



**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](http://www.myfcc.info)

All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

**THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT + MARCH 20, 2022**

**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**

**Centering in Silence and Song**

*Bless the Lord*

*Taize*

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life

**Greeting and Welcome**

**Opening Hymn**

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*

CH86

**Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer**

Hear these words from Paul's Letter to the Church in Corinth: I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

When in this past week have we failed to see all as brothers and sisters?  
When have we been unaware of God's presence in our lives?

*Silence*

**God of infinite goodness, throughout the ages you have persevered in claiming and reclaiming your people. Renew for us your call to repentance, surround us with witnesses to aid us in our journey, and**

grant us the time to fashion our lives anew, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

**Song of Praise**

*Gloria*

Christopher Grundy

Glo - ry to the Cre-a - tor, and the Christ, and the Spir-it so near, as it  
9  
was from the start so it shall be for - ev-er one God, al-ways here.

**Hebrew Scripture**

Isaiah 55:1-9

Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Psalter**

Psalm 63

Michael Joncas

My soul is thir - sting, my soul is thir - sting,  
5  
my soul is thir - sting for you O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you;  
**my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.**

So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

**Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.**

**R**

So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

**My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,**

**and my mouth praises you with joyful lips when I think of you on my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night;**

for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

**My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. R**

### **Gospel**

Luke 13:1-9

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them--do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

### **Reflection**

#### **Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus**

For the Church: that the Holy Spirit will nurture and renew us so that we may bear the abundant fruits of virtue and vibrant discipleship

For greater stewardship of creation: that we may fulfill God's commission to care for the earth, water, and air that God has created for the good of all the human family

For all government leaders: that God will help them hear the cries of those who are suffering, inspire them with new insights to address the needs, and be moved to actions

For an end to war and violence: that God will empower us to challenge those who are using violence, open new opportunities for dialogue between conflicting parties, and help them find ways that will benefit all people with better lives

For all who are experiencing affliction, particularly in Ukraine: that God will hear their cries, relieve their sufferings, and give them strength to remain faithful

For all who are homeless: that God will open resources for them to find affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, and helpful neighbors

For all who are ill: that the Spirit will renew the gift of life in all who are sick, give them strength to recover quickly, and guide their healthcare providers in making accurate diagnoses

For transformation of our minds and hearts: that we may embrace the Gospel message, be converted from misdirected desires, and embrace our new life in Christ

For the gift of awe: that we may reverence the holy ground on which we stand, the many blessings that we have received, our bonds of friendship, and our community of faith

*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/trespases,  
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**

*Bright Morning Stars*

arr. Jay Althouse

*Offerings may be placed in passed plates, mailed to:*

*First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC.*

*Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250, or given online at [www.myfcc.info](http://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

**Holy God, we give you thanks for the diverse gifts you have bestowed upon us. Bless us with your Spirit that they may be used to proclaim your good news in word and deed. Amen.**

## Hymn

*There's A Wideness in God's Mercy*

CH73

## Benediction

### The Week Ahead...

Sunday, March 20 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

Monday, March 21 10am First Church leads Worship at St Joseph Living Center

Tuesday, March 22 6pm Adult Education on Zoom  
7pm Prayers at the End of the Day on Facebook

Wednesday, March 23 1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, March 24 7pm Music Ministry Rehearsal

Sunday, March 27 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

Our current list for our **Church World Service Health Kits** is:

- 35 hand towels
- 5 washcloths
- 15 toothbrushes
- 28 nail clippers
- 25 bars of soap
- 180 bandaids
- 30 combs

Items may be placed in the basket in front of the Welcome Table.