



**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

The Rev. Charles Ericson, Intentional Interim Minister

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

August 24, 2025

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

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

Erik Haeger

Centering in the Spirit (*inspired by Psalm 103*)

Alex Hewes

One: The Psalmist writes: Bless the LORD, O my soul...

All: ...and do not forget all God's benefits.

One: We are used to thinking of benefits as insurance, paid vacations, and a holiday bonus.

All: But with God, the benefits we receive are more spiritual and lasting.

One: God's benefits flow abundantly from heaven, not from HR.

All: God's benefits fill the soul, not the pocketbook.

One: God's benefits are all around us as we gather for worship:

All: The gift of prayer, the inspiration of word and song, the love we share with one another;

One: And a never-ending stream of grace, divine wisdom, hope and new life.

All: May our hearts and minds be open now, as God's benefits become revealed!

***Opening Hymn**

Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

CH190

1 Tell me the stories of Jesus
I love to hear;
things I would ask him to tell me
if he were here:
scenes by the wayside,
tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

2 First let me hear how the children
stood round his knee,
and I shall fancy his blessing
resting on me;
words full of kindness,
deeds full of grace,
all in the lovelight of Jesus' face.

3 Into the city I'd follow
the children's band,
waving a branch of the palm tree
high in my hand;
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing
loudest hosannas, "Jesus is King!"

Blessing of Backpacks

Worship Circle

Prayer for Transformation

Loving God, we know that the lesson about kindness isn't just for the children of our congregation — it is for all of us. And while we devote ourselves to following Jesus' example of treating others with kindness at all times, we occasionally fall short. Remnants of unresolved anger, past hurts and even lingering prejudices result in acts that are not kind. When this happens, help us to be gentle with ourselves; assure us of your constant outpouring of grace and mercy, and restore within us the desire to be kind to our neighbors...and ourselves. Amen.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

Kindred in faith, may we know deep in our souls that God's kindness is abundant and overflowing. It pours out upon us when we approach God with pure, repentant hearts. Like fresh, replenishing raindrops, God's kindness refreshes our spirits, and restores our desire to spread kindness to our neighbors and our world.

*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.

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 103:1-8

103:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits — 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. 6 The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Gospel

Luke 13:10-17

13:10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." 13 When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14 But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured and not on the Sabbath day." 15 But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it to water? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" 17 When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame, and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things being done by him.

Reflection

"Faith Lessons of the Beatles: *John — Always Growing*"

Rev. Chuck Ericson

Hymn

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

CH254

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.

2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will
to do and to endure.

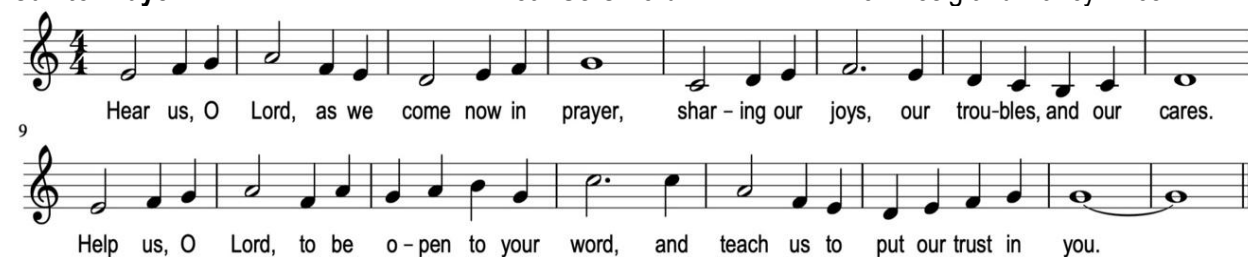
3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.

4 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

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

Kindness is more than just a way we treat one another in daily encounters. It is the way we look out from our own local environment to the world beyond ourselves as followers of Jesus. Global kindness extends to concerns for those who walk miles to fill a jug of water, neighbors who innocently fear for their own safety while at work, victims of senseless warfare and natural disaster. As our morning offerings are now given and received, may we hold in prayer all who yearn for the gift of kindness.

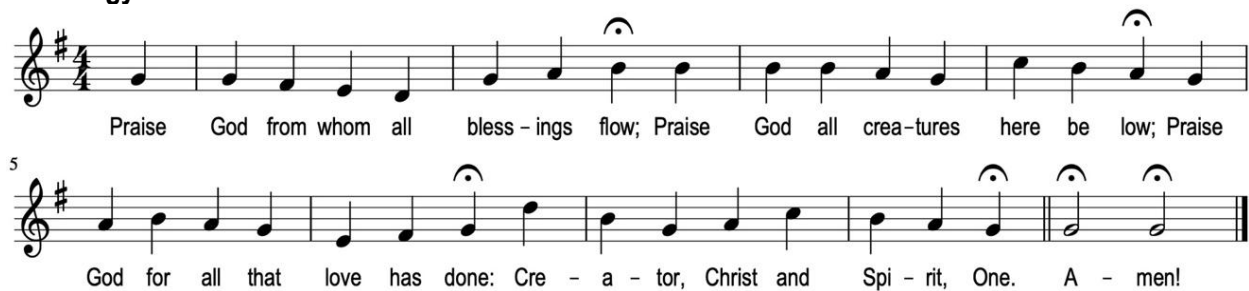
*Your financial offerings may be placed in the collection plates as they come around,
or mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC, PO Box 36, Mansfield Center, CT 06250*

Musical Offering

Grow Old With Me, by John Lennon

Howard Drescher

*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 One, may the gifts and offerings we bring to you now become transformed into life-changing expressions of kindness benefiting our neighbors, near and far, through the ministries of our church. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Holy Spirit, Truth Divine

CH241

1 Holy Spirit, Truth divine,
dawn upon this soul of mine.
Voice of God, and inward Light,
wake my spirit, clear my sight.

2 Holy Spirit, Love divine,
glow within this heart of mine.
Kindle every high desire;
purify me with your fire.

3 Holy Spirit, Pow'r divine,
fill and nerve this will of mine.
Boldly may I always live,
bravely serve and gladly give.

4 Holy Spirit, Peace divine,
still this restless heart of mine.
Speak to calm this tossing sea,
grant me your tranquility.

5 Holy Spirit, Joy divine,
gladden now this heart of mine.
In the desert ways I sing,
spring, O living Water, spring!

***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

THE WEEK AHEAD**Sunday, August 24**

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle; Blessing of the Backpacks
2:00 p.m. Quiet Corner Indivisible CT
4:00 p.m. Take Note rehearsal & potluck

Tuesday, August 26

5:30 p.m. Pastoral Search Committee

Thursday, August 28

9:30 a.m. Quilt Group

Saturday, August 30

12:30 p.m. Girl Scouts