



**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

October 5, 2025

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost ~ World 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

Erik Haeger

Centering in the Spirit (*inspired by Psalm 37*)

Janna Pedersen

One: Friends, let us not despair at the acts of the wicked —

Many: We will trust in God, and scatter the seeds of justice in our world.

One: Let us not desire or trust in the power of worldly empires —

Many: We will delight in the power of God whose light fills our souls.

One: Let us not embrace wrath or resentment, but instead find patience in times of shadows —

Many: We will commit to the ways of God, trusting in the Holy One as Divine Love fills our earth.

***Opening Hymn**

Come Down, O Love Divine

CH582

Prayer for Transformation

Spirit of Encouragement, You thrive in our times of doubt. Your work takes root even if the drought of fear destroys our fertile soil. Yet we allow our mistrust of you and our neighbors to disturb our growth. We ask you to increase our faith when we are refusing to cultivate it. Motivate us to seek new ways of exploring our faith. Embolden us to trust even when fear creeps into our minds. Amen.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

In seasons of drought and rains, God is still giving us the encouragement to grow in faith. Know that through the grace of God, we will continue to find the strength to stretch ourselves and expand our faith.

Song of PraiseGlory 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 37:1-9*

- ¹ Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,
- ² for they will soon fade like the grass
and wither like the green herb.
- ³ Trust in the LORD and do good;
live in the land and enjoy security.
- ⁴ Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.
- ⁶ He will make your vindication shine like the light
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.
- ⁷ Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.
- ⁸ Refrain from anger and forsake wrath.
Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- ⁹ For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

Epistle*Hebrews 12:1-3*

¹² Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

³ Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary in your souls or lose heart.

Reflection*Clouds of Witnesses*

Rev. Chuck Ericson

Hymn*As Grain on Scattered Hillsides***CH491****Call to Prayer***Hear Us O Lord*

Don Besig and Nancy Price



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.**

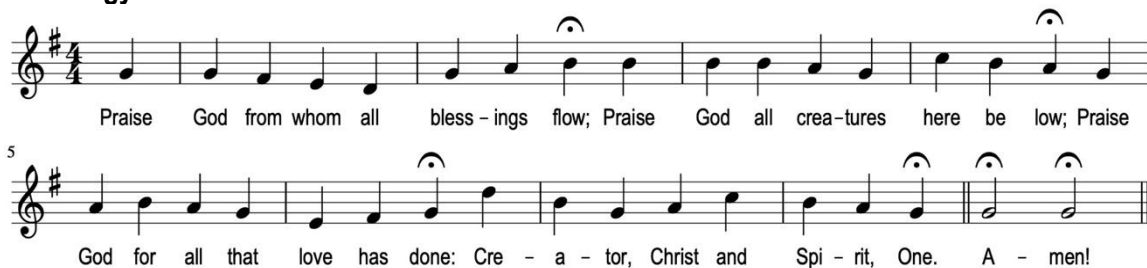
Invitation to Generosity

As we journey with God, we listen to God's still-speaking voice asking us to have faith in all we share. The Spirit of God asks us to live into our faith as we share our treasures, talents, and time with all of creation.

*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 "In Remembrance" by Buryl Red, arr. by Lloyd Larson
Offered by Cheryl Chase, Laurel Thurman, Erik Haeger

*Doxology



*Prayer of Dedication

**Holy Vessel of Endurance, When our spirits experience dehydration, you quench our souls.
When doubt creeps into our minds, you fill our hearts with your hydrating presence.
Encourage us to stretch ourselves in our giving. Help us to see that we have the faith to
take movements forward into the future with courage and strength. 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

For Everyone Born, A Place at the Table

last page

Invitation to Communion

One: Like a sower, God scatters, and God will give growth.

Many: God scatters life across the earth.

One: God scatters people in every land and nation.

Many: God scatters disciples far and wide.

One: Like a shepherd, God gathers.

Many: God gathers people into families of faith.

One: God gathers people into communities of love.

Many: God gathers people into the body of Christ.

One: Today, on this World Communion Sunday, God gathers us at one table with disciples of every language, culture, and tradition. From cathedrals and chapels, from huts and houses, from fields and cities, God gathers us in many places and makes us one in Christ. At this table, we remember the cost of discipleship and rejoice in the richness of Christ's gifts poured out for the whole world.

