



**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 31, 2025
Twelfth 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

Alex Hewes

One: Out of faith, out of desire, out of habit... we have gathered here in this place today.

All: We cherish this place and all that it means to us.

One: This place is a building constructed by our ancestors, and so full of treasured memories.

All: This place is also a meetinghouse — where we come to worship... mourn... and celebrate.

One: This place is a sanctuary — where we feel welcome...safe...and inspired.

All: Here we find God waiting to meet us when we arrive.

One: We encounter God in the pages of hymnals... the lighting of prayer candles... and holy silence.

All: And when the hour of worship is over, we depart this sacred place to go forth to serve.

One: So come, let worship begin!

All: Yes! Let worship begin!

***Opening Hymn**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

CH517

Prayer for Transformation

Giver of Divine Love, please assure us in these next few moments that your divine love is flowing into our lives at all times and in all circumstances. If we lose our way along the path of faith, your love pursues us and brings us back. If we try to run away from you out of feelings of guilt or shame, you are there to embrace us with loving arms when we fall exhausted. When our words and actions hurt those we hold dear, your love shows us the way to heal broken relationships. May we feel your divine love flowing into our souls now as we pause in silence. Amen.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

Kindred in Christ, the Divine Love of our God is flowing all around us — beside us...between us...above us...below us...from the crowns of our heads to the soles of our feet. It has been pouring out grace, forgiveness and the promise of new life. Receive it, rejoice in it, share it abundantly with those who are dear to you, and know that there is an unending supply of it for all the rest of your days.

*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

Psalms 112:1-9

- 112: 1 Praise the LORD! Happy are those who fear the LORD, who greatly delight in his commandments.
2 Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.
3 Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.
4 They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.
5 It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.
6 For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.
7 They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD.
8 Their hearts are steady; they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.
9 They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor.

Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-14

14:1 On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely. 7 When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. 8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, 9 and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. 10 But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. 11 For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." 12 He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. 13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. 14 And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Reflection "Faith Lessons of the Beatles: George — *Always Selfless*"

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.

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

As Jesus walked through towns and villages, he exemplified humility and selflessness to the people he encountered while teaching and preaching the good news. As Jesus' disciples in this time and place, we are called to follow this example — considering the needs of our neighbors while we also have pressing needs of our own...giving generously to others even when our own resources may be limited. As our offerings are now dedicated to God, may they reflect this spirit of humility and selflessness.

*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*Imagine, by John Lennon*

Cheryl Chase, Deb Hubbell, Laurel Thurman, Linda Wenner, Erik Haeger

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea-tures here be low; Praise

God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

***Prayer of Dedication**

We ask your blessing upon our gifts and offerings, dear God, and pray that through our church's ministries they may make a difference in the lives of others whose needs are far greater than our own. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

Sister, Let Me Be Your Servant

CH490

***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 31

10:15 a.m. Worship and Worship Circle

Tuesday, September 2

10:30 a.m. Monthly service at MCNR

5:30 p.m. Worth Fighting For/Indivisible

Wednesday, September 3

1 p.m. Book Group

5 p.m. Meditation Group

5:30 p.m. Pastoral Search Committee

Thursday, September 4

9:30 a.m. Sewing & Service

4:30 p.m. Windham Regional Arts Council Board Meeting

Saturday, September 6

9 a.m. WAIM Work Day