



The _____
First Congregational Church
_____ of Woodstock _____

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

March 26th, 2023


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## Easter Flowers

Easter plants and flowers always bring beauty to the Easter service. If you would like to share a flowering plant for the Easter service in memory of a loved one and take it home after, please contact Christine Morton or Alison Briggs to order. Also, please remember to make your check out to FCCW.

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Greeters Needed!

Would you like to help welcome folks to worship on Sunday mornings? We need two volunteers each Sunday from 10:10 until the beginning of worship. If you would like to serve in this way there is a sign-up sheet in the Billings Room near the punch bowl. Questions? Contact Diana Snider at dennisssnider@msn.com.

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## Sue Hottenstein Memorial Service

There will be a memorial service on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, at 11:00 am, with a reception following. Please join us in thanking God for Sue's life and ministry.

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GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
Friday, April 7th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm
Lebanon Opera House (51 North Park Street, Lebanon)

Many Churches...
One Savior...
One Salvation...

Free admission. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

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## Save the Date!

On Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, FCCW will be hosting the meeting of the Northern New England Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Pastors and ruling elders from churches throughout Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine will be gathering for a worship service and business meeting.

FCCW will be providing a continental breakfast and lunch for the attendees. Anyone is welcome to attend the worship service and business meeting as a guest. This is a great opportunity to meet and fellowship with some of Pastor Doug's closest associates and accountability partners.

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The March Prayer letter is available on the back table.

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## **Super Abundance in the Lord**

### **1. Boaz Showers Ruth with Growing Favor.**

- A. Boaz Blesses Ruth with Favor at Meal Time (14).
- B. Ruth Takes a “Higher” Seat at Boaz’s Invitation (14b).
- C. Boaz Instructs His Men to Favor Ruth (15-16).
- D. Ruth Ends the Day with a Super Abundance (17).

### **2. God Provides This Abundance for Ruth through Boaz.**

### **3. He Continues to Provide Us with Great Abundance.**

Conclusion: This part of the story shows us a piling on of abundant favor. Boaz is making it clear that Ruth is to be afforded every honor and courtesy by all those in his employ. Boaz in turn is in the service of the God of Israel and here is His agent for blessing Ruth and Naomi. How does this picture of Divine favor help us to understand Christ’s blessings to us?

## **Ephesians 3:14-21**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, <sup>16</sup> that *according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,* <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to *know the love of Christ* that surpasses knowledge, *that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

## **Luke 14:7-11**

Now Jesus told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, <sup>8</sup> “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do *not* sit down in a *place of honor*, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, <sup>9</sup> and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. <sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. <sup>11</sup> For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

## **Mark 8:8** (see also Luke 9:17)

They *ate* and were *satisfied*. And they took up the broken pieces *left over*, seven baskets full.

## **Romans 8:31-39**

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him *graciously give us all things*? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ*? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;  
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **Galatians 3:29**

And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

# Taking Gathered Worship Home

Where does your help come from? Ruth is learning as this story unfolds that the God of Israel is indeed faithful. She is encountering super abundance not just from Boaz, but from the Lord Himself.

*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 Ruth 2:14-17; Ephesians 3:14-21; Luke 14:7-11; Mark 8:8; Romans 8:31-39; Galatians 3:29; Psalm 31:1-24.** DISCUSS How does Boaz's blessing prefigure Christ to Ruth? How does it demonstrate God's loving care for us? What do you wrestle most with in this? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY "Jesus, You bless us so abundantly. Yet we struggle. Teach us to rely entirely on You."

## Sunday Evening

**Young Adult Fellowship** at 6pm in the church library.

## Monday

**READ Ruth 2:14-17; Ephesians 3:14-21; Psalm 31:1-24.** DISCUSS Why does God abundantly bless Ruth? What about the times that His people go without? How does this relate to Philippians 4:10-13? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY, "Father, teach us to be grateful for all of Your provision in abundance and need. Help us to know You, Lord Christ and to follow You, Holy Spirit, wherever You lead us."

## Tuesday

**READ Ruth 2:14-17; Luke 14:7-11; Romans 8:31-39; Psalm 31:1-24.** DISCUSS How does Christ's counsel about the banquet table apply to Ruth? How does it apply to us? How does the confidence in Christ spoken about in Romans help us to receive whatever the Lord provides with thanks? SERVE by considering someone else's needs *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY, "Lord God, You are trustworthy in all Your promises. Teach us how to trust You together in all that Your holy Word teaches."



### Wednesday

READ **Ruth 2:14-17; Mark 8:8; Luke 9:17; Ephesians 3:14-21; Psalm 31:1-24**. DISCUSS How do Mark and Luke use the language of Ruth to communicate abundance? How do we know if we have found favor with God? SERVE by *contacting someone from FCCW you haven't seen in a while. Demonstrate care for them more than yourself!* MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY, "Lord, thank You for granting us Your favor and forgiveness at the cross."

### Thursday

READ **Ruth 2:14-17; Romans 8:31-39; Galatians 3:29; Psalm 31:1-24**. DISCUSS Everything God gives us is by grace. How are you thanking Him for His abundant provision? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY, "Lord, make our hearts more grateful for all that You have abundantly provided for us."

### Friday Be sure to wish Karis a happy birthday!

READ **Ruth 2:14-17; Ephesians 3:14-21; Luke 14:7-11; Mark 8:8; Romans 8:31-39; Galatians 3:29; Psalm 31:1-24**. DISCUSS What has the Holy Spirit been teaching you this week through these passages? MEDITATE on **Ephesians 3:20-21**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *trust You together for Your favor in Christ*.

### Saturday

ATTEND Sue Hottenstein's memorial service at FCCW at **11am**. PREPARE for *gathered worship tomorrow*. READ **Ruth 2:1-23**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the *worship service @ 10:30*. Ask Jesus to *help us trust Him instead of giving into bitterness and doubt*.

## Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.