



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

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250

860.423.9008 + [www.myfcc.info](http://www.myfcc.info)

All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

**THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + JANUARY 21, 2024**

**Welcome to Our Guests!**

*We're delighted you have joined us for worship; the members are the ministers of this church...  
if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us!*

**Chimes and Prelude**

**Welcome and Greeting**

**Hymn**

*Jesus Calls Us*

CH337

**Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer**

Hear these words from the First Letter of Paul to the Church in Corinth: I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have spouses be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

When in this past week have we been resistant to change?

When have we failed to follow where God might be leading us?

*Silence*

Let us pray.

**God of the prophets, you call us to follow and to serve you. Fulfill in us your commonwealth of justice and joy, that the light of your presence may be revealed to all nations. Amen.**

## Musical Response

## More Light

Christopher Grundy

9 More - light, more - truth is breaking from your Word.

More - light, more - truth, Ho-ly Spir-it, help us hear what needs to be heard.

## Hebrew Scripture

Jonah 3:1-5; 10

*The book of Jonah is a comedy starring a reluctant prophet who is given a one-sentence message: Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. Much to Jonah's dismay, the people of Nineveh repent. The point of the story is to get the reader to wrestle with the question "On whom should God have mercy?"*

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God's mind changed about the calamity that God had said they would bring upon them; and they did not do it.

## Psalter

Psalm 62

MARYTON

My soul, O God, in si - lence waits; my hope se - cure with - out - a sound;  
I set my trust in You be - yond the fu - tile boasts of mo - rtal pride;  
In - to my si - lence you have said that good-ness rests with you - a - bove.

9 the Lord's my re - fuge and my rock in whom the joys of life - a - bound.  
with con - fi - dence I hold the prize, and cast dis - ho - nest claims a - side.  
The re - com - pense for my de - light: a share of your un - fail - ing love.

## Gospel

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

## Reflection

### Call to Prayer

*Creator of the Stars of Night*

CH127



Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo-ple's e - ver - last - ing light,  
O Christ, re-deem-er of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.

### Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the church throughout the world and for musicians and servers, that all proclaim the good news of God's reconciling love...

For skies and seas, for birds and fish, for favorable weather and clean water, and for the well-being of creation, that God raise up advocates and scientists to guide our care for all the earth...

For those who provide leadership in our cities and around the world, for nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, for planning commissions and homeless advocates, that God inspire all people in the just use of wealth...

For those who are sick, distressed, or grieving; for the outcast and all who await relief, that in the midst of suffering, God's peace and mercy surround them...

For our congregation and community, for families big and small, and for the organizations that meet here during the week, that God's steadfast love serve as a model for all relationships...

In thanksgiving for our ancestors in the faith whose lives serve as an example of gospel living, that they point us to the hope we have in Christ...

*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**

*Take My Life and Let It Be*

CH609

*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](http://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**

**God of Heaven and Earth, you call us to leave behind our  
preoccupations and to follow you into the future. May this act of giving  
be a gesture of our willingness to follow where you lead. In Jesus'  
name, we pray. Amen.**

### **The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

Friends, we know what it feels like to look for God.  
We know what it feels like to turn our heads up to the sky,  
looking for stars, listening for a voice that calls us beloved.  
I think that's part of why we end up here,  
because we are hoping that in the midst of this messy world  
we might catch a glimpse of God

that will carry us through.

Well friends, I have good news.

God is already here.

Like a mighty wind, God is moving through this room.

God is at this Table, inviting us forward.

The invitation may not be as clear as a star in the sky,

or a voice that parts the clouds,

but just as God called Jesus "Beloved," God calls you the same.

So come to this Table with your questions and your doubts.

Come with your joys and your gratitude.

Come seeking, come hungry, come curious.

Come open. Come not because you have to but because you can.

Come with all of you, for there is room for you here.

This is God's Table; this is God's meal.

You are beloved, so come.

Let us pray.

God is with you.

**And also with you.**

Open up your hearts.

**We open them up to God and one another.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

God of today, tomorrow, and yesterday,

As we begin this new year, we once again find ourselves looking for you.

We long for the clarity of a star in the sky, or a voice in the clouds declaring your presence in our lives.

So today we ask that you would make yourself known to us.

Do what only you can do. Reach into our spirits to give us a boost of confidence that love is real and we are not alone. Remind us that we are beloved in your eyes.

We know we're asking a lot for a group that brings very little. We don't have gold or Frankincense or Myrrh. We haven't thrown off our shoes to honor your holy ground.

We haven't been baptized in the Jordan river. We haven't spent the last several days traveling here by camel. We're no Magi, Moses, or Messiah, but we're yours.

Instead, we bring ourselves to this Table—to your Table—in hopes of catching a glimpse of you. Speak to us in this bread. Speak to us in the cup. Speak to us through these star words. Speak to us as you spoke through the clouds at Jesus’s baptism, so that these star words may be a tool that helps us look for you in the coming year.

Holy God, you call us beloved. You are with us in our joy. You are with us in our sorrow. Surely, even as we pray, you are with us here as well. So with grateful hearts, we unite our voices to sing

**Musical Response** *Santo Santo Santo* Traditional Argentine

San - to, san - to, san - to. Mi co - ra - zon te a - do - ra! Mi  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you! My

5  
 co - ra - zon te sa - be de - cir: San - to eres, Se - nor!  
 heart knows how to say to you: Ho - ly are you, Lord!

**Sharing the Bread and Cup**

*All are welcome at Christ’s table; we offer non-alcoholic juice and gluten-free bread.*

**Hymn** *Lord You Have Come to the Lakeshore* CH342

**Benediction and Response** *Take Us Home By Another Way* Christopher Grundy

Spir - it take us home take us home by an - oth - er way, take us long way 'round the

7  
 ty - rants and their schemes. Give us strength to walk, show us dreams of a bet - ter

13  
 day, and we'll pave the way with jus - tice go - ing home by an - oth - er way

Tuesday, January 23

10:30am First Church leads Worship at MCNR

Wednesday, January 24

1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 25

12:15pm Contemplative Communion

Sunday, January 28

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

Following Worship, Congregational Meeting