



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

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

July 17th, 2022

and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic² and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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|---------------------------|---|------------------|
| ❖ Creedal Song | <i>Barocha</i> | Congregation |
| ❖ Scripture Reading | Isaiah 5:1-7 | Pastor |
| ❖ Hymn of Reflection #338 | <i>Spirit of God, Descend
Upon My Heart</i> | Congregation |
| The Sermon | John 15:1-11
<i>“A Fruitful Life”</i> | Rev. John Meinen |
| ❖ Hymn of Response #529 | <i>Love Divine, All
Loves Excelling</i> | Congregation |
| ❖ Benediction | Numbers 6:24-26 | Pastor |

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

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

Postlude

² The term “catholic” here means universal and does not mean any particular denomination.

~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~

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Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet tonight  
at 6 pm in the church library.  
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Market on the Green

The 2022 season of our face painting booth at Market on the Green is well underway! Volunteers from FCCW are at the park every **Wednesday**, June 1-Oct 12 from **3-6 pm**, offering free face painting for all ages. We also have coloring books, and story time for the kids. Each Wednesday we serve between 20 and 40 families. We often hear comments like “Your face painting is a highlight of our kids’ week!” and “We love that you guys are here serving the community!”

More helping hands are always welcome! If you would like to help in any way with this amazing outreach opportunity please contact Hayley Bauer at hayleylgriffith@gmail.com.

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The July Prayer Letter is available in the narthex.  
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Teachers Needed

WCCC is in need of **Teachers/Assistants**, and **Substitutes**. Please contact Ruth Brisson at rbrissonwccc@gmail.com or 410-925-7959, if you are interested in serving in any of these roles.
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## Guest Preacher—Rev. John Meinen

John Meinen is the campus minister for Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at the University of Vermont (UVM). RUF seeks to reach students with the good news of Jesus and equip them to love and serve Christ, his church, and his world the whole of their lives.

John is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder ('04) and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary ('12). Before starting RUF at UVM, John served low-income entrepreneurs in the Bay Area, studied microfinance in Bangladesh, led backpacking trips for Outward Bound, and completed a year-long fellowship program in the nation's capital. His wife, Megan, is the Director for UVM's Adventure Ropes Course. John and Megan live a few blocks from the UVM campus with their 6-year-old daughter, Willa, their new baby boy, John Bradley (JB), and a black lab named Fella. The Meinenes love sharing meals with friends, watching nature documentaries, and playing outside. If you want to know more about the ministry of RUF at UVM, please don't hesitate to contact John via email ([john.meinen@ruf.org](mailto:john.meinen@ruf.org)) or by cell (802.922.4202). You can also visit [www.rufuvm.org](http://www.rufuvm.org).

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Mid Vermont Christian School

*Educating for Impact*

### **Calling missionaries to MVCS!**

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Music Director & Teacher (band & chorus teaching could be split into two part time positions), Elementary School Teacher, JSH Foreign Language Teacher, JSH Mathematics Teacher and part-time High School Art.

Please inquire through the school office ~ [mvcs@mvcs.info](mailto:mvcs@mvcs.info) or 802-295-6800.

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## **HISTORY & FELLOWSHIP RETREAT**

### **Old South Church Newburyport, MA**

The Board of Christian Education of the First Congregational Church of Woodstock, Vermont invites you to join us for a special day trip to the seaside town of Newburyport, where we will tour the church founded by George Whitefield. We will learn about this highly influential puritan evangelist with the help of historian, Jason Wakefield. After spending the morning at Old South, we will have time for lunch, shopping and sightseeing in the historic downtown, and perhaps a stroll on the boardwalk or a chance to put your toes in the sand.

We will meet at the Woodstock Union High School parking lot the morning of July 23. Our comfortable Premier coach will leave at 8:00AM sharp, returning that evening at approximately 6:30PM. See more information and itinerary at [www.FCCW.net](http://www.FCCW.net).

Payment is required in advance by check or cash. Due to the underwriting of the BCE and several individuals, the members and friends of FCCW are being offered the very low cost of \$25 per person for the bus and tour. Please expect to pay for lunch or bring your own.

Please speak to Preston Bristow with any questions, and see Jeff DeDell when you're ready with payment.

This will be a day well spent, exploring Christianity past and present.

