

"Unless a grain of wheat falls
into the earth and dies,
it remains just a single grain;
but if it dies,
it bears much fruit."

John 12:24

*Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ
Open and Affirming*

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 17, 2024**

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.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER
Words of Welcome and Announcements

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** *responsively*

L: Our Lenten journey is almost over.
We are drawing closer to Jerusalem now.

P: **Jesus speaks more and more
about his suffering and death.**

L: He calls us to take up our crosses and follow him.

P: **He calls us to be servants of all.**

L: Walk with us, Lord; create a holy pause
in our busy and noisy lives.

All: **Teach us your way, O Lord,
and lead us in your truth.**

***GATHERING HYMN**

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

No. 48

PRAYER OF THE DAY

unison

Loving God, in Christ you taught us that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Teach us this day what that means for us, so that we may bear the fruit of your self-giving love in our lives. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

unison

Gentle and most merciful God, we have not loved you as you love us, nor have we always lived as we ought. Forgive our sin. Lift us above every past regret and failure. Draw us closer to you, that we may know your healing grace, and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE

HYMNS

“The Bond of Love”

No. 395

We are one in the bond of love;
we are one in the bond of love.
We have joined our spirit with the Spirit of God;
we are one in the bond of love.
Let us sing now, everyone;
let us feel God’s love begun.
Let us join our hands that the world
will know we are one in the bond of love.

“O How He Loves You and Me”

No. 270

O how he loves you and me,
O how he loves you and me;
he gave his life – what more could he give?
O how he loves you, O how he loves me,
O how he loves you and me!

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

***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.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** *unison*

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your
goodness we have these gifts to share. Use our gifts,
and us, for the needs of others and for the well-being
of your world. Amen.

ANTHEM

THE WORD OF GOD

The Gospel Reading **John 12:20-28**

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Sermon "The Vulnerability of Love"

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

unison

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.

*SENDING HYMN

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” No. 261

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

“To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness.

But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable.”

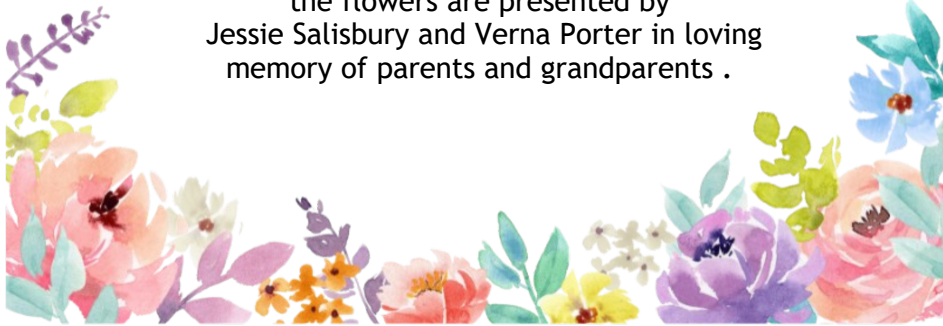
C. S. Lewis, The Four Loves

On The Calendar/Announcements

Fidget Blankets, March 19, 9:00 AM
Church Council Meeting, March 19, 7:00 PM via Zoom
Family Game Night, March 23, 6:00–8:00 PM
Maundy Thursday Service, March 28, 7:00 PM

Events are held in Parish Hall unless otherwise noted.

Praising God's Glory,
the flowers are presented by
Jessie Salisbury and Verna Porter in loving
memory of parents and grandparents .



PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Rev. Dr. Gary Klingsporn, Pastor
Stephanie Ouellette, Liturgist
Patricia Cauchon, Director of Music
Congregation, Ministers to the World

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