



**First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC
November 19, 2023, 10:00 a.m.,
The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

We don't choose our talents; but we needn't hide them in a napkin because they are not just what we want.

— Louisa May Alcott

We have different forms assigned to us in the school of life, different gifts imparted. All is not attractive that is good. Iron is useful, though it does not sparkle like the diamond. Gold has not the fragrance of a flower. So different persons have various modes of excellence, and we must have an eye to all.

— William Wilberforce

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 123)

Leader: To you O God, we lift up our eyes, you who are enthroned in the heavens!

People: **As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master.
Our eyes look to our God, seeking mercy.**

Leader: Have mercy upon us! Have mercy upon us!
We have had more than enough of contempt.

All: **Our souls have had more than our fill of the scorn
of those who laze in luxury, the contemptuous contemptible.**

HYMN* NCH #421 *We Gather Together*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION* (unison)

God, the bounty of creation speaks of your goodness. The beauty of nature reminds us of your love. Therefore, we gather together in this company to offer joyous praise and heartfelt thanksgiving. Even so, the memory of our sins weigh on us. We confess that we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves, and we have loved ourselves poorly. We have squandered the gifts and talents you have entrusted to us. Forgive us, we pray. Kindle within us a passion to do your will and grant us the courage to follow where you lead. Be known to us in the silent prayers of our hearts...

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 Judges 4:1-7; Matthew 25:14-30

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 #419 *Now Thank We All Our 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, we give thanks for the ability and opportunity to give. Bless this offering and all who give their time, talent, and treasure. Cultivate gratitude in our hearts, that we recognize your blessing in every breath and every moment. In Christ we pray. Amen.

HYMN* TWC #381 *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*

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.*

* Those who are comfortably able, please stand.

Pastor: Reverend Richard Malmberg

Ushers and Greeters: Ann Looney and Betty Prentiss

Organist: Sharon Nelson

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, George Jeffrey, Linda Jeffrey, Chuck Shaw,
Linda Smith, Mike Delaney, Ann Rogers, Minna Good, Stephen Hill, Dave Adams,
Annie Greenman and Marty Greenman, Phil Rogers, Keith Sayers, Rock Houstoun.

Our sister church in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe

Members living in retirement homes:

Gina Nason, Becky Hubbard, Carol Lamp

The altar flowers are given today by Sandy and Austin Pickering

The deacon for the month of November is Linda Wright.

Judges 4:1-7

Deborah and Barak

⁴ The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. ² So the LORD sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goiim. ³ Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help, for he had nine hundred chariots of iron and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

⁴ At that time Deborah, a prophet, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. ⁵ She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. ⁶ She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Position yourself at Mount Tabor, taking ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. ⁷ I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops, and I will give him into your hand.' "

Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Talents

¹⁴ "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵ to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once ¹⁶ the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. ¹⁷ In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸ But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²² And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things;

I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’²⁴ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter,²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’²⁶ But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?’²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.²⁹ For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.³⁰ As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’