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:

Creator of the Universe, Maker of mountains and rivers, deserts and seas, vineyards and wheat fields, we praise you for the life you have given us and for all living things around us! From the seeds you scattered, you gathered the people of Israel, giving them your covenant and your promise. In the fullness of time, you came to us in Jesus of Nazareth, child of Mary and the Promised One of Israel. We honor his teachings, we weep at his suffering, and we rejoice in his risen life. With angels and archangels, with our ancestors in faith, and with our brothers and sisters who gather at your table across every continent and island, we ask your blessing on this bread and this cup. May these gifts of Christ's body and blood strengthen us to be the gathered and scattered Church in the world — many in culture and expression, yet one in Spirit, one in truth, one in faith, one in love. Gather your scattered seeds into your home of grace and peace, where all creation is renewed in you.

Musical Response

Santo Santo Santo

Traditional Argentine



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 thank you, generous God, for the nourishment of this table and the living presence of Christ among us. We thank you for the gift of growth and grace in this life-renewing feast. We thank you for the company of your great cloud of witnesses, here in this place, in every land, and throughout the generations. Take your gathered people and scatter us again into the world — renewed, invigorated, and committed — that, so nourished, we may take root and bear life-giving fruit to feed, heal, clothe, and comfort, in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Lord, You Give the Great Commission

CH459

*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

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.

Some of this morning's liturgy comes from the following sources:

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ Global Ministries resources for the 2025 celebration of World Communion Sunday.

Increase Our Faith: Service Prayers for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, October 5

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle; World Communion Sunday

11:30 a.m. Capital Campaign Committee

Monday, October 6

6:30 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal

Tuesday, October 7

10:30 a.m. Monthly service at MCNR

5:30 p.m. Advent planning meeting (downstairs)

5:30 p.m. Worth Fighting For (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, October 8

1:00 p.m. Book Group

5:00 p.m. Meditation Group

Thursday, October 9

5:00 p.m. Ministry Teams & Governing Board potluck/meeting

Saturday, October 11

12:30 p.m. Girl Scouts

The following items are still needed for our Church World Service Health Kits:

- 25 bath-size bar soap (in original packaging)
- 41 travel size deodorant (3.4 oz or less, non-aerosol)
- 40 travel size lotion (3.4 oz or less, new only, fragrance-free)
- 35 travel size shampoo (3.4 oz or less, new only)
- 35 travel size toothpaste (3.4 oz or less, expiration date 1 year or more)
- 36 sturdy wide tooth combs (6" minimum teeth)

These items can be put in the basket at the front of the Sanctuary, near the name tag table.

For Everyone Born



1. For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,
2. For wo - man and man, a place at the ta - ble,
3. For young and for old, a place at the ta - ble,
4. For just and un - just, a place at the ta - ble,
5. For ev - every-one born, a place at the ta - ble,



for ev - ery - one born, clean wa - ter and bread,
and all those be - tween, be - yond, and be - sides;
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
a chance to re - pent, re - form, and re - build.
to live with - out fear, and sim - ply to be.



a shel - ter, a space, a safe place for grow - ing,
ex - pand - ing our world, dis - man - tle - ing pow - er,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrin - kled,
pro - tect - ing the wronged, with - out shame or pres - sure,
to work, to speak out, to wit - ness and wor - ship,



for ev - ery - one born, a star o - ver - head.
each val - ued for what their voice can pro - vide.
for young and for old, the right to be - long.
for just and un - just, God's vi - sion ful - filled.
for ev - every-one born, the right to be free.

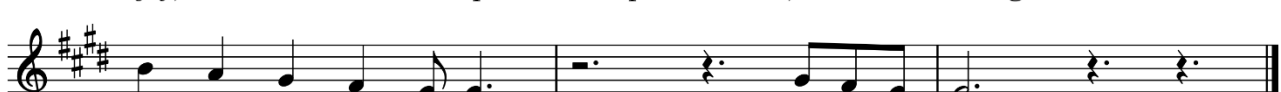
Refrain



And God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and



joy, com - pas - sion and peace. Yes, God will de - light when we are cre



-a - tors of jus - tice, jus - tice and joy.

TEXT: Shirley Erena Murray, 1998; adapted by Avery Arden

MUSIC: Brian Mann, 2006

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