**PRESTON BRISTOW @GMAIL.COM**  
**DEDELLCREW@GMAIL.COM**

*Dear FCCW Family,*

*I am so looking forward to the History & Fellowship Retreat on July 23rd. Our guide, Jason Wakefield, is a close personal friend of mine and George Whitefield is a wonderful hero of the Faith. Let me encourage you to participate if there is any way you can join us!*

*-Pastor Doug*

## **A Fruitful Life**

### **1. We All Want to Bear Good Fruit.**

### **2. Abiding Is an Essential Practice.**

### **3. Pruning Is an Essential Practice too.**

CONCLUSION: God wants you and your ministry to bear good fruit. There are things He wants to add to your life. Ways for you to get and stay connected to Jesus. Ways for you to be a branch (or water sprinkler) and extend that love to others. There are things He wants to cut out too. Ways for you to be lightened, and guided, and experience newfound growth. While you have a part to play in this growth (abide is a command, after all), this work did not originate with you, and it is not entirely up to you either. This is the Father's doing. You are in the hands of a good vinedresser. Even now, He is running His hands through the leaves of your life, strengthening connections, forging new ones, cutting off branches, and causing you to grow. This is for His glory and our enjoyment—yours, mine, the world's. Amen.

## Isaiah 5:1-7

Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his *vineyard*:

My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

<sup>2</sup> He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

<sup>3</sup> And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.

<sup>4</sup> What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?

<sup>5</sup> And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

<sup>6</sup> *I will make it a waste*; it shall not be pruned or hoed, & *briers and thorns shall grow up*; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

<sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!

## Mark 4:1-20

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. <sup>2</sup> And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: <sup>3</sup> “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup> And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. <sup>8</sup> And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” <sup>9</sup> And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

<sup>10</sup> And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, <sup>12</sup> so that

“*they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.*”

<sup>13</sup> And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? <sup>14</sup> The sower sows *the word*. <sup>15</sup> And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. <sup>16</sup> And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. <sup>18</sup> And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, <sup>19</sup> but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. <sup>20</sup> But *those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit*, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

(see also Psalm 34)



# Taking Gathered Worship Home

God the Father has not only provided us the way of salvation in Jesus Christ, but also the means to grow in Him. Apart from Christ we are separated from God and can do nothing. For those in Christ by faith, we receive entrance into His family, connection to the vine, and loving care from the Master Vine Dresser. Let us humble ourselves in study this week.

*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 **John 15:1-11; Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 34; Mark 4:1-20**. DISCUSS How are you celebrating forgiveness in Christ? What is the cost of our sin? What provides you confidence today and hope for tomorrow? PRAY “Jesus, thank You for blessing us so greatly with Your steadfast love.”

## Sunday Evening

The *Young Adults' Fellowship* will meet at 6pm in the FCCW Library.

## Monday

READ **John 15:1-11; Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:8-19**. DISCUSS What should the vine grower expect from the vineyard for all His cultivation? What does He receive instead? SERVE by putting someone else's interest *above your own!* MEDITATE on **John 15:4**. PRAY, “Lord, thank You for all Your tender care, protection, and cultivation. Make us fruitful and grateful to You.”

## Tuesday

READ **John 15:1-11; Psalm 34:1-11; Proverbs 1:2-7**. DISCUSS how *does seeking the Lord* relate to *abiding in the vine*? What does it mean to *fear the Lord* in this context? What further blessings do we experience through obedience? MEDITATE on **John 15:4**. PRAY, “Lord, enable us to trust You in all things. Teach us Your ways!”

### Wednesday

READ **John 15:1-11; Psalm 34:12-22**. DISCUSS how does Christ's fulfillment of v. 20 protect us from an unbiblical triumphalism? Does the martyrdom of countless saints negate this promise? Why or why not? MEDITATE on **John 15:4**. PRAY, "Lord, teach us to trust Your faithfulness and to cling to You."

### Thursday

READ **John 15:1-11; Mark 4:1-20; Isaiah 55:6-11**. DISCUSS How does God's word not return void if it proves unfruitful in some? Is God's purpose the same in them all? How is purpose different with the reprobate from the elect? How is it the same? MEDITATE on **John 15:4**. PRAY, "Lord, enable us to rejoice in what is right and to mourn evil. Make us to want no part of wickedness and to turn from it to You swiftly and consistently."

### Friday

READ **John 15:1-11; Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 34; Mark 4:1-20**. DISCUSS, How has God been convicting you from these passages this week? MEDITATE on **John 15:4**. PRAY that we at FCCW would *bless the God who has so richly blessed us in Christ*.

### Saturday

PREPARE today for the service tomorrow which is *available both in-person and via live-stream*. READ **Philippians 3:1-21**. Invite others to join you tomorrow for the 9:30 service. Ask Jesus to gather us together joyfully to praise Him.

## John 15:4

"Abide in me, and I in you.  
As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself,  
unless it abides in the vine, neither can you,  
unless you abide in me."