



Did you know Theodore Parker...

Theodore Parker once described himself as the most hated man in America. He was a firebrand orator, a tireless social reformer and abolitionist. He was also one of the most learned American scholars in biblical studies of his day, a devout follower of Jesus, and an independent thinker, which made him a thorn in the side of Boston's religious establishment. He devoted his energies in advancing temperance, women's suffrage, women's equality, prison reform, and the abolition of slavery. He began his ministry at the Congregational church at Roxbury, near Boston. He was invited by a group of admirers to start a new congregation in Boston where he would gain a wider hearing. He named it the 28th Congregational Society of Boston. His informative and fiery sermons were soon drawing an audience of 2000 every Sunday.

Parker warned against the growing influence of business interests over good government that served the general public. A dozen years before Lincoln, Parker spoke of government "of all the people, for all the people and by all the people." Parker was also an active member of the Transcendental Club where he became friends with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. His most important sermon was, The Transient and Permanent in Christianity. He was dismayed that no Christian denomination would endorse the abolition of slavery, but he remained an optimist. A century before Martin Luther King Jr., Parker said, "I do not pretend to understand the moral universe, the arc is a long one, but I am sure it bends toward justice."

...was a Congregationalist?

Celebrating 400 Years of American Congregationalism
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Call To Worship

L: Pilgrims are we, O Lord God ,we come

C: 400-year-old travelers with Your Son

L: When we have been weary, You have restored our souls

C: And set us on the path again, of redemption

L: We come to this hour seeking refreshment, courage, and the will

C: To continue this journey toward the community of heaven

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard