



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

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All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME + AUGUST 29, 2021

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 and Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Hymn

Wonderful Words of Life

CH323

Sing them o - ver a - gain to me, won - der - ful words of life;
Christ, the bless - ed one, gives to all, won - der - ful words of life;
Sweet - ly ech - o the gos - pel call, won - der - ful words of life;

5
let me more of their beau - ty see, won - der - ful words of life.
sin - ner, list to the lov - ing call, won - der - ful words of life.
9 of - fer pard - on and peace to all, won - der - ful words of life.

13
Words of life and beau - ty, teach me faith and du - ty;
All so free - ly giv - en, woo - ing us to heav - en;
Je - sis on - ly Sav - ior, sanc - ti - fy for - ev - er;

17
beau - ti - ful words, won - der - ful words, won - der - ful words of life,
beau - ti - ful words, won - der - ful words, won - der - ful words of life.

Call to Healing and Opening Prayer

Hear these words from the Letter of James to the Whole Church: Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of God's own purpose God gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of all creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for

your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act--they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

When in this past week have we been quick to speak and slow to listen?

When have we not been doers of the word?

When have we failed to care for those most in need?

Let us pray.

**Blessed are you, O Lord and Lover, source of beauty and depth of passion.
Strengthen and inspire us to do the word we hear and live the faith we
confess. Amen.**

Gloria Patri

Henry W. Greatorex

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Glo - ry to the Cre - a - tor, the Christ, the Ho - ly Spi - rit, Three - in - One; as it
was in the be - gin-ning, is now and ev - er shall be, world with-out end. A - men. A - men.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The lyrics are written below the notes. A small number '7' is written below the first measure of the second staff. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes D5, E5, F#5, and G5, followed by a double bar line. The lyrics continue below the notes.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 115

O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

**Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from
their heart;**

who do not slander with their tongue, and do no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach
against their neighbors;

**in whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honor those who fear the
LORD; who stand by their oath even to their hurt;**

who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be moved.

Gospel

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered
around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without

washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile." For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

Reflection

Joseph Blotz

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Beisig and Nancy Price

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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.

For all who hand on the faith, particularly preachers, teachers, and parents: that they may share the faith clearly and convincingly, and lead others into an experience of God's great love

For conversion from our hypocrisies: that we may recognize where we say one thing and live by another so that we may come to greater integrity and wholeness

For all who have experienced the evil of human hearts: that God will heal the pain of those who have experienced abuse, discrimination, or human trafficking and fill them with hope for the future

For all who are suffering from natural disasters and for those assisting them: that God will calm the wildfires, help the people of Haiti to recover, and sustain all who are helping them

For refugees and displaced persons, particularly those fleeing Afghanistan: that God will guide them to safety, protect them on their journeys, and help them find welcome in new communities

For greater respect for and stewardship of earth's resources: that we may treasure the natural resources that God has given us and wisely use them for the good of the human family

For an end to the pandemic: that God will curtail the surge in the Covid virus, send healing to all who are ill, and give strength and courage to all medical personnel

For safety in schools: that God will watch over all schools, protect students from the Covid virus, violence, and bullying, and help all to grow in knowledge and self-awareness

For peace: that the Spirit will renew the dedication of those working for peace and help all to work together to defeat the common enemies of disease, ignorance, and poverty

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is most 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.**

Musical Offering

Adagio from Sonata in D

Franz Joseph Hayden

offered by Cheryl Chase and Laurel Thurman

*Offerings may be placed in the collection boxes at the entrances to our worship space,
mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250,
or given online at www.myfcc.info*

