



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

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

Amanda Boukus, Office Assistant

August 2, 2026 ~ Communion Sunday

Today's Worship Leader: The Rev. Dr. Susan J. Foster

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

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Call to Worship

Dave Latrico

One: Blessed are those who trust in God.

All: We draw our strength from our Creator, like a tree planted by the water.

One: We send our roots by the stream, drawing nourishment from God who loves us.

All: We shall not fear – even in hard times.

One: When challenges come, we will stand tall, trusting that God will provide.

All: Come, let us worship God who deserves our thanks and praise. Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale

CH 70

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

God of generosity and new life, we come before you in need of the gifts you so freely provide. Forgive us when we fail to trust in your presence and mercy.

Expand our vision so that we can see beyond the circumstances in front of us.

Help us to place our trust in you so that we may not only receive your grace but also share your bounty with all those in need. Amen.

Words of Grace

Hear the Good News! In the midst of chaos, God offers peace and blessing. Instead of guilt, God provides peace and forgiveness. We are created new each day by God who

names us beloved children. We are loved and we are forgiven. Let us rejoice in these gifts and extend that mercy to others. Amen.

***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 end, 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.

Scripture Reading

Psalm 145:8–9, 14–21

The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.
The Lord upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.
The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.
The Lord is just in all his ways
and kind in all his doings.
The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.
The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 14:13–21

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and

cured their sick. ¹⁵ When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶ Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat."

They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸ And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And all ate and were filled, and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Reflection

Blessing and sharing

The Rev. Susan J. Foster

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 and the Lord's Prayer

You are invited to pray in whatever language is most comfortable for you. The following offers examples:

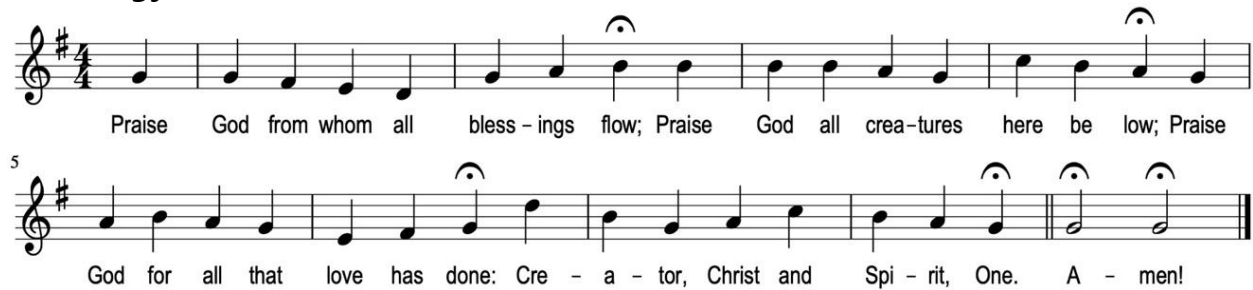
**Our Father/Mother/Creator,
who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts/sins/trespases,
as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/tresspass against us.
And lead us not into/help us 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

*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

Holy One, bless these gifts. May they feed the hungry, welcome the migrant, and provide rest to those weary of carrying heavy burdens. Use our resources and use us to spread the hope and new life of your Gospel. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

~ The Service of Holy Communion ~

Invitation to the Table

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Open up your hearts.

We open them up to God and one another.

Let us give thanks to God, the Creator of all.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Let us continue in the spirit of prayer:

Musical Response

Santo Santo Santo

Traditional Argentine



San - to, san - to, san - to. Mi co - ra - zon te a - do - ra! Mi
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you! My
5 co - ra - zon te sa - be de - cir: San - to eres, Se - nor!
heart knows how to say to you: Ho - ly are you, Lord!

Sharing the Bread and Cup

All are welcome at Christ's table; we offer non-alcoholic juice and gluten-free bread.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (unison)

Loving and generous God, thank you for welcoming us to your table and blessing us with your presence. Filled with your gifts and your Spirit, empower us to share your love and blessing with your children near and far. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

Now Thank We All our God

CH 715

***Benediction**

***Passing the Peace**

May the peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of that peace.

Postlude

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.

Our Greeters today are Ava Little and Deb Richards.
Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.
Our Communion Servers are David Darnell, Gary Coté,
Karen Christianson, and Julie Menard.
Coffee Hour is hosted by David Darnell and Gary Coté.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!

About our visiting minister:

Rev. Dr. Susan J. Foster (Sue) is a writer, preacher, retreat leader, counselor, wife, mother, volunteer chaplain, daughter, sister, friend. Sue graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary (MDiv) and Hartford International Seminary (DMin). Her doctoral thesis focused on theologies of hospitality and how to live out the inclusive Spirit of our welcoming God. After serving the East Woodstock Congregational Church (UCC) for 36 years, Sue has stepped away from active parish ministry and is enjoying exploring retirement.

About Communion at First Church

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 the First Church of Christ in Mansfield. Christ's table is open to 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.

Special Communion Sunday Offering

An envelope labeled **Blessing Box** is included in your bulletin on Communion Sundays (every first Sunday of the month.) You may place donations in this envelope and drop it into the offering plate during worship. Every contribution goes directly toward purchasing food for our pantry.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wednesday, August 5	5 p.m. Meditation Group
Thursday, August 6	9:30 a.m. Sewing & Service 4 p.m. Administry team meeting

Worship Leaders for August:

August 9	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster
August 16	Rev. Chuck Ericson
August 23	Bobbi Giardina
August 30	Laurel Thurman

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8/01 Gen Beebe
8/01 Dan Truman
8/02 Paul Tanner
8/03 Phoebe Hall
8/05 Frankie Wunschel
8/07 Lorraine Foster
8/09 David Darnell
8/10 Barbara Dobrocki
8/12 Carol Phelps
8/14 James Russell
8/15 James Puccini
8/23 Diane Wright
8/25 Lois Happe
8/31 Erik Haeger

Cleaning Crew Schedule

The crew from Servitium will conduct their weekly cleaning on Fridays from 2:30-4:30 pm. If you have a late afternoon event scheduled for a Friday, please be in touch with Jean Bell so she can alert the cleaners.

Reminders for Church Entry and Building Security

Our safety team recently noticed a couple of safety issues regarding our exterior doors. Please review these reminders to help keep our church community and building safe:

- **Brown's Road Lockbox:** If you use the lockbox to enter, please secure the key **before** you walk into the building. Hold the door open, re-lock it, return the key to the box, close it, and **scramble the numbers immediately**. Leaving the combination visible/unscrambled compromises our building security.
- **South Parking Lot Double Doors:** Please remember to always use the designated side of the double doors. The side marked **"Use Other Door"** does not fully close on its own, often leaving the door unlatched and the building vulnerable to unauthorized entry.