

**First Church of Christ in Mansfield
(Congregational) United Church of Christ**

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All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

THE TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + OCTOBER 22, 2023

Chimes and Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Centering in the Spirit

Hymn

Immortal Invisible God Only Wise

CH66

Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer

Hear these words from the Gospel according to Matthew: Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax[a] to Caesar or not?" But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

In this past week have we been hypocritical?

When have we been amazed?

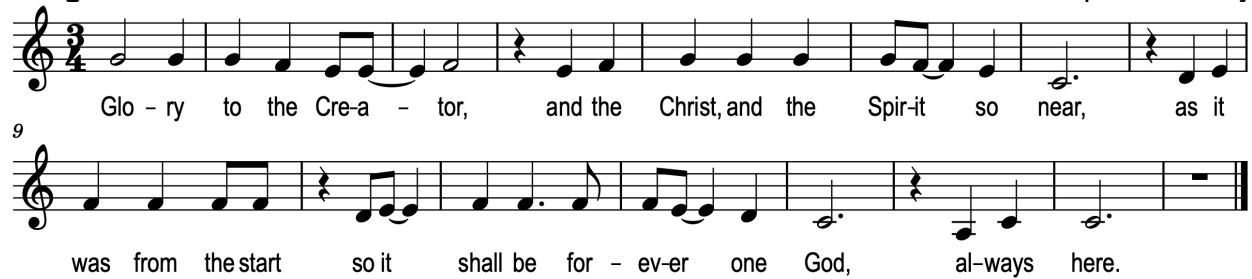
Silence

You know each of us by name, O God, and in your sight we have found favor, yet our minds cannot comprehend the vision of your glory or the vastness of your love. Grant that as we glimpse your greatness, reflected in your many gifts, we may always return to you the praise that is yours alone. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song of Praise

Gloria

Christopher Grundy



9
Glo - ry to the Cre-a - tor, and the Christ, and the Spir-it so near, as it
was from the start so it shall be for - ev-er one God, al-ways here.

Christian Scripture

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by the Apostle Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for us all.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly

³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Psalter

Psalm 99

CH



God reigns, en-throned on high; let all the earth pro - claim with trem-bling lips the
Un - to the priests of old who called u - pon God's name, the law was sp - ken



awe-some might of God's great name! A ho - ly Lord, whose rule is
from the clouds and wrought in flame! To God's com-mand give heed; in



marked with equ - i - ty, whose right-eous-ness to us is bound all time to be.
faith en-dure al - ways, let Zi-ion's walls for - ev - er ring with songs of praise.

Hebrew Scripture

Exodus 33:12-23

¹²Moses said to the LORD, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' ¹³Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." ¹⁴He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." ¹⁵And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." ¹⁸Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." ¹⁹And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The LORD'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." ²¹And the LORD continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²²and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

Reflection

Call to Prayer

Lord Listen to Your Children Praying

CH305

9 Lord, li-sten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Lord, send your Spi-rit in this place.

Lord, lis-ten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Sendus love, sendus power, sendus grace.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 2/2 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 2/2 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: "Lord, li-sten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Lord, send your Spi-rit in this place." The second staff continues the melody with similar note values. The lyrics are: "Lord, lis-ten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Sendus love, sendus power, sendus grace." A small number '9' is written at the beginning of the first staff.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists.

God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made.

God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth.

God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt. Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name.

God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known.

Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you. We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all.

Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is most comfortable for you.

The following are offered as examples...

**Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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 debts/sins/trespasses

as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/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.

Musical Offering

Rock of Ages

CH214

*Financial offerings may be placed in the collection plates,
mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250,
or given online at www.myfcc.info*

Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea - tures here be low; Praise
5 God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

Prayer of Dedication

Holy Spirit keep us attuned to the voices around us, to those who need us to be bearers of your love and compassion; may these gifts we have given help us, through your church, meet those needs. Amen.

Hymn

God Be With You Til We Meet Again

CH434

Benediction and Postlude

The Week Ahead...

Sunday, October 22

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

Second Hour: Church Safety in Fellowship Hall

Monday, October 23

10am First Church leads Worship at St. Joseph Living Center

7pm Take Note Rehearsal

Wednesday, October 25

1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, October 26

12:15pm Contemplative Communion in Yellow Office

Saturday, October 28

12noon-4pm Memorial Service in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, October 29

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle and Collection of Pledges