



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

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

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church

The Rev. Charles Ericson, Intentional Interim Minister

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

**March 2, 2025 — Transfiguration Sunday Communion Sunday**

**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**

**Greeting and Announcements**

**Prelude**

**Centering in the Spirit** (*inspired by Exodus 34 & II Corinthians 3*)

L: In ancient times, Moses placed a veil upon his face as he returned from Mount Sinai;

**P: For the glory of God shone intensely on his skin, and the Israelites were afraid.**

L: Generations later, the Apostle Paul wrote that Christ has set aside the veil for those who believe.

**P: Each time we gather to worship, we lift the veil that reveals the glory and wonder of God.**

L: Our faces may shine when we encounter the glory of God, but we are not fearful.

**P: For our shining faces reflect the joy that fills our souls when we gather as God's people.**

L: So, come, let us sing...pray...listen...speak...and partake with confidence and conviction,

**P: For the veil has been lifted, and the glory of God surrounds us!**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly*

**CH419**

**Prayer for Transformation**

**God of Glory and Grace, It often seems as though many veils exist in our world today — the veils between church and culture, sacred and profane, the spiritual and the physical, estrangement and reconciliation, truth and conspiracy. Please free us from feeling compelled to choose between extremes, and remind us that the faith we have received from Jesus sets aside every veil and speaks to every situation we may encounter in our lives. Empower us this morning, Liberating God, so that we may break through the veils before us, equipped with an abundance of love, an unquenchable thirst for justice, and a passion for peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

*moment of silence*

**Words of Grace**

Friends, the veil that Jesus has set aside reveals the divine gifts of mercy, forgiveness, redemption and grace — ours for the taking, unconditional and unlimited. The slip-ups, failings and wrong turns we have taken are left in the past, covered and forgotten. Rejoice and give thanks, for new life and new possibilities abound! Our faces and our spirits are aglow with the glory of God. Amen.

**\*Song of Praise**

*Glory to God*

Paul Vasile

Glo-ry to God, whose good-ness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has world with-out end, A - men. World with-out end, world with-out par - doned me, and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free! As it was in the be-gin-ning, is end, A - men. World with-out e - nd, world with-out end, A - men. now and ev - er shall be, A - men World with-out men!

**Hebrew Scripture**

Exodus 34:29-35

<sup>29</sup>Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup>When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup>But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup>Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup>When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup>but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been command-ed, <sup>35</sup>the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

**Gospel**

Luke 9:28-43

<sup>28</sup>Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup>And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup>Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. <sup>31</sup>They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup>Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup>Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” —not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup>While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup>Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” <sup>36</sup>When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

<sup>37</sup>On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. <sup>38</sup>Just then a man from the crowd shouted, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. <sup>39</sup>Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. <sup>40</sup>I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” <sup>41</sup>Jesus answered, “You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son

here.” <sup>42</sup>While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

<sup>43</sup>And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

## Reflection

“Shining Faces”

Rev. Chuck Ericson

## 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 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**

## Invitation to Generosity

Our faith story is filled with accounts of miracles: a parting of the sea...the healing of a child...a mountain-top transfiguration. Other miracles happen all around us on a daily basis: when a hungry soul is fed...when extravagant love heals a broken heart...when long-lingering conflict succumbs to lasting peace. Such everyday miracles can come to life through the ministries and mission initiatives of our beloved church. Our morning offering will now be received so that more miracles can spring forth.

*Your financial offerings may be placed in the collection plates as they come around,  
or mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC, PO Box 36, Mansfield Center, CT 06250,  
or given online at: [www.myfcc.info](http://www.myfcc.info)*

## Musical Offering

### \*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

**We bring these gifts to you this day, Gracious and Generous God, and pray that you would bless and transform our gifts into simple, yet very powerful and far-reaching miracles that can change lives...change our world...and change ourselves. Amen.**

### \* The Service of Holy Communion \*

***For visitors:*** At the Last Supper, Jesus turned no one away and imposed no restrictions on receiving the bread and the cup. Neither do we here at First Church in Mansfield. Christ's table is open at all, and we extend an extravagant welcome to you to join us. The communion elements will be brought to the pews by servers. Plates containing pieces of bread will be distributed first, followed by trays containing individual cups of grape juice. Each time, worshipers are asked to hold the elements until all have been served and an invitation to partake is spoken from the communion table. For those who wish to know, the cup contains non-alcoholic grape juice and the bread is gluten-free.

Communion Hymn

*I Come with Joy*

CH420

### Invitation to Communion

### The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

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.**

Let us continue in the spirit of prayer:

Holy God, our loving Creator, close to us as breathing and distant as the farthest star, we thank you for your constant love for all you have made...

... Gifted by the presence of your Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves to you as we unite our voices with the entire family of your faithful people everywhere:

### 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.*

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

**We give thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

## \*Closing Hymn

*Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

CH392

## \*Benediction

Now may God bless you and keep you;  
May God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;  
May God's countenance be lifted up upon you and give you peace. Amen.

## \*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

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### ***About the Service of Communion***

*The shift from receiving communion by intinction to passing trays of bread and juice from pew to pew has been made out of concern for the health of worshipers during this time of numerous colds and flu.*

### ***A Message from Sewing & Service:***

*Thanks to the generosity of this community, we have all the supplies we need for the health/hygiene kits!*

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*Announcing a delicious way to support First Church:*

**Our annual Easter Candy Fundraiser  
featuring Munson's Chocolates!**

From 2/23/2025 through 3/14/2025, follow the link on our website ([myFCC.info](http://myFCC.info)) to our Campaign Page to order your favorite chocolate confections. (Orders must only be placed on the Campaign Page.)

There is something for everyone, and these treats also make great gifts!

Payment is not due until you receive your order. They will be available for pick-up in Fellowship Hall the week of April 7th. We can deliver your order upon request.

To help our fundraising efforts go even further, please be sure to share the link to our fundraising page with your family and friends!

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***Greeters, Readers, Musicians, Communion Servers,  
and Coffee Hour Hosts Needed!  
Sign up on the clipboard in the Sanctuary.***

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**THE WEEK AHEAD**

**Monday, March 3**

6:30 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal (FH)

**Tuesday, March 4**

10:30 a.m. Monthly service at Mansfield Center for Nursing & Rehabilitation

5:30 p.m. Pastoral Search Committee (lower level break room)

6:00 p.m. Special Olympics Cornhole Practice (FH)

**Wednesday, March 5**

1:00 p.m. Book Group (FH)

**Thursday, March 6**

9:30 a.m. Sewing & Service (FH)

12:00 p.m. Contemplative Meditation (Sanctuary)

**Sunday, March 9**

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle