



# 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

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

## THE TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + JUNE 25 2023

Chimes and Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Centering in the Spirit *a poem for the one who longs to be seen* Liezel Graham

Hymn *His Eye is On the Sparrow* CH82

### Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer

Hear these words from the Gospel according to Matthew "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!" "So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

When in this past week have we found it difficult to acknowledge our value before God?  
When have we given in to fear?

*Silence*

**God of strength and courage, in Jesus Christ you set us free from sin and death,  
and call us to the risk of faith and service. Give us grace to follow him who gave  
himself for others, that, by our service, we may find the life he came to bring.  
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  
was from the start so it shall be for - ev - er one God, al - ways here.

## Christian Scripture

Romans 6:1-11

What should we say then? Should we keep on sinning so that God's grace can increase? Not at all! As far as sin is concerned, we are dead. So how can we keep on sinning? All of us were baptized into Christ Jesus. Don't you know that we were baptized into his death? By being baptized, we were buried with Christ into his death. Christ has been raised from the dead by the Father's glory. And like Christ we also can live a new life.

By being baptized, we have been joined with him in a death like his. So we will certainly also be joined with him in a resurrection like his. We know that what we used to be was nailed to the cross with him. That happened so our bodies that were ruled by sin would lose their power. So we are no longer slaves of sin. That's because those who have died have been set free from sin.

We died with Christ. So we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ was raised from the dead and will never die again. Death doesn't control him anymore. When he died, he died once and for all time. He did this to break the power of sin. Now that he lives, he lives in the power of God.

In the same way, consider yourselves to be dead as far as sin is concerned. Now you believe in Christ Jesus. So consider yourselves to be alive as far as God is concerned.

## Psalter

Psalm 86: I Need Thee Every Hour

CH578

## Hebrew Scripture

Genesis 21:8-21

The child grew and was weaned, and Avraham made a great drinking-feast on the day that Yitzhak was weaned. Once Sara saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian-woman, whom she had borne to Avraham, laughing... She said to Avraham: Drive out this slave-woman and her son, for the son of this slave-woman shall not share-inheritance with my son, with Yitzhak! The matter was exceedingly bad in Avraham's eyes because of his son. But God said to Avraham: Do not let it be bad in your eyes concerning the lad and concerning your slave-woman; in all that Sara says to you, hearken to her voice, for it is through Yitzhak that seed will be called by your (name). But also the son of the slave-woman—a nation will I make of him, for he too is your seed. Avraham started-early in the morning, he took some bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar—placing them upon her shoulder-together with the child and sent her away She went off and roamed in the wilderness of Be'er-Sheva. Now when the water in the skin was at an end, she cast the child under one of the bushes, and went and sat by herself, at-a-distance, as far away as a bowshot, for she said to herself: Let me not see the child die! So she sat at-a-distance, and lifted up her voice and wept. But God heard the voice of the lad, God's messenger called to Hagar from heaven and said to her: What ails you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the lad there where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and grasp him with your hand, for a great nation will I make of him! God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; she went, filled the skin with water, and gave the lad to drink. And God was with the lad as he grew up, he settled in the wilderness, and became an archer, a Bowman. He settled in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took him a wife from the land of Egypt.

## Reflection

Rev. Joseph Blotz

## Call to Prayer

*Lord Listen to Your Children Praying*

CH305

9 Lord, li-sten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Lord, send your Spi-rit in this place.

Lord, lis-ten to your chi - ldren pray - ing. Sendus love, sendus power, sendus grace.

## Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that we may live in the confident assurance of God's abiding concern and providential care for us

For all who are suffering from wildfires and smoke: that God will send rain to dampen the fires, bring relief to all affected by the smoke, and protect and assist all who have fled their homes or who are fighting the fires

For all elected leaders: God will give them insight into the effects of their decisions and help them to make choices that will bring about the greatest good for society

For all who live under the threat of violence or slavery: God will strengthen them against neighborhood turmoil, gang or organized crime threats, or armed conflicts and help them to bear witness to the truth and God's redeeming love each day

For all who are grieving: that God will heal their pain, give them a new vision for life, and restore their hope for tomorrow

For a receptive spirit: that family members, neighbors, and co-workers may listen more closely and work to understand the pains, values, and goals of one another

*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.**

## Offering Hymn

*Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life*

CH665

*Financial offerings may be placed in the collection 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

**We worship you, O God, with gladness for your faithful love endures forever. In witness to this faith which we claim, we boldly give for ministry which changes people's lives in your holy name. Amen.**

Hymn

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*

CH631

### Benediction Postlude

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### The Week Ahead...

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| Sunday, June 25                     | 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle<br>Following Worship, Congregational Meeting<br>2pm Dr. AJ Levine "How and Why Jews and Christians Read the Same Texts Differently" |
| Monday, June 26-<br>Friday, June 30 | Quiet Corner Quilt Camp in Fellowship Hall   |
| Monday, June 26                     | 10am First Church leads Worship at St. Joseph Center   |
| Thursday, June 29                   | 12:15pm Contemplative Communion in Sanctuary   |
| Sunday, July 2                      | 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle   |