



**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

All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT + DECEMBER 24, 2023

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!*

Chimes and Prelude

Welcoming the Light

How does a weary world practice love?

By sending cards, and picking up the phone.

By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others.

By learning people's stories and finding common ground.

By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.

There are a million ways to practice love.

So today we light the candle of love as a reminder and a charge.

With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen. .1

Welcome and Greeting

Hymn

Awake Awake!

CH138

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, more days than not, hope feels like the rain. We try to hold onto it with cupped hands, but eventually, it slips right on through. Forgive us for holding hope so loosely. Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow. We know that this world needs people of hope, so today we pray: turn us into those people. Teach us how to sing Mary's song of hope for the world. With open hearts we pray, Amen.

Body of Christ, no matter how many times we let hope slip through our fingers, we still belong to God. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven. We are sent to serve. Amen.

Song of Praise

Doxology for the Weary

CRANHAM

¹ Our Words for Worship this Advent were written by the Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed



Praise the One Cre - a - tor, praise the Liv - ing Christ. Praise the Ho - ly Spi - rit,
 7 praise both day and night. Praise when you are wea - ry, praise in times of joy.
 13 Praise, my soul, with all your strength and your heart and voice.

Hebrew Scripture

Isaiah 12

You will say on that day:

“I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me,
 your anger turned away, and you comforted me.

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid,
 for the Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.”

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say on that day:

“Give thanks to the Lord; call on his name;

make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Canticle

Benedictus

CH137

Gospel

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name;

indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
 from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;
 he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
 and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things
 and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
 in remembrance of his mercy,
 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
 to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Reflection

Call to Prayer

Creator of the Stars of Night

CH127



Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo-ple's e - ver - last - ing light,
 O Christ, re-deem-er of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.

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.**

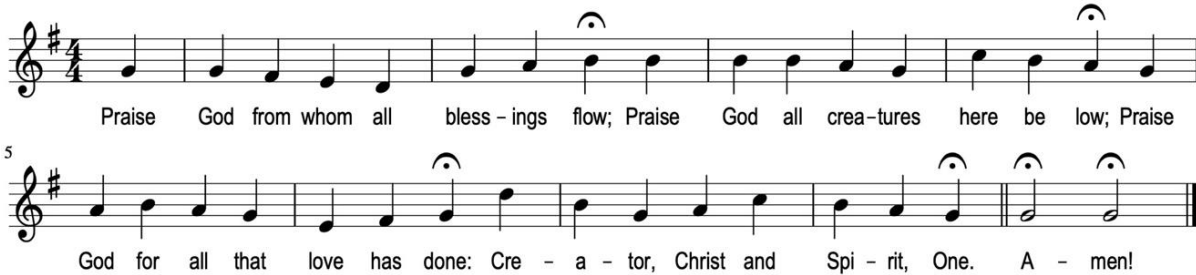
Musical Offering

Let There Be Christmas

Joseph Martin

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 bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea-tures here be low; Praise
 God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

Prayer of Dedication

**Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given, the goodwill of our hearts, that
 disappointment may be turned to hope, and worry may be turned to anticipation, as
 we await with wonder the birth of Christ. Amen.**

Hymn

People Look East

CH142

Benediction

Tree of Joy and Postlude



This Year's Christmas Poinsettias are Given...

by Mary Anne Baker in memory of the Rev. Pat Felletter

by Sandy and Don Baxter in memory of Russ Baxter

by Pam Bridgeford in memory of her mother, Ruth M. Dyer, and her friend, Adelaide Corcoran

by Cheryl Chase and Laurel Thurman in memory of Ed DiGiovanni

by the Drescher Family in blessed memory of the Rev. Pat Felletter

by Carol Fineout in honor of cherished loved ones and fond memories

by Sharon and Bob Foster-Chalecki in honor of our parents Helen and Howard Foster and Dorothy and Ted Chalecki

by Penny Guerin for Dorothy, James, Natalie, and David Guerin

by Kathy Healey and Robert Johnson in memory of Lucille Healey, Robert Healey, and Joana Healey

by Lisa Peterson-Blinn in memory of