

THE FIRST CHURCH OF WEST BRIDGEWATER

United Church of Christ & Unitarian Universalist Association

Sept. 17, 2017 **Service of Word** **10:00 A.M.**

Gathering Songs Rosemary Valentine, Organist

Welcome Rev. Ashton

Centering Music “Holy Ground”

Choral Response “ H No. 554

Call to Worship

L: There’s a wideness in God’s mercy, like the wideness of the sea.

P: There’s a kindness in God’s justice, which is more than liberty.

L: With humble and grateful hearts, let us worship God.

* Hymn “Morning Has Broken” H No. 267

Chalice Lighting

Wisdom Hannah Arendt

“Forgiveness is the key to action and freedom”

Lighting

We light this candle to affirm and promote acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.

Prayer

Loving God, whose strength enables us to stand against the temptations we face and whose judgment discerns our deepest motives, empower us by your Word to embody the spirit of Christ in our relations with one another, and in our care for all, mercy be extended to all your children. Amen.

Time of Reconciliation

Invitation “Create in Me a Clean Heart” H No. 414

Scripture Matthew 18:21-35 (Pew Bible pg. 952-953)

Litany of Confession

L: In the Lord’s prayer Jesus taught us to pray:

P: Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

L: Abba, loose the cords of mistakes binding us, as we release the strands we hold of others guilt.

P: Abba, forgive our hidden past, the secret shames, as we consistently forgive what others hide;

L: Abba, lighten our load of secret debts as we relieve others of their need to repay.

Assurance “Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus” H No. 146

Scripture Psalm 145 H No. 728

(Choir sings choral response . . . Leader reads odd verses. . . congregation reads even verses)

Pastoral Prayers “Cares Chorus”

I cast all my cares upon you; I lay all my burdens down at your feet and anytime that I don’t know what to do; I cast all my cares upon you.

L: We pray for all those who are in need of healing in mind, body, spirit, and soul. . .

P: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

L: We pray for those who have died . . .

P: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

L: We remember those who suffer from abuse, oppression, violence, injustice, and war . . . We pray for the peace of Christ to enter every heart that God’s goodwill be realized on earth.

P: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

L: We rejoice with those who rejoice . . .

P: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

L: We are mindful of those who are unable to gather in communities of faith on your Sabbath and of those in need of travel mercies . . .

P: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Today’s flowers are given by Carol and Mike Roppolo in celebration of their daughter, Nancy’s, birthday.

“Prayers go up, Blessings come down.”

Silent prayer. . . Lord’s Prayer. . . “Eagle’s Wings” chorus, H No. 385

Sermon **“Forgiving Heart”** Rev. Ashton

Thank Offerings

Invitation **Mathew Pratt**, Deacon

Anthem Choir

*Doxology H No. 563

*Offering Prayer

* Hymn “Just As I Am, without One Plea” H No. 325

Covenant

* Hymn “I Love to Tell the Story” H No. 463

* **Benediction**

First Church President

L: Go from this place dancing a new dance and singing a new song.

P: Let us go from this place spreading the love of the God who leads us to safety.

L: Go from this place rejoicing in God's forgiving presence in our lives.

P: Let us go out into the world as learners and as teachers, celebrating the wonder of being God's children.

* **Congregational Response** "Let There Be Peace" H No. 308

* **Postlude** Rosemary Valentine, Organist

On Sunday, September 10, we collected \$ 835.00 towards meeting our weekly budget need of \$1,451.00.

The Mission and Outreach Committee has named the month of September as "*Lunch Box Snacks*" month. Please bring in your donations on any Sunday to help stock the shelves of the W.B. Food Pantry.

THINK VACATION, THINK CHURCH FAIR!?!? YES! As you enjoy your vacation this Summer or Fall, please keep our church fair in mind. Donate a "fun" souvenir from your trip to our "Mystery Travels" table appearing at the fair in November. Keep it simple and make sure it has the name of your destination on it. For details, see Cindy Kwan or Jane Hatch.

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THE FIRST CHURCH
OF
WEST BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS

Est. 1651



"We the members of The First Church of West Bridgewater united by the love of one another and guided by the teachings of Jesus, hold it to be our purpose to maintain a welcoming house for the worship of God; to teach and study the lessons of our faith, to develop programs for those in need; and to sponsor fellowship opportunities. All this we support in order to build a mutually sustaining and caring community of faith."