



**First Church of Christ in Mansfield  
(Congregational) United Church of Christ**

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church  
The Rev. Don Erickson, Pastor  
Erik Haeger, Organist  
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator  
Mandy Boukus, Office Assistant

**May 10, 2026 – Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**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!*

*Privacy Notice: Our worship service is made available digitally for those who cannot attend in person. Footage from this service may also be used in marketing materials for our community. If you do not wish to have your likeness recorded, streamed, or photographed please inform a Greeter who can seat you appropriately.*

**Playing the Chimes**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Prelude**

Erik Haeger

**Call to Worship**

Gary Cote

Behold, God is our Mother, our Brother,  
our Savior, and our deepest Love.

**We are held in the goodness of God,  
more closely than our own clothes or skin.**

Come, let us bring our weariness and our wonder,  
for in our quietest seeking, God is found.

**For in God's love, our life is everlasting.**

Do not be afraid, for love is our Lord's meaning.

**And all shall be well, and all shall be well,  
and all manner of thing shall be well.**

**Let us worship God in love.**

**Silent Prayer of Confession**

**Words of Forgiveness** (in unison)

**As we give to you, O God, our vulnerability,  
may we know you do not look at us with blame,  
but with the tender compassion of a loving parent.  
Thank you for making our waywardness  
stepping stones to understanding your goodness and your grace.  
Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 66:8-10, 12b-20

*We, your people, bless you, our God;  
 let the sound of your praise be heard,  
 you, who have kept us among the living  
 and have not let our feet slip.  
 For you, O God, have tested us;  
 you have tried us as silver is tried...  
 we went through fire and through water;  
 yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.  
 I will come into your house with costly gifts;  
 I will pay you my vows,  
 those that my lips uttered  
 and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.  
 I will [offer you my selfless reverence]. Selah*

*I will call out to those [awestruck by] God,  
 and I will tell them what you have done for me.  
 I cried aloud to you,  
 and extolled you with my words.  
 If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,  
 you would not have listened.  
 But truly you have listened;  
 you have heard the words of my prayer.  
 Blessed be you, O God,  
 you who have not rejected my prayer  
 or removed your steadfast love from me.*

\*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.

Gospel Reading

John 15:4-13

*“4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. 6 Whoever*

does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup> "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

### Pastoral Meditation

"Christian Mysticism: Julian of Norwich"

Rev. Don Erickson

### Call to Sharing and 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.

### Pastoral Prayer

#### Prayers of the People

#### The Prayer of Jesus

*Please pray with 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/those who trespass against us.  
 Lead us not into/Help us yield not to temptation,  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom,  
 and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

#### Invitation to Generosity

#### Offertory

Erik Haeger

#### Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

Laurel Thurman

**Gracious God, true Vine, we offer these gifts as branches connected to you. As we give, we pray that your words remain in us, transforming these offerings into fruit that lasts. Prune our hearts from selfishness, and help us to embody the sacrificial love of Jesus, laying**

down our resources to serve others. May these gifts reveal your joy in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

**\*Closing Hymn**

*Mothering God, You Gave Us Birth*

Text: Julian of Norwich, ca. 1400; Paraphrase, Jean Janzen

Tune: QUEBEC

1. Moth-er-ing God, you gave me birth in the bright morn-ing of this world.  
2. Moth-er-ing Christ, you took my form, of-fer - ing me your food of light,  
3. Moth-er-ing Spir - it, nur - turing one, in arms of pa - tience hold me close,

Cre - a - tor, Source of ev - ery breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.  
grain of my life, and grape of love, your ve - ry bo - dy for my peace.  
so that in faith I root and grow un - til I flower, un - til I know.

Text: Julian of Norwich, ca. 1400; adapted by Jean Wiebe Janzen ©1991, Augsburg Fortress Publishers. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-706926

**\*Poetry Prayer**

from "Showings"

by Julian of Norwich

And in this he showed me a little thing  
the quantity of a hazelnut,  
lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed.  
And it was as round as any ball.  
I looked upon it with the eye of my understanding,  
and thought, 'What may this be?'  
And it was answered generally thus,  
"It is all that is made."  
I marveled how it might last,  
for I thought it might  
suddenly have fallen to nothing  
for littleness.  
And I was answered in my understanding:  
It lasts and ever shall, for God loves it.  
And so have all things their beginning  
by the love of God.  
In this little thing I saw three properties.  
The first is that God made it.  
The second that God loves it.  
And the third, that God keeps it.

## \*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 greeter this morning is Tatyana Dominique.  
Our cantor is Laurel Thurman.  
Coffee hour is hosted by Carol Drescher.  
***Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!***

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## THE WEEK AHEAD...

<b>Monday, May 11</b>	6:30 pm Take Note! Rehearsal
<b>Tuesday, May 12</b>	6:00 pm Community Choir sectional
<b>Wednesday, May 13</b>	1:00 pm Book Group 5:00 pm Meditation Group
<b>Thursday, May 14</b>	6:00 pm Governing Board

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## Spring Sermon Series

### Mysticism: An Ancient Way Made New

Rev Don will examine Christian mysticism and what it might mean for us and our spiritual lives.

**May 10:** Unknowability of God

**May 17:** Limitless Love of God

**May 24:** Simplicity of Life in God

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