



**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
Erik Haeger, Organist
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator
Mandy Boukus, Office Assistant

June 28, 2026

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!

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.

Gathering Music

All Blues, by Miles Davis

FCC Jazz Quintet

Playing the Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Come Sunday, by Duke Ellington

FCC Jazz Quintet

Call to Worship (*Inspired by Psalm 13 & Matthew 10*)

How long, O Lord? We look out at a world in need of your peace.

But we trust in your unfailing love; our hearts rejoice in your salvation!

Christ calls us to this place. He tells us: "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me."

We come ready to welcome one another, to listen deeply, and to seek God's vision.

Let us sing to the Lord, for God has been good to us!

Let us worship God together!

***Opening Hymn**

In Loving Partnership

CH 497

Poetry Prayer

Wild Geese, by Mary Oliver

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Merciful God, we confess that we often treat church life like worldly enterprise. We worry more about scarcities than your abundance. We allow differences of opinion to cloud our covenant of love. Forgive us when we hold back our 'cups of cold water' from those who need them. Turn us back to you. Renew our passion for ministry, reshape our communal life, and grant us the courage to be a public, brave voice for your love. Amen.

(Silence)

Assurance of Grace

Hear the good news from the Apostle Paul: We are no longer under the law of fear, but under the law of grace! In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven, redeemed, and equipped to do good work.

Thanks be to God!

*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 133

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,

which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

Gospel Reading

Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Reflection

Who Are We?

Cheryl Chase

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

Pastoral Prayer

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

We are called together not as isolated individuals, but as a vibrant, interconnected community. Everything we have—our time, our talents, and our resources—flows from the boundless generosity of a loving God. As we prepare to bring our offerings forward, let us remember that our gifts are seeds. Together, they transform this church into a sanctuary of welcome, a source of nourishment for those in need, and a powerful force for justice in our wider world. Let us share what we have with joy and a deep gratitude for the community we build together

Offertory

God Bless the Child, by Billie Holliday

FCC Jazz Quintet

***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 (in unison)**

Gracious and Bountiful God, you have woven us together into a community of faith, calling us to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world. We return to you a portion of the vast blessings you have poured out on us. We pray that our collective generosity does not stop at these walls, but spills over into our neighborhoods and the wider world. Bless these gifts, and may they strengthen our spirits, feed the hungry, comfort the hurting, and empower us to build a more just and loving community for all. In the spirit of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Just a Closer Walk With Thee
FCC Jazz Quintet and Congregation

CH557

Poetry Blessing

Benediction

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

Call to Worship, Prayer for Transformation and Assurance of Grace combines resources from the UCC ONA Coalition for Sunday, June 28, 2026 (Open & Affirming Sunday) and UCC Worship Ways and Presbyterian USA liturgies for an annual meeting day.

Our greeter this morning is Lisa Peterson-Blinn.

Our cantor is Laurel Thurman.

Our Digital Minister is Deb Hubbell.

Coffee hour is hosted by David Darnell & Gary Cote.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!

THE WEEK AHEAD...

Sunday, June 28

11:30 am Congregational Meeting

Wednesday, July 1

5:00 pm Mediation Group

Thursday, July 2

9:30 am Sewing & Service

Our June Congregational Meeting will take place on TODAY in Fellowship Hall immediately following worship.

Welcome to Jazz Sunday at First Church

June 28, 2026

We are a music-loving church, and jazz, America's musical gift to the world, is an important part of our musical heritage. Today we are presenting four significant jazz pieces that we believe will enhance our worship experience and remind us how jazz has been intimately tied to worship, especially in the Black church. We hope they will be a spiritual gift for you.

Pre-worship warm-up – As we wait for our service to begin, the ensemble will jam on Miles Davis's "All Blues." This tune first appeared on the 1959 album *Kind of Blue*. The blues was long condemned by churches White and Black as "the devil's music." Over time, the blues and especially gospel have become far more entwined with spiritual practices. Does "All Blues" help move you in a spiritual way?

Prelude – Duke Ellington wrote "Come Sunday" in 1943 as part of a larger suite performed at Carnegie Hall on the theme of Black Americans in our national history. "Come Sunday" has entered the standard jazz repertoire and achieved prominence with a recording by Mahalia Jackson in 1958. It cemented Ellington's standing as a great American composer and clearly established Black composers on equal footing with their white counterparts.

Offertory – Billie Holliday, one of America's pioneering jazz vocalists, wrote "God Bless the Child" with composer Arthur Herzog in 1939 and recorded it in 1941. Holiday traced the song and its title to an argument with her mother over money during which she said, "God bless the child that's got his own." The very first lines of the song evoke the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. How do you feel about this song?

Closing hymn – We'll end with a New Orleans classic, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." The song is thought to date back well into the 19th century and is frequently played as part of traditional New Orleans jazz funerals. We are inspired by the version recorded in the 1960s by the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, featuring a great vocal by pianist and singer Sweet Emma Barrett. Closer Walk is in the Chalice Hymnal, number 557, and we will cue you when it is time to join us in this final song of our Jazz Sunday!

Thank you for the opportunity to share our music today:

Howard Drescher, Carol Drescher, Bobbi Giardina, Erik Haeger, Paul Tanner

Summer Worship at First Church

While our church leadership lines up pulpit supply for summer worship, we're looking for everyone to lend a hand. Please sign up for the various Sunday roles (greeters, readers, musical offering, communion servers, coffee hour) on the clipboard at the front of the sanctuary.

Also, if you are willing to plan and lead a service, please let a member of the Ministry of Spiritual Life know (David Darnell, Bobbi Giardina, Laurel Thurman.) There are many worship resources available to guide you if you are interested. So far we have:

June 28	Cheryl Chase
July 5	Deb Hubbell
July 12	Julie Menard
July 19	Karen Christianson
July 26	
August 2	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster
August 9	
August 16	Rev. Chuck Ericson
August 23	Bobbi Giardina
August 30	Ministry of Spiritual Life (Hymn Sing Sunday)