Doxology

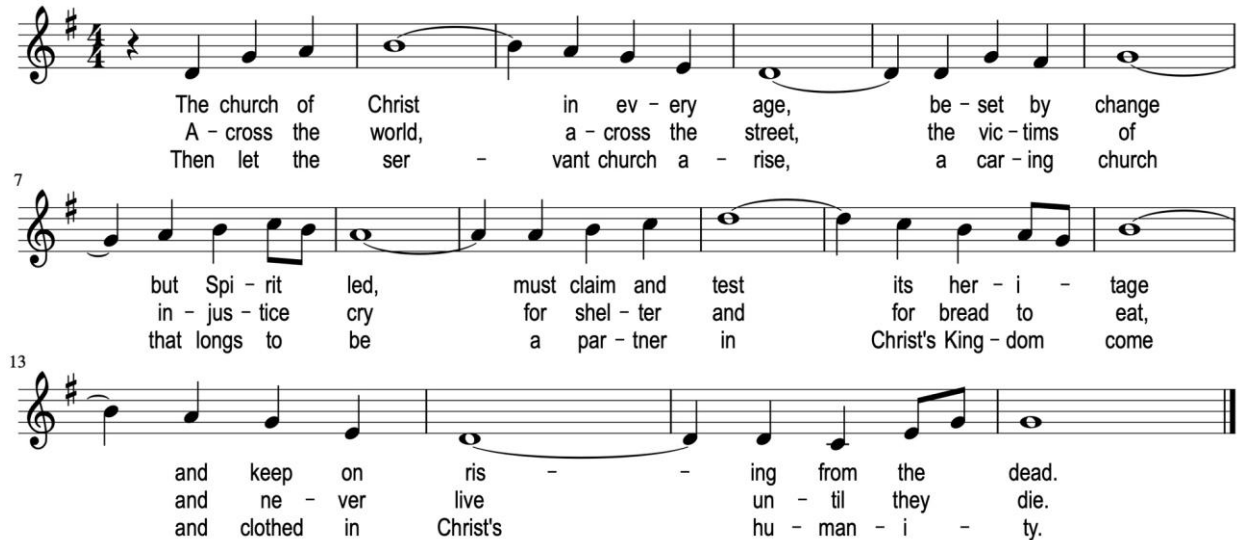
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here be low; Praise
5 God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

Prayer of Dedication

Let us pray.

Generous, transforming God, thank you for the blessing of these gifts which life and labor have brought into our hands to share with those in need. We dedicate them now as an expression of your love for the world, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn The Church of Christ in Every Age Fred Green/Waly Waly



The church of Christ in every age, be-set by change
A-cross the world, a-cross the street, the vic-tims of
Then let the ser-vant church a- rise, a car-ing church
7 but Spi-rit led, must claim and test its her-i-tage
in-jus-tice cry for shel-ter and for bread to eat,
that longs to be a par-tner in Christ's King-dom come
13 and keep on ris-ing from the dead.
and ne-ver live un-til they die.
and clothed in Christ's hu-man-i-ty.

Benediction and Blessing of the Devices

Let's take a moment to welcome God's Spirit into all of the adjustments we have made to our lives and our ways of learning so that we may stay safe and keep our loved ones safe from Covid-19.

May the Holy Spirit come into our lives and release our attachment to the way things used to be as we feel the weight of our electronic device in our hands or on our laps. We can use that weight to ground us and center us making our connection to the earth sturdier.

May the Holy Spirit open our hearts to gratitude for all of the creativity, and resources, and human labor that went into making this device functional for us.

May the Spirit inspire a moment of awe and wonder for the ways that we are invisibly connected through electricity and wi-fi and 3G and 4G, Bluetooth.

May the Spirit help us to remember that it is not the device that has value; the value is found in the connections which the device allows us to sustain.

May the Holy Spirit set before us all of those people with whom we have connected virtually in this time of physical distance and hold their presence in our hearts.

Blessings for the new school year. (adapted from Dayna Edwards)

CALENDAR

Sunday, August 29 10:15am Worship

Monday, August 30 10am First Church leads Worship at St. Joseph Living Center

Wednesday, August 31 10:30am Book Group on the lawn

Sunday, September 5 10:15am Worship

Looking Ahead...

Sunday, September 12, Worship Circle will be back! Olivia Russel will be leading an interactive faith formation for students in elementary and middle school. Students will gather before Worship either outside or downstairs, depending on the weather.

Also September 12, Avery Lenhart and Curtis Ehler from the No Freeze Project will be with us to share in Worship about the work they are doing and the possibility of housing those without homes in churches like ours for several weeks throughout the winter.

Tuesday, September 14 at 6pm on Zoom Adult Faith Formation will resume, as Cheryl and Laurel lead us in watching and reflecting on Professor Amy Jill Levine's series on the Sermon on the Mount.