



## WEEKLY EMAIL

**First Congregational Church of Hanover, Massachusetts**

**From Pastor Terry**

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**August 30, 2020**

## SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

### **Call to Worship** (based on Psalm 105)

Let us give thanks to the Lord and call on God's name. We will tell everyone what God has done for us. We will sing songs and hymns of praise because of God's faithful and wonderful deeds. We will honor God's holy name and seek the Lord with our whole hearts. We will watch and listen for God's presence. God has made a world of wonders and shared it with us. We will worship with thanks and praise!

### **Invocation:**

O God, author and giver of all good things, plant in our hearts the love of your name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

### **Scripture: Matthew 16:21-28**

<sup>21</sup> From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup> And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." <sup>23</sup> But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

<sup>26</sup> For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? <sup>27</sup> "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. <sup>28</sup> Truly I tell you, there

are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

**Hymn: *God of Grace and God of Glory***

God of grace and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power;  
crown the ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower.

Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour,  
for the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us, scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!  
From the fears that long have bound us, free our hearts to love and praise.

Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days,  
for the living of these days.

Cure thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to thy control;  
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal,  
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

Set our feet on lofty places; gird our lives that they may be  
armored with all Christlike graces, pledged to set all captives free.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, that we fail not them nor thee,  
that we fail not them nor thee!

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;  
let the search for thy salvation be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore,  
serving thee whom we adore.



**Sermon: *Betting the Table***

**Hymn: *In the Cross of Christ I Glory***

In the cross of Christ I glory, Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me, Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,  
Never shall the cross forsake me, Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming Light and love upon my way,  
From the cross the radiance streaming Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, By the cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide.

### Announcements

**OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE** continues this Sunday, August 30. Enjoy the informal atmosphere of the pine grove. So far we have had good weather every Sunday since we began worship outdoors.

We will continue to record worship each week and make it available on our website.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THRIFT SHOP YARD SALE & CLOTHING DRIVE



**THE SEPTEMBER CABINET MEETING** will be held by Zoom on Thursday, September 10, 7-9 pm.

**READ THE UPPER ROOM DEVOTIONAL** on-line at:

<http://www.upperroom.org/standingorderchurches>.

### Church Calendar

**SUNDAY:** The virtual coffee hour is at 11:30.

**MONDAY BIBLE STUDY AT 7 PM** Join:

<https://zoom.us/j/93375349480pwd=OWlkcjRmV2llaEt0M202RUhKRTA4UT09>

**Meeting ID:** 933 7534 9480; **Password:** 006430

**TUESDAY** the Deacons meet via ZOOM.

**WEDNESDAY:** Search Committee.

**WEDNESDAY HOUR OF FELLOWSHIP AT 2 PM** Join

<https://zoom.us/j/5848654652?pwd=WHIDSnlhWkIwc2FGS0c3VWgwNmMzZz09;>

**Meeting ID:** 584 865 4652; **Password:** 531416

**EVERYDAY** – if you miss seeing someone from church give them a call!

## CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Please email your celebrations and concerns to John Terry or to the church office.



*Celebrate with Eric and Colleen Stroshine on the birth of their first grandchild on August 18.*

**Please pray for:**

- Mary Bare, sister-in-law of Rev. John Terry, recovering at home
- Barbara Winsloe, mother of Deborah Springhetti, in failing health
- Peter Gluckler, brother-in-law of Carolyn Frattalone, who passed away suddenly Aug 2.
- Desmon Silva, RN, nursing colleague of Jessie Berry
- Jaycee Hall, Ruth Hall's daughter-in-law, with remitting auto immune disease
- 6 month old Lucca who has an inoperable tumor
- For John Demoura, grandnephew of Don and Lynn White, in Good Samaritan Brockton NICU

*Dear Reverend John, Thank you for taking the time to participate at the funeral for Carol. We wish to express our sincere appreciation for the words you chose that gave us peace and comfort. Thank you for your prayers. ~Neil Caldeira and Family*

## ATTACHMENT OF THE WEEK

I start putting this together on Monday mornings. This is a Monday column from one of my favorite authors.

***Another Monday*** by Diane Butler Bass

It is yet another Monday of what will most likely be a difficult week. There are many issues of concern, much to be worried about with both the pandemic and politics. In recent days, however, I've found myself less anxious than in the past, as I've leaned on these words from the late Marcus Borg's final book, *Convictions*:

*"Centering in God transforms us. It changes us. It produces what Paul called 'the fruit of the Spirit' and 'the gifts of the Spirit.' It is what Jesus meant when he said, 'You will know them by their fruits.' The fruits of centering in God are many and intertwined, but the most important are compassion, freedom and courage, and gratitude. Sequencing them is thus not about their relative importance; they all go together."*

Usually, when I've thought about fruitful spiritual character, the words that come to mind are a traditional list of traits from Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Over the years, I've heard many sermons on these nine qualities of mature spirituality, with preachers always urging hearers to grow in these characteristics as evidence of faith.

Marcus's list – compassion, freedom and courage, and gratitude – both surprised and spoke to me. I wondered why he chose them instead of the more traditional nine. Although I certainly aspire to those four virtues, I hadn't really thought of them in relation to "centering in God" or the "fruit of the spirit." But Marcus believed them foundational to the most important thing – "loving what God loves, participating in God's passion for a different sort of world" – to live a life of justice and mercy woven into the fabric of the world.

These fruit – compassion, freedom and courage, and gratitude – are about far more than our own personal character. Yes, they are virtues that grow from the mealy soil of our own souls, rooted and grounded in God, as dispositions cultivated over time. The four fruits aren't just about our individual spiritual well-being, however. These fruits feed others.

Cultivating the fruits of compassion, freedom and courage, and gratitude seem just right at this moment. Compassion is neighbor-directed love; freedom and courage are the power to resist anxiety and fear; and gratitude awakens our senses to gift and wonder. I can't think of any four things I long for – that I need – that *we* need – more right now.

As a backyard gardener, I know that growing fruit is part grace and part hard work; part mystery and part practice. But it does take focus. During the spring and summer, I have to pay attention to the garden. Life centers on soil and vines: weeding, watering, fertilizing, shooing pests away, watching and waiting as fruit ripens. Like the garden, "centering on God" takes focus, attention, and nurture on (what theologian Paul Tillich once called) the "Ground of our being." That is, of course, part mystery. But it is a practice, too.

I wish I could wave a wand and the coronavirus would disappear; I would like our political and economic crises to likewise vanish. But that, of course, is called "magical thinking." Instead, I want to center down this week, and cultivate compassion, freedom and courage, and gratitude. To center on God isn't an exercise in spiritual escapism; rather, it is to grow the love, fearlessness, and humility that feeds a hungry world.