



The _____
First Congregational Church
_____ of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

March 10th, 2024

**in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed
in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.**

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|---------------------------|---|--------------|
| ❖ Creedal Song #735 | <i>Gloria Patri</i> | Congregation |
| ❖ Scripture Reading | Daniel 7:9-14 | Pastor |
| ❖ Hymn of Reflection #247 | <i>O Sacred Head, Now Wounded</i> | Congregation |
| The Sermon | Mark 2:1-12
<i>“Restoring a Kingdom of Active Faith”</i> | Pastor |
| ❖ Hymn of Response #172 | <i>Let Us Love and Sing
and Wonder</i> | Congregation |
| ❖ Benediction | 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 | Pastor |

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

*~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~
Prelude: Lamb of God (Christiansen/Cassler)
Beautiful Savior (Christiansen/Cassler)
Offertory: We Will Glorify (Paris)
Postlude: "Postlude" in D Major (Fischer)*

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**Vespers Today**

Vespers will be held this afternoon at Woodstock Terrace at 3pm and the Mertens House at 3:30 pm. All are welcome to join in this time of worship and encouragement.

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Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight at 6 pm
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Easter Sacrificial Offering

On Easter Sunday we will take a special sacrificial offering for Caleb Rayapati and Harvest Ministries in Secunderabad, India. They are in need of a new vehicle to enable them to travel throughout the region and minister in many ways to these remote villages in the name of Jesus. Check out the front-page feature of the FCCW March Prayer Letter for more information and some pictures!

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## Save the Date!

**Sunday, March 31** — Easter Sunday

**7:00 am** Sunrise Service on Mount Tom (meet at Faulkner Park at 6:00)

**8:00-9:00 am** Breakfast in the Billings Room

**10:30 am** Morning Worship Celebration

**Saturday, April 20, 5:30-8:00 pm** — Community Barn Dance & Potluck

**Thursday, May 30, 6:00 pm** — Supper Talk: Beyond "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God": Who was Jonathan Edwards and why should you know about him? Meal at 6 pm followed by the presentation given by Paul Hoehner

**Sunday, July 21**— Church Picnic on the WCCC playground (rain date July 28)

**Saturday, August 24** — Libby Warren's wedding here at FCCW

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Nursery Staff Position

We are looking to hire someone as our Nursery Attendant. Please join us in praying for the Lord to raise up a mature, responsible adult (18+) who loves Jesus and children and who would be the anchor for caring for the little ones on Sunday mornings, assisted by volunteers from the congregation. For more information or to apply, please contact Karl Huck at karlhuck@gmail.com. Thank you.

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## Greeter Sign Up

There is a sign up sheet in the Billings Room for Sunday morning greeters. If you would like to help welcome folks on Sunday morning please take a moment to sign up! Questions? Check with Rosmarie Vanderhoof.

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## Community Barn Dance & Potluck

Come to a community barn dance on **April 20** at First Congregational Church of Woodstock!

Come sample the hilarity and joy of moving through simple figures with neighbors in your community. Singles, couples, and children are all welcome. All dances taught in a walk through by dance leader Ruth Holleran (aka "Hootin' and Holleran"). No experience necessary. Smiles guaranteed!

Dance to the New England fiddle music of stellar contradance band recordings. These are the dances and fiddle tunes that have survived in rural pockets of New England from the days of English, Irish, and French-Canadian settlers. Foot-tapping good, they support upbeat cardio exercise and a cheerful social experience. Come join us for an evening of fun doing circles, easy contras, longways reels, and more!

Potluck at 5:30 (food supplied by the church), Dance 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Chairs will also be available if you want to observe! Bring your water bottle and invite your friends to this fun and free event!

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The March prayer letter is available on the back table.

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## Weekly Gathering Opportunities

**Sundays, 6:00 pm** — Young Adult Fellowship Group in the library

**Tuesdays, 7:00 am** — Middle School & High School Bible Study—meet at Maplefields to grab breakfast, then on to the church for study, discussion, and prayer.

**Tuesdays, 10:00 am** — Ladies' Bible Study meets in person at the Thompson Senior Center and via ZOOM, please contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [bonhope2@gmail.com](mailto:bonhope2@gmail.com).

**Tuesdays, 6:00 pm** — Prayer Meeting, in person in the library and via ZOOM

**Wednesdays, 6:15 am** — Men's Bible Study, in person in the library and via ZOOM, please contact Dick Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email [rbatwood1@gmail.com](mailto:rbatwood1@gmail.com).

