

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**  
**Fifteenth Sunday of Pentecost**  
**September 13, 2020**  
Second Congregational Church in Wilton,  
United Church of Christ

**WELCOME to the worship of God at the**  
**Second Congregational Church in Wilton,**  
**United Church of Christ.**  
**We are glad you are here today!**

**\*Bold print means congregational participation.**  
An asterisk (\*) indicates to please stand, if you are able.

**GATHERING FOR THE WORD**  
WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE** "Over the Brook Kidron" R.J. Hughes

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*Psalm 103:1-7, 8-13*)

Bless GOD, O friends: with all our strength, bless the holy name.  
Bless GOD, O friends, and never forget God's gifts—

**People: Bless GOD, O friends: with all our strength, bless the holy name.**  
**Bless GOD, O friends, and never forget God's gifts--**

Forgiveness flowing into healing,  
Tireless goodness and joy:  
Strength and youth of the Eagle's flight.

**People: Bless GOD, O friends: with all our strength, bless the holy name.**  
**Bless GOD, O friends, and never forget God's gifts--**

Vindication, justice for all those oppressed;  
Liberation from bondage, and guidance for the way;  
Unending mercy, steadfast love.

**People: Bless GOD, O friends: with all our strength, bless the holy name.**  
**Bless GOD, O friends, and never forget God's gifts--**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is GOD's love toward those who are faithful;  
As a parent has compassion for children,  
so our GOD has compassion for us.

**People: Bless GOD, O friends: with all our strength, bless the holy name.**  
**Bless GOD, O friends, and never forget God's gifts.**

**\*HYMN**

“With Welcome Hearts We Greet you Lord”

**INVOCATION**

Compassionate-One, Lover-of-Goodness, Patience-with-Sinners,  
Draw near to us.  
Surround us with confidence in your good news:  
that you love us as parents love their children;  
that your mercy is boundless and generous,  
that you beckon us always and will wait forever  
as we find our way back to you.  
Open our hearts to receive your compassion;  
And then show us how to forgive,  
So that we may be vessels of resurrection hope in our troubled world.  
In Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

**Prayer of Confession**

Friends, in the scriptures, “Seven” is often seen as a perfect number,  
a mystical number, a number that points to infinity.  
So when Jesus tells his disciples to forgive “seventy times seven”,  
(or “seventy-seven times” depending on translation),  
he is inviting people into a never ending, expansive dance of grace.

Confession, repentance, turning one’s life around to a transformed future;  
Forgiveness, resilience, opening one’s life to a new moment in relationship:  
all this may seem impossible, and yet Jesus calls us to profound,  
ever-evolving change.

Let’s take a few moments to ponder our lives,  
personal, and in wider community.  
Where do we need forgiveness? Where do we need to forgive?

Where do our lives intersect in the wider community  
with structures, practices, attitudes that deeply hurt our neighbors?  
Where must we seek forgiveness?  
Where must we seek to effect change?

How have we been wounded with structures, practices, attitudes  
of the wider community that need transformation?  
How may we begin to forgive?

*Silence*

**\*ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Holy One,  
You call us into this ever expanding dance of grace;  
Turning “seventy times seven” is not too much when we follow your lead  
into a future of hope and peace.  
Glory be to the One who, working in us,  
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. **Amen.**

**GLORIA PATRI Tune: GREATOREX**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, Amen.

## ENGAGING THE WORD

READING FROM SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 18:21-35*

SERMON

“How Many times?”

\*HYMN

“If My People’s Hearts Are Humbled”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PASTORAL PRAYER, SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

\*CALL TO OFFERING

Like Paul, who was showered with an abundance of mercy from God,  
we too have been blessed.

Like Paul, we are called to go forth  
and witness to the presence of Christ in our lives in so many diverse ways.

One of the ways in which we tell the story  
is through the giving of gifts to God.

In our gift-giving we participate with God  
in providing for the needs of God’s people.

\*DOXOLOGY Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.\*

\*OFFERTORY DEDICATION

People: May our gifts become symbols of our intention  
to minister with God to satisfy the needs of those whom God loves.

\*BENEDICTION

Let us go forth to forgive as we have been forgiven: seventy times seven!  
freed of the paralyzing burden of sin in order to  
do justice, love mercy, walk confidently, and humbly, with God. Amen.

\*POSTLUDE

“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”

R.J. Hughes

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/MEETINGS VIA ZOOM**

September 14, Book Club, 10:00 AM

September 15, Council Meeting, 7:00 PM

September 16. Search Committee, 6:30 PM

September 16, Congregational Survey Meeting, 7:00 PM

September 19, A Celebration of Life for Paul Kennedy at the Cathedral of the Pines

September 20, Virtual Worship

**PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE**

Pastor Kerry Richardson (Interim Pastor)

Patricia Cauchon, Director of Music

Stephanie Ouellette Liturgist

All the Congregation, Ministers to the World

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Email for Church Administration

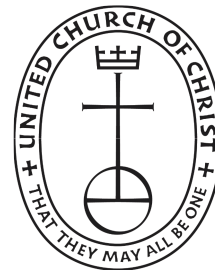
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