

The First Congregational Church

Walpole, NH, United Church of Christ

May 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Fifth Sunday of Easter



The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work.

— Émile Zola

All happiness depends on courage and work.

— Honoré de Balzac

15 Washington Street Walpole, New Hampshire
www.walpolenhucc.org

Gathering Music/ Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Call to Worship (Based on Psalm 31)

Leader: God, I seek refuge in you; let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me!

People: Incline your ear to me, rescue me swiftly!

Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me!

Leader: You are my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake
lead me and guide me, take me out of the net which is hidden
for me, for thou art my refuge.

People: Into your hand I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, O God, my faithful God.

**All: Let your face shine on your servants; save me us by your
steadfast love!**

Hymn NCH # 1 *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

Prayer of Invocation (unison)

God, our friend and our redeemer, we hope to know you in our worship by
your Holy Spirit. Give us grateful and faithful hearts, we pray. Stir our passion
for your Word and wisdom to discern your way. Give us sensitivity to feel
your presence in every moment, every breath, and in this silence we offer...

Words of Assurance

Sharing the Peace of Christ

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you

Children's Message

The Lord's Prayer (trespasses)

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Sung Amen

Scripture Lesson: Acts 7:54-60; John 14:5-14

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 #400 *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation*

Call to Offering

Doxology Old Hundredth

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.

Prayer of Dedication (unison)

God, we give only what you have given us. Help us to be good stewards of all you entrust to our care. Bless our offering and bless us all with wisdom to employ these gifts in your service. May they bear witness to your unending goodness. All this we pray in Christ. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Sovereign God, we confess that we have not lived the lives of which we are capable. We have gifts that we have not used, and gifts we have misused. We have not loved you with our whole hearts, and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have turned our backs on our sisters and brothers in need, and in doing so, shut the doors of our hearts to the love you offer them through us. Forgive us, we pray. Cleanse and renew our hearts, that we might resume the path of discipleship with courage, strength and endurance, even as we offer you the silent confessions of our hearts...

Words of Assurance

Invitation

Communion Prayer (unison)

Gracious God, we now dedicate these elements to become sacraments of ministry, signs of your work and witness among us. Do bless this bread and this fruit, and in the common sharing of them bless us all by the outpouring of your Holy Spirit. In this meal we remember Christ's sacrifice and his call that we also might serve. We embrace each other along his pathways, and we look with hope for the transformation of the world in his love. May we, your servant community, become ourselves bread for the journey and fruit for the spirit among all peoples and powers of the earth. Amen.

Communion Hymn NCH #331 *Come My Way, My Truth, My Life*

Prayer of Thanksgiving (unison)

We give thanks, O Lord of Life, that you have refreshed us at your table and refashioned us in your hope for community. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us into the world as Christ's witnesses with courage and in peace. All this we pray in the name of your son, our friend and teacher, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn TWC #669 *God of Grace and God of Glory*

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

Pastor: Reverend Richard Malmberg

Ushers and Greeters: Linda Wright

Lay reader: Linda Wright - **Music Director:** Anna Dunn

Zoom Director: Paul Looney

Deacon of the Month: Kathy Yardley

Please pray for:

Dean Prentiss, Bill Sudsbury, Chuck Shaw, Dave Adams, Linda Graff,
Bob Rhodes, Charley Grasse

Prayers for our sister church in Zimbabwe

Members living in retirement homes:

Becky Hubbard, Carole Hill and Carol Lamp

On the cover: *The Stoning of Stephen, Julius Schnorr Carolsfeld, engraving, nineteenth century, German*