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Mark's Gospel—Jesus' True Identity Reveals the Magnitude of His Sacrifice

10:30 Morning Worship Service:

Mark 2:1-12

Restoring a Kingdom of Active Faith

Jesus Is the Promised Son of Man Who Has Come to Restore His Kingdom.

- 1. He is Restoring His Kingdom both Spiritually and Physically (1-12).**
- 2. Contrasting Kingdoms: Friends v. Scribes (3-7).**
- 3. The Ancient of Days Gives the Son of Man Dominion (Daniel 7:9-14).**
- 4. His Restored Kingdom Is Characterized by Faith in Community (12).**

Conclusion: These four friends loved relentlessly as demonstrated through their actions. Jesus saw that their love was grounded in faith and rejoiced. The scribes on the other hand sat in judgment and disbelief. As we have been wrestling with Jesus' true identity, Mark adds here another level. Jesus is the Son of Man. He is authorized by the Ancient of Days to rule and reign over all the earth both physically and spiritually to bring glory to God. Do you know Him as Sovereign? Are you living out that faith through love for others?

Daniel 7:9-14

“As I looked, thrones were placed, & *the Ancient of Days* took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, & the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.

A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

“I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a **son of man**, and he came to *the Ancient of Days* and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Isaiah 43:25

“I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will *not* remember your sins.”

First John 1:8-10

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

First Kings 8:33-36

When your people Israel are defeated before the enemy because *they have sinned against you*, and if they turn again to you and acknowledge your name and pray and plead with you in this house, ³⁴ then hear in heaven and *forgive the sin of your people* Israel and bring them again to the land that you gave to their fathers.

³⁵ “When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because *they have sinned against you*, if they pray toward this place and acknowledge your name and turn from their sin, when you afflict them, ³⁶ then hear in heaven *and forgive the sin of your servants*, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk, and grant rain upon your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Chapter one introduced us to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In chapter two we begin to hear the objections of those who oppose Him and deny His identity as the Christ, the Son of God. With each objection and the Christ's answer we learn in more depth the true identity of Jesus.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ. Ask Jesus to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday Morning

READ Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; Isaiah 43:25; First John 1:8-10; First Kings 8:33-36; Psalm 103:1-22. DISCUSS What is the significance of Jesus being the "Son of Man"? How does this divine title fit His authority over both physical and spiritual spheres? How are you serving Him? **SERVE** someone in need. **MEDITATE** on **Psalm 103:1-5**. **PRAY** "Son of Man, please make us faithful like the paralytic's friends. Keep us from the folly of the scribes and make Your Kingdom come."

Sunday Evening

Young Adult Fellowship meets at **6pm** in the church library (back door).

Monday

READ Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; Isaiah 43:25. DISCUSS Were the scribes right about only God forgiving sin? What did they miss? How did they represent unregenerate Israel? **SERVE** by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* **MEDITATE** on **Psalm 103:1-5**. **PRAY**, "Son of Man, thank You for coming to restore Your Kingdom. Thank You for forgiving our sin as only You, God, can do."

Tuesday

READ Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; First John 1:8-10. DISCUSS Apart from Christ are we as sinful as unrepentant Israel? Do you really believe that? How do you demonstrate that? How does your faith show up in your actions like the paralytic's friends? **SERVE** by considering someone else's needs *above your own!* **MEDITATE** on **Psalm 103:1-5**. **PRAY**, "Son of Man, Your Father has given You authority over all Creation including all the nations. Teach us to joyfully submit to Your authority. Restore to our fellowship the blessing of faithful friends."

Wednesday

READ **Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; First Kings 8:33-36**. DISCUSS What were God's people to do when they sinned? How does this relate to Christ's call to repent and believe? SERVE by *caring about someone else* more than yourself! MEDITATE on **Psalm 103:1-5**. PRAY, "Son of Man, humble us so that we yield to You in all things physically and spiritually."

Thursday

READ **Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; Psalm 103:1-22**. DISCUSS How does Christ's clear willingness to forgive us help you to have confidence in confession? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own*! MEDITATE on **Psalm 103:1-5**. PRAY, "Son of Man, enable us to glorify the Father by faith in You and the power of the Holy Spirit."

Friday

READ **Mark 2:1-12; Daniel 7:9-14; Isaiah 43:25; First John 1:8-10; First Kings 8:33-36; Psalm 103:1-22**. DISCUSS, What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Psalm 103:1-5**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *be transformed together by God's Word through Mark*.

Saturday

PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Mark 2:1-28**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the *worship service @ 10:30*. Ask Jesus to *reveal Himself to us in His Word by His Spirit*.

Meditate on Psalm 103:1-5

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.