



**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

Ministers: All the Members of the Church
Erik Haeger, Organist
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

September 8, 2024 ~ Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Today's Worship Leader: Bobbi Giardina

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!*

Playing the Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Deb Richards

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Centering in the Spirit

All Are Welcome (All Belong)

insert

***Opening Hymn**

In Christ There Is No East or West

insert

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Creator God, you create all people in your image. When we neglect the needs of the poor, raise our commitment to care for others and to help create justice for all. When favoritism and prejudice blind us, and when we exclude and demean others, focus us on your inclusive love, a love that welcomes us and calls us to welcome others. Live in us and through us, that our lives and our actions may reflect your image in all that we say and in all that we do. Amen.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

God is good all the time.

And all the time, God is good.

In God's goodness, we touch goodness.

In God's love, we receive love.

In God's grace and mercy, we find fellowship with God's people.

***Song of Praise**

Gloria

Christopher Grundy

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.

Hebrew Scripture

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold. The rich and the poor have this in common: the LORD is the maker of them all.

Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of anger will fail. Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.

Do not rob the poor because they are poor or crush the afflicted at the gate, for the LORD pleads their cause and despoils of life those who despoil them.

Psalter

Psalms 146

CH 766

Epistle

James 2:1-10, 14-17

My brothers and sisters, do not claim the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory while showing partiality. For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here in a good place, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit by my footstool," have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into the courts? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Gospel

Mark 7:24-37

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a

gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon toward the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Reflection

"You Can't Say You Can't Play"

Bobbi Giardina

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price

Hear us, O Lord, as we come now in prayer, shar - ing our joys, our trou- bles, and our cares.

9

Help us, O Lord, to be o - pen to your word, and teach us to put our trust in you.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

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.**

Invitation to Generosity

God has chosen the poor as heirs of God's kingdom. God calls us to value the needs of this world more highly than we value silver and gold. May our offerings reflect the values to which God calls us.

Offertory

"Go Gently Through the Years"

Diane Rutledge

Offered by Cheryl Chase

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures 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

Through these gifts and offerings, bless your world, O God. Through our lives and our actions, bring love to your creation, that all may know your presence and live in your grace. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Help Us Accept Each Other

CH 487

*Benediction

Go into the world as agents of healing
Appreciating the wonder of creation
In all forms, expressions, and ways
Boldly embracing the fullness of humanity
Welcoming the stranger
And considering the other as friend.
Go in peace.

*Passing the Peace

The peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, is with you always.
And also with you.
Let us share with one another a sign of that peace.

Postlude

The Week Ahead...

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Monday, September 9 | 7:00pm Take Note! Rehearsal in Fellowship Hall |
| Tuesday, September 10 | 5:30pm Governing Board via Zoom |
| Wednesday, September 11 | 1:00pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall |
| Sunday, September 15 | 10:15am Worship & Worship Circle (Worship Leader: Don Baxter) Rally Day Potluck immediately following Worship (come hear the Governing Board's excitement around the vision for First Church) 5:00pm PFLAG Mansfield Tolland in Fellowship Hall |