our sin confounds our efforts and clouds our perception. We stray from the path you set before us. We waste passion on pettiness. We become lost serving our own desires rather than the needs of our neighbors. Forgive us, we pray. Cleanse and renew our hearts. Open us to all the possibilities you offer. Renew our spirits and be known to us in the silence we offer...

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE\***

**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST\***

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**LORD'S PRAYER:** (trespasses)

**JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**SUNG AMEN**

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS** Genesis 50:15-21; Matthew 18:21-35

**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) Psalm 119:105  
*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

**SERMON**

**HYMN\*** NCH #292 *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*

**CALL TO OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY**

**DOXOLOGY\***

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION\*** (unison)

God bless these gifts, which we have received, and the portion we return in gratitude and hope. Bless this offering, our work, and our meditations, that we may be joyfully employed in service to all your people and so glorify your holy name. All this we pray in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**HYMN\*** TWC #708 *Blest Be the Tie that Binds*

**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**

\*Those who are comfortably able, please stand.

**Pastor:** Reverend Richard Malmberg

**Zoom Director:** Jane Malmberg

**Music:** Seth Phoenix

**Lay reader:** Ellie Shaw

**Church Staff:**

**Office Administrator:** Jane Vesper **Treasurer:** Tracey Martin

**Church Office Hours** M - F 9 a.m.-12 noon

**Telephone:** 603-756-4075

**Email:** walpolechurch@yahoo.com. **Website:** www.walpolenhucc.org

**Please pray for the following people:**

Bob Rhodes, Dean Prentiss, Bill Sudsbury, Ann Rogers, Marjorie McGill,  
George Jeffrey, Chuck Shaw, Linda Smith, Karen Smith, Mike Delaney,  
Linda Jeffrey, Betsey Congdon, Austin and Sandy Pickering

Our sister church in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe

**Members living in retirement homes:**

Gina Nason, Becky Hubbard, Carol Lamp

The altar flowers are given today by Ellie Shaw

The deacon of the month of September is Carole Hill.

**Genesis 50:15-21**

**Joseph Forgives His Brothers**

<sup>15</sup> Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup> So they approached<sup>Ⓜ</sup> Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup> 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup> Then his brothers also wept,<sup>Ⓜ</sup> fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup> So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

**Matthew 18:21-35**

**Forgiveness**

<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven<sup>Ⓜ</sup> times.

**The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant**

<sup>23</sup> "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup> When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, <sup>25</sup> and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup> So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me,

and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup> And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup> But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup> Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup> But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup> Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup> Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup> And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup> So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."