

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

INDOOR WORSHIP

November 8, 2020

Welcome

Prelude "O God Our Help in Ages Past" by *W. Croft arr. L. Larson*

Call to Worship

Leader: We are pulled in many directions.

People: Many duties and tasks seek to lay claim on our lives.

Leader: This day, in this place, let service to God be your choice.

People: This day, in this place, we open our hearts and spirits to God.

Leader: Blessed be the God of creation who has called us here.

People: Praise be to God who sustains and nurtures our lives.

Hymn "O Thou Who Camest From Above" Tune: HEREFORD

**1 O thou who camest from above
the fire celestial to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart!**

**2 There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
in humble prayer and fervent praise.**

**3 Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
to work, and speak, and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire,
and still stir up the gift in me.**

Prayer of Confession *from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Holy One, we confess that we are not awake for you.

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image in one another.

We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community.

Open our hearts to your coming,

open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,

open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: In the deepest darkness, in the times when all seems lost, we are not lost to God. God calls us to be ready for God's new kingdom. In all this God is with us.

People: Amen.

Recognition of Veterans



Hymn "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" Tune: AMERICA

**1. My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From ev'ry mountainside
Let freedom ring!**

**2. Our forebears' God to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God our King!**

Commissioning of the Members of the Senior Minister Search Committee

Paul Sainsbury (Chair), Helen Porter (Vice Chair), Kathi Buzzell, Cathy Holton, Rev. Larry Iannetti, Janey Mullins, Bill Whitehead

Lesson Matthew 25:1-13

Sermon "Being Vigilant" Rev. Dr. James Matarazzo

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

**All: 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.**

Invitation to Offering

Offertory Music "Thy Word" by M. Smith arr. J. Carter

Doxology *Sung by all*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low
Praise Holy Spirit evermore
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

Lord, we return a portion of all the gifts you have given to us in remembrance and in gratitude for these blessings. Use these gifts to support ministries of healing and hope, for we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn "Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing" Tune: DARWALL

**1. Rejoice, give thanks and sing:
Your Sovereign God adore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting,
And triumphs evermore.
Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**2. Jesus, the Savior, reigns,
The God of truth and love;
The Lamb who purged our stains,
Is crowned with power above.
Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**3. Rejoice in glorious hope!
For Christ the Judge shall come
And take the faithful up
To their eternal home:
Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

Benediction

Postlude *"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above" by L. Smith*

Please Hold in Your Prayers...

*Nolan Schloemer, Bonnie & Bill Gibbs, Donald & Trudy Desfosse, Jay Dev Chandra, Joie Hodge, Anna M. Kane,
Linda Mitrano, Charles Monroe, Chris Laurson, Gary & Barb Sampson, Bill Siegmann, Florence Stowe,
Sandy Wilson, Donna and Beau Meyer and family, Stan and Theresa Elbe, Lisa DiPilato and the Scott and DiPilato
families.*

... also, all military personnel, first responders, health care workers and all who protect and care for us.

*The Minister is the Rev. Dr. James Matarazzo.
Our Music Director is Mr. Curtis Smith.*

The Lay Reader is Bill Whitehead

The flowers on the altar are given by Betsy and Ed Giles in memory of loved ones.

Mission Statement

The purpose of this Church is to come together as Christians to serve God by studying and listening to the Word and living by Christ's teachings. We are committed to reaching out through prayer, caring, sharing and fellowship.

Open and Affirming Statement

We, the First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury, endeavor to live out the Great Commandment by loving, welcoming and affirming all people. We welcome and affirm everyone including people of all gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, ages, races, cultures, family configurations, economic circumstances, physical, cognitive and emotional abilities, educational levels, spiritual and religious traditions. We invite all to share in the Christian life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings and joys of our church family. We publicly commit ourselves to the ongoing work of being an open and affirming (ONA) congregation, listening to the still-speaking voice of God. We shall strive to fulfill this affirmation with God's grace, journeying together in Christian faith.

