



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

THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME + JUNE 13, 2021

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250

860.423.9008 + www.myfcc.info

All the Members, Ministers + Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor
Sarah Kaufold, Choir Director + Erik Haeger, Organist

Greeting

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Opening Hymn Come Ye Thankful People Come

*Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, does provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.*

*All the blessings of the field,
all the stores the gardens yield,
all the fruits in full supply,
ripened 'neath the summer sky,
all that spring with bounteous hand
scatters o'er the smiling land,
all that liberal autumn pours
from its rich o'erflowing stores,*

*These to thee, my God, we owe,
source whence all our blessings flow;
and for these my soul shall raise
grateful vows and solemn praise.
Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.*

Call to Healing and Opening Prayer

In our Hebrew Bible story the Lord sends Samuel to anoint David to be the new king over Israel. God has rejected Saul as king, but he remains in power and Samuel must go secretly on his mission. As so often happens in the Bible, one who seems least likely in the eyes of others is chosen by God to carry out the divine will.

Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one."

When in this past week have we judged by outward appearance?
When have we failed to look on another's heart?

Let us pray.

**Mighty God, to you belong the mysteries of the universe.
You transform shepherds into kings,
the smallest seeds into magnificent trees,
and hardened hearts into loving ones.
Bless us with your life-giving Spirit, re-create us in your image,**

Gloria Patri

Glo - ry to the Cre - a - tor, and to the Christ, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be -

gin - ning, is now, and ev er shall be, world with - out end. A - men, a - men.

Sacred Scripture Mark 4:26-34

[Jesus] also said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come." He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Reflection

Call to Prayer Hear Us O Lord



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.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that the seed of faith planted in the heart of each believer may grow into a bountiful manifestation of God's reign in the world

For a renewal of faith: that the Spirit will enable us to live in a trusting reliance with God who is always faithful and who desires to share life with us

For growth in hope: that God's faithful love will sustain us in times of discouragement and empower us to persevere through difficult times with the confidence that God makes all things new

For the tender shoots in our midst: that God will give abundant growth for the young, to those new to the faith, and those beginning their ministry and guide them to maturity of faith and service

For the sick: that God will bless and strengthen those preparing for or recovering from surgery, restore them to health, and fill their hearts with peace

For all who are in need: that God will give strength to those struggling with addictions, protection to runaway youth and refugees, and comfort to the isolated and the grieving

For the human family: that God will strengthen those who are working to defeat the Covid virus, heal places where division thrives, and bring justice where racism, homophobia, sexism, and economic disparity hold sway.

For public officials: that God will help them to fulfill their duties, seek the truth and the common good in all the issues that arise, and be open to learning from one another

For peace: that God will help world leaders to dialogue honestly so that violence may end, the weak and innocent may be protected, and that the dignity of each person may be respected.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ, who taught us to pray, saying...

**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.**

Offering Chime Suite: Hope

As we share this musical offering, I invite you to hold your financial offering in your hand, envisioning the ministry and mission it will enable in the days ahead. At the conclusion of worship, please place your offering in the mail. (First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250) or go to www.myfcc.info)

Benediction Living Resurrection

I wonder what might grow this week with just a mustard seed of faith...

of hope...
of justice...
of compassion
Not a quart of it,
not a gallon,
nor a truckload,
not even a whole field but
Just a mustard seed.
I wonder...
Now go and live out that grace,
that faith,
that hope,
that justice,
that compassion.
Yes! Let it be so! Amen!

May peace be with you, Beloved of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

About This Morning's Hymn. *Come, Ye Thankful People Come* was written in rural England in the mid-nineteenth century by Henry Alford, when the life of the village during the winter depended on the bounty of the autumn harvest. While the first stanza of this hymn rejoices over the harvest, the last stanzas expound on Jesus' parables in Mark 4:26-29 (today's focus Scripture) and in Matthew 13. The hymn concludes with a prayer that the final harvest at His Second Coming would happen soon.

WAIM Back to School Program provides vouchers from WAIM to eligible school families for school clothing and uniforms. Last year we assisted 401 students returning to classes with a brand new uniform or outfit for the first day of school. The BTS program assists Windham/Willimantic area families who are struggling financially and need to purchase uniforms or school clothes. Families and receive vouchers later so that each child will have a uniform,/new outfit for the first day of school. Vouchers are for \$25 per child. If you would like to donate to this program you can send a check to WAIM/BTS at P.O. Box 221, Willimantic, CT

The **No Freeze Shelter** is in need of sunscreen, insect repellent and camping supplies in these warm months when many without homes are camping.

First Church Giving Opportunities

1st Sunday of the Month- Supportive Friends Sunday

- First Church Deacon's fund
- The Community Meal program
- "Love Offerings" honoring our friends and family

2nd Sunday of the Month- Sheltering Sunday

- Holy Family Shelter & the No-Freeze Shelter
- Our First Church Building fund

3rd Sunday of the Month- Sustenance Sunday

Welcoming gifts of food items and funds for:

- The Soup Kitchen
- Our First Church Blessing Box
- Tuna Church for Access Agency

4th Sunday of the Month- School & Service Sunday:

- Items for Church World Service School Kits and Hygiene Kits

CALENDAR

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| Sunday, June 13 | 10:15am Worship on the lawn |
| Wednesday, June 16 | 10:30am Book Group on the lawn |
| Thursday, June 17 | 6:30pm Spirituality of Spirituals with Sarah on the lawn
7:30pm Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary |
| Sunday, June 20 | 10:15am Worship with Holy Communion on the lawn |