



**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](http://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

**November 23, 2025**

**Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost  
Stewardship Sunday ~ Thanksgiving 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**

Karen Christianson

L: Thanksgiving Day is just a few days away...

**A: ...It is a time to call to mind all that makes us feel grateful.**

L: For some, the atmosphere will be filled with parades and football games and feasting...

**A: ...At the heart of the celebration, though, will be moments of deep appreciation.**

L: We will give thanks for the love we both give and receive...

**A: ...Within our circles of friends and family, and also as we serve and labor in our communities.**

L: We will give thanks for our country's ever-unfolding dream...

**A: ...A dream of freedom, justice, prosperity and opportunity for all.**

L: We will give thanks for Creation's wonders...

**A: ...Blue skies, majestic mountains, green meadows, crystal streams and creatures of all kinds.**

L: Most of all, we will pause in solemn thought to give thanks for our God, whose blessings never end.

**A: Let the celebration of Thanksgiving begin now...as we sing, pray, listen and worship together!**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*We Gather Together*

**CH276**

**Prayer for Transformation**

**Generous and Giving God, we are thankful for so many things as we gather together here this day. Among all of our sources of gratitude, perhaps one of the greatest is the gift of free will that you endowed in our beings at the dawning of Creation. You made us free to choose where we live, who we love, how we express our thoughts and talents, what we believe and so much more. You even gave us the free will to make unwise choices, to turn away from you and one another, to say and do things we might later regret. In the next few**

moments of sacred silence, we bring to you our feelings of thanks for the blessings of our free will, as well as our need to be forgiven and redeemed. Please be with us, Holy One, as our yearning souls reach out to you now. Amen.

*moment of silence*

### Words of Grace

Family of faith, our God also gives us the free will to become new creations — unburdened of past regrets, and empowered to be reborn! Receive the gift of transformation...and give thanks!

### \*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.

### Psalms

#### Psalm 46

- 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake  
in the heart of the sea,  
3 Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. *Selah*  
4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.  
5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.  
6 The nations are in an uproar; the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice; the earth melts.  
7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*  
8 Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.  
9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.  
10 "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."  
11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

### Epistle

#### Colossians 1:11-20

1:11 May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, 16 for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things

have been created through him and for him. **17** He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18** He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. **19** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**Reflection**

“The Transfer Switch”

Rev. Chuck Ericson

**Hymn**

*God, Whose Giving Knows no Ending*

**CH606**

**A Poem**

**This Day We Say Grateful**

Julie Menard

*by Jan Richardson*

*It is a strange thing  
to be so bound  
and so released  
all in the same moment,  
to feel the heart  
open wide  
and wider still  
even as it turns  
to take its leave.  
On this day,  
let us say  
this is simply the way  
love moves  
in its ceaseless spiraling,  
turning us toward  
one another,  
then sending us  
into what waits for us  
with arms open wide to us  
in welcome  
and in hope.  
On this day,  
in this place  
where you have  
poured yourself out,  
where you have been  
emptied  
and filled  
and emptied again,  
may you be aware  
more than ever  
of what your heart  
has opened to  
here,  
what it has tended  
and welcomed  
here,*

*where it has broken  
in love and in grief,  
where it has given  
and received blessing  
in the unfathomable mystery  
that moves us,  
undoes us,  
and remakes us  
finally  
for joy.  
This day  
may you know  
this joy  
in full measure.  
This day  
may you know  
this blessing  
that gathers you in  
and sends you forth  
but will not  
forget you.  
O hear us  
as this day  
we say  
grace;  
this day  
we say  
grateful;  
this day  
we say  
blessing;  
this day  
we release you  
in God's keeping  
and hold you  
in gladness  
and love.*

### Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price

9 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.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the staff, with a small '9' at the beginning. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics, ending with a double bar line.

### 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.**

### Moment for Stewardship – A Season of Thankfulness

Steve Lane

#### Invitation to Generosity

When we place our faith in God, darkness is transferred to light, loneliness is transferred to community, and emptiness is transferred to fullness. So it is with our giving. Through the ministries of our beloved church, supported by our gifts and pledges, despair is transferred to hope, conflict is transferred to peace, prejudice is transferred to justice and hatred is transferred to love. May we be generous and glad as we present our offerings to God, believing that the lives of those we serve may be blessed in these ways.

*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

Erik Haeger

#### \*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!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The lyrics are written below the staff. A small '5' is at the beginning of the second staff. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics, ending with a double bar line.

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

God of all that is good and pure, we ask you to bless the offerings that we bring to you this day, and also the gifts of our time and talents that we devote to serving you and our neighbors throughout the week. Accept our thanks for the joy and satisfaction we receive through our giving. Amen.

**\*Closing Hymn**

*For the Fruit of All Creation*

PH714

**\*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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Our Cantor today is Laurel Thurman.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall following worship for Coffee Hour,  
hosted by Laurel Thurman and Cheryl Chase.

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**THE WEEK AHEAD**

Sunday, November 23	10:15 a.m. Worship and Worship Circle 1:30 p.m. WAIM Walk for Warmth (St. Joseph's Church, Willimantic)
Monday, November 24	6:30 p.m. Take Note rehearsal
Wednesday, November 26	1:00 p.m. Book Group
Thursday, November 27	HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
Sunday, November 30	10:15 a.m. First Sunday of Advent 6:00 p.m. Christmas Tree Lighting