



First Congregational Church of Rowley

175 Main Street, Rowley, MA – 978-948-3993

Order of Worship Service

Sunday, April 24, 2022

Reverend Thomas Bentley



*Breathe the breath
of new life into us,
O Lord*

Flowers on Sunday, April 24

Chancel Wall: In memory of Jack Burke with love from his wife, Joan Burke, his son, John Burke and his daughter, Jill Burke.

Altar: Given in loving memory of her mother, Arlene, by Sara Stafford

Flowers on the Chancel Wall on Easter Sunday

Judy Robillard and the Stoddard children in loving memory of Raymond W. Stoddard

Given by Jerry and Nancy Schmidt in gratitude for God's gift of healing, live and eternal life.

Deacons – Jerry and Nancy Schmidt

Lay Reader – Dave Irving

A/V – Eric Fila

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Tom Bentley

Call to Worship

Leader: Faith never comes easy. Thomas, a faithful disciple of Jesus, doubted the post-Resurrection appearance and needed to see Jesus for himself.

People: How we are like Thomas! We sometimes think we need to see in order to believe!

Leader: How blessed are the ones who, never having seen, yet have come to believe.

Leader & People: Open our hearts, Lord, this day to absolute faith in you, that, although we have not seen the risen Christ, we may believe fully in him. AMEN.

Opening Prayer (in unison)

Dave Irving

Breathe the breath of new life into us, O Lord, that we may fully feel the power of your love and the awesome glory of the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ. Prepare us to receive your blessing and then to go from this place to be a blessing to others in your name. AMEN.

Prayer of Confession

Dave Irving

We confess that we far too often want proof for everything, O Lord. We want proof that someone loves us; we want proof that we can trust in others; we want proof that everything in life is going to turn out all right. Lord, forgive our distrust! Forgive the many times when we think and act in ways which are hurtful and mean. Heal our wounds. Bind up our spirits in the cords of your compassion. Help us to fully place our faith in you, with our whole hearts, and minds, and spirits, and souls. For we ask this in your blessed Name. AMEN.

Words of Assurance

Rev. Tom Bentley

Peace. Be still. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Jesus came to bring you new life. Believe in him. Receive the blessing of hope and peace. AMEN.

Opening Song: "Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing"

NCH 303

<https://youtu.be/7TJpr-fXT34>

New Testament Reading

Dave Irving

Acts 5:27-42 The Message

Bringing them back, they stood them before the High Council. The Chief Priest said, “Didn’t we give you strict orders not to teach in Jesus’ name? And here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are trying your best to blame us for the death of this man.”

Peter and the apostles answered, “It’s necessary to obey God rather than men. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, the One you killed by hanging him on a cross. God set him on high at his side, Prince and Savior, to give Israel the gift of a changed life and sins forgiven. And we are witnesses to these things. The Holy Spirit, whom God gives to those who obey him, corroborates every detail.”

When they heard that, they were furious and wanted to kill them on the spot. But one of the council members stood up, a Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel, a teacher of God’s Law who was honored by everyone. He ordered the men taken out of the room for a short time, then said, “Fellow Israelites, be careful what you do to these men. Not long ago Theudas made something of a splash, claiming to be somebody, and got about four hundred men to join him. He was killed, his followers dispersed, and nothing came of it. A little later, at the time of the census, Judas the Galilean appeared and acquired a following. He also fizzled out and the people following him were scattered to the four winds.

“So I am telling you: Hands off these men! Let them alone. If this program or this work is merely human, it will fall apart, but if it is of God, there is nothing you can do about it—and you better not be found fighting against God!”

That convinced them. They called the apostles back in. After giving them a thorough whipping, they warned them not to speak in Jesus’ name and sent them off. The apostles went out of the High Council overjoyed because they had been given the honor of being dishonored on account of the Name. Every day they were in the Temple and homes, teaching and preaching Christ Jesus, not letting up for a minute.

Call to Offering

FirstChurchRowley.org

April 24, 2022

Rev. Tom Bentley

FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com

Moment of Music: "Why Did I Doubt You?" (sung by Stephen Eager)

<https://youtu.be/3nAegoVapGs>

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him all creatures here below

Praise Him above the Heavenly Host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Amen

Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Tom Bentley

Joys and Concerns

Rev. Tom Bentley

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Tom Bentley

Lord's Prayer: (in 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 sins, as we forgive those who have sinned 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

Gospel Reading

Dave Irving

John 20:19-31 The Message

Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." Then he showed them his hands and side.

