

The First Congregational Church

Walpole, NH, United Church of Christ

Sept. 27, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

**Live in harmony
with one another;
be sympathetic,
love as brothers,
be compassionate
and humble.**



1 Peter 3:8, NIV

WE ARE SO THIRSTY. WHERE IS GOD?

“For it is God who is at work in you.” — Philippians 2:13

“The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” — Gerard Manley Hopkins

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

Gathering Music / Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Call to Worship / Opening Blessing

Leader: We come carrying a great deal: the noise of the world,
the worries of our own lives, questions that have followed us here.

People: We come thirsty for something deeper.

Leader: For peace. For connection. For courage.
For some sense that love still matters.

People: We come looking for God.

Leader: And scripture tells us that God is already at work—among us
and within us.

All: So let us become quiet enough to notice. Let us worship God.

Hymn TWC #72 *To God Be the Glory*

Prayer of Invocation and Confession (unison)

God, we are thirsty. We thirst for a world that feels less frightened and divided.
We thirst for relationships that are honest and kind. We thirst for some
assurance that goodness is stronger than cruelty and love stronger than fear.
And sometimes, in our thirst, we lose sight of one another. We become
impatient. We protect what is ours. We stop listening. We wait for someone
else to make things better. Bring us back to the way of God: toward humility,
compassion, courage, and care for one another. And in the silence, hear the
things we carry that have no words...

Silence...Amen.

Words of Assurance

The grace of God meets us exactly where we are. Nothing needs to be hidden
here. We are forgiven. We are loved. And God is still at work in us.

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

God, there is so much need in the world. People longing for peace.
People wondering what comes next. People trying to hold families together.
People grieving someone they love. People living with fear they rarely speak aloud.
People simply wanting to know that somebody sees them.
And there is thirst here, too. Some of us need courage.
Some need forgiveness. Some need rest. Some need a reason to hope.
Some simply need to know that we are not alone.
Paul tells us that you are at work within us.
So work through our hands when something needs doing.
Through our ears when somebody needs listening.
Through our voices when kindness needs to be spoken.
Through our courage when silence is easier.
Through our lives when another human being needs care.
There is more love in this world than we sometimes remember.
Help us become part of it. Amen.

Sung Amen

Scripture Lesson: Philippians 2:1–13

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 *We Are So Thirsty. Where Is God?*

Call to Offering

There are many ways to answer the thirst of the world. One is simply to share something: money, time, attention, food, compassion, presence.
Our offering is one way of saying that what we have is meant to move through us and into the lives of others.

Doxology

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, you heavenly host:

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication (unison)

God, take these gifts and put them to work. Let them feed, welcome, comfort, teach, and care. And take our lives as well. Use what we have and who we are to bring kindness, courage, and hope into this thirsty world. Amen.

Hymn TWC #60 *Great is Thy Faithfulness*

Benediction

The world is a tired place these days. So, pay attention to the person beside you. Listen carefully. Be generous. Stay curious. Choose kindness when you have the choice. Offer love. And when you wonder where God has gone, remember the words we heard today: God is at work *in you*. Go in peace. Amen.

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

Ushers and Greeters: Kat, Beckett and Peter Graves

Lay reader: Kathy Yardley

Music Director: Anna Dunn

Zoom Director: Paul Looney

Deacon of the Month: Kathy Yardley

Please pray for:

Bill Sudsbury, Linda Graff, Bob Rhodes, Lester Phillips,
Dave Adams, Jim Smolnik, and Glen Sibley.

Prayers for our sister church in Zimbabwe

Members living in retirement homes: Becky Hubbard, Carol Lamp, Janet Martin,
Judy Daniels, Shirley Byczkowski and Fred Dill