



*I will place my law within them
and I will write it upon their hearts*

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 TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME + OCTOBER 8, 2023

Chimes and Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Hymn

O Worship the King

CH17

Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer

Hear these words from the Gospel according to Matthew: Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

When in this past week have we experienced rejection?

When have we rejected someone else?

Silence

God, our beloved, you set before us the goal of new life in Christ. May we live in the power of his resurrection and bring forth the fruit of your gentle and loving rule. 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.

Christian Scripture

Philippians 3:4b-14

In our Christian Scripture this morning, Paul reviews some of his credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Psalter

Psalm 19

CH731

Hebrew Scripture

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

¹God spoke all these words: ²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

¹⁸When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, ¹⁹and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." ²⁰Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

Reflection

Howard Drescher

Call to Prayer

Lord Listen to Your Children Praying

CH305

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

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

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

Holy God, you call us to work for peace and justice in your vineyard. Refresh the church with your life, that we may bear fruit through work and service.

Thank you for the abundant harvest of the earth. Bless and care for those whose hands bring the fruits of the earth to the tables of all who hunger. May we be inspired by your servants who cared deeply for your creation.

Curb the impulses of greed and pride that lead us to take advantage of others. Grant that world leaders seek the fruits of the kingdom for the good and welfare of all people.

Sustain all who suffer with the promise of new life. Assured of your presence, heal our pain and suffering, and equip us to embrace all bodies aching for wholeness of mind, body, and soul. We call to mind those who are struggling today.

We pray for all managers in our community and for all who seek employment. Give hope and a future to those who lack meaningful work, those who have been marginalized or abused in the workplace, and those who desire new opportunities.

Thank you for the saints who teach us to live faithfully in your vineyard. May our chorus join theirs until our labor is complete.

At this time I invite you to add your prayers to those I have spoken. You are welcome to come forward and light a candle as a symbol of that pray, speaking it aloud into the microphone at the front if you wish.

God of every time and place, in Jesus' name and filled with your Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping.
May your word be on our lips, as we pray together as Jesus has taught us, saying,

*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

Come Down O Love Divine

CH582

*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*

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 Spirit keep us attuned to the voices around us, to those who need us to be bearers of your love and compassion; may these gifts we have given help us, through your church, meet those needs. Amen.

Hymn

It Is Well With My Soul

CH561

Benediction and Postlude

May the Lord bless us and keep us.

May God's face shine upon us and be gracious to us.

May God look upon us with kindness and grant us peace. Amen

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us share with one another some sign of the peace Christ gives.

The Week Ahead...

Sunday, October 8	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle
Monday, October 9	7-9pm Take Note rehearsal in Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, October 11	1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall
Thursday, October 12	10am First Church leads Worship at St. Joseph Living Center 12:15pm Contemplative Communion in Yellow Office 1pm Safety Team
Friday, October 13	Memorial Service Setup in Fellowship Hall
Saturday, October 14	2pm Memorial Service for Norma and Winston Hawkins
Sunday, October 15	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle 5pm PFLAG of Mansfield Tolland in Fellowship Hall