The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were awestruck. Jesus repeated his greeting: "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you."

Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. "Receive the Holy Spirit," he said. "If you forgive someone's sins, they're gone for good. If you don't forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?"

But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, “We saw the Master.”

But he said, “Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won’t believe it.”

Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.”

Then he focused his attention on Thomas. “Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don’t be unbelieving. Believe.”

Thomas said, “My Master! My God!”

Jesus said, “So, you believe because you’ve seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing.”

Jesus provided far more God-revealing signs than are written down in this book. These are written down so you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and in the act of believing, have real and eternal life in the way he personally revealed it.

Message: “Struggling in the Place of Doubt”

Rev. Tom Bentley

Closing Song: “Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise”

<https://youtu.be/6mcJfWcs-M>

Verses 1, 2, 4 in the Pilgrim Hymnal #60

Benediction

Rev. Tom Bentley

“Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing”

<https://youtu.be/7TJpr-fXT34>

Rejoice, give thanks and sing;
Your Sovereign God adore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting
and triumphs ever more.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Our Savior Jesus 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.

Christ Jesus cannot fail to rule both
earth and heaven; The keys of death
and hell are to the Savior given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
For Christ the Judge shall come,
And take the faithful up to their
eternal home.
We soon shall hear a heavenly voice
above the trumpet's sound, Rejoice!

“Why Did I Doubt You?”

(sung by Stephen Eager)

<https://youtu.be/3nAegoVapGs>

Trust and obey
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus
but to trust and obey.

There is gonna come a day
when all that I have left to say
is why ?-
why did I doubt you?
Why did I shed all those tears
And feel such overwhelming fears?
Why, why did I doubt you ?

I will look at all you've done
and wonder why I thought
the sun would never shine again.
All the chaos all the mess
Were pathways for your hand to
bless
you never dropped me once.

Someday when this pain will be
a faded distant memory
I'll think
why did I doubt you?
All of my anxiety
what good did worry do for me
oh Why, why did I doubt you?
When every day my needs were met
and even on those days that I'd
forget
to pray.
You would answer anyway.
You knew that I was made of clay.
You never left my side.

Someday far beyond the sky
I'll see your face and I will cry
Why, why did I doubt you?
and then I'll see undoubtedly
that I'd been safe and safe could be-
So why, why did I doubt you?
Why did I doubt you?
Why did I doubt you?

“Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise”

Verses 1, 2, 4 in the Pilgrim Hymnal
#60

<https://youtu.be/6mcJfWcs-M>

Savior, again to thy dear name we
raise
with one accord our parting hymn of
praise.
Once more we bless thee ere our
worship cease,
then, lowly bending, wait thy word of
peace.

Grant us thy peace upon our
homeward way;
with thee began, with thee shall end
the day.
Guard thou the lips from sin, the
hearts from shame,
that in this house have called upon
thy name.

Grant us thy peace throughout our
earthly life,
our balm in sorrow and our stay in
strife.
Then, when thy voice shall bid our
conflict cease,
call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.

Coming up at First Church...

Wednesday mornings at 10am
Getting to Know Us, study group

Wednesday, April 27

Trustees Meeting, 6:30pm

(4th Wednesday)

Diaconate Meeting, 7pm

Saturday, April 30 – **Pets Unleashed**

Tuesday, May 10 – **Executive**

Committee Meeting, 7pm

Saturday, May 14

Pancake Breakfast 8-9:30am (\$8)



Annual Plant Sale, 9am-1pm
(rain date 5/21)

Council on Aging Fitness Groups

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

1pm-2pm

Save the date: Ezekiel Rogers Golf
Tournament, September 17, 2022



**Saturday, April 30 🐾 10am-Noon
at First Church of Rowley**

Vacation Bible School Event

The Bible lesson is from Genesis 1. The story of creation, keying in on God putting us in charge of taking care of all of HIS creatures. Geared towards Pre-K-2nd grade, and all are welcome. The event includes the Bible story, games, crafts, and snacks.

Blessing of the Pets at noon with Reverend Tom

Parents come back with your pets, if you do not have a pet, or your pet is not good around other pets, you can bring a stuffed pet from home or adopt a small stuffed dog at the event (Noontime on the Town Common)

175 Main Street, Rowley, MA