



**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

August 3, 2025

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost 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

One: We come from many different places as we gather here this day.

ALL: We come from east and west, north and south, near and far.

One: We bring many different life experiences, as well..

ALL: We are children, adolescents, young adults, middle-aged and elders.

One: We carry many different feelings, too, as the hour of worship gets underway.

ALL: We are joyful, anxious, wondering, sad, hopeful, weary.

One: And yet with all these differences, we have all arrived here in God's holy presence.

ALL: We are united by our deep love of God, our affection for one another, and our common yearning to grow in faith and service.

One: So, in word and song, in silence and in celebration...

ALL: Let's seek God's embracing, empowering and unifying Spirit together!

***Opening Hymn**

In Christ There Is No East or West

CH687

Prayer for Transformation

Forever Accepting God, We know that you love us all no matter what — eternally and unconditionally. However, in our imperfect humanity, it is not always the same for us. We have a tendency to focus on one another's differences; we can put distances between ourselves and others who do not hold the same opinions, beliefs and values; we miss opportunities for valuable friendships and experiences because of this shortsightedness. In these next few moments of silent reflection, please grant us the wisdom and the courage to overcome such tendencies and find greater affinity with one another. Amen.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

The Psalmist assures us that “as far as the east is from the west”, so far does God’s grace extend; as a parent has compassion for their children, so God has compassion for us; for God knows how we were made; God remembers that we are dust. God’s love and mercy are boundless. Receive and rejoice!

*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, 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
end, A - men. World with-out end, world with-out end, A - men.
was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ev-er shall be, A - men.

Psalter

Psalm 107:1-9, 43

107:1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble

3 and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

4 Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town;

5 hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.

6 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress;

7 he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town.

8 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.

9 For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things.

43 Let those who are wise pay attention to these things, and consider the steadfast love of the LORD.

Hebrew Scripture

Hosea 11:1-11

11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. **2** The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and offering incense to idols. **3** Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk; I took them up in my arms, but they did not know that I healed them. **4** I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them. **5** They shall return to the land of Egypt, and Assyria shall be their king, because they have refused to return to me. **6** The sword rages in their cities; it consumes their oracle priests and devours because of their schemes. **7** My people are bent on turning away from me. To the Most High they call, but he does not raise them up at all. **8** How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. **9** I will not execute my fierce anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim, for I am God and no mortal, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. **10** They shall go after the LORD, who roars like a lion; when he roars, his children shall come trembling from the west. **11** They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will return them to their homes, says the LORD.

Reflection

“The Heart That Recoils”

Hymn

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart”

CH265

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.**

Invitation to Generosity

Just as our hearts can recoil, so can our hearts soften, especially when we look out from God’s house to see people yearning for sustenance...shelter...acceptance...justice...and more. With tender hearts that overflow with concern and compassion, let us give faithfully and generously to the ministries of our church so that the hearts of our neighbors in need may be warmed and encouraged. The morning offering will now be received.

*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*

Musical Offering

Agnus Dei

Ruth Morris Gray

Offered by Cheryl Chase, Erik Haeger, Laurel Thurman

*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

May the gifts and offerings we now present to you, O God, have your blessing and become transformed into acts of kindness and hope for others in our community and the world.
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

Lord of Our Highest Love!

CH390

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

Come and Find the Quiet Center

CH575

*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

May the peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you always.

And also, with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of that peace.

Postlude

The opening liturgy is inspired by Psalm 107 and Psalm 103.

Our shift from receiving Communion by intinction to the tradition of passing trays of bread and juice from pew to pew has been made from our concern for health (risk of germ transmission) as well as our hope to create a more unified, communal experience whereby worshippers partake of the elements at the same time.

THE WEEK AHEAD...

Thursday, August 7	9:30 a.m. Sewing & Service 6:30 p.m. Private use of Fellowship Hall
Sunday, August 10	10:15 a.m. Worship and Worship Circle 2 p.m. Quiet Corner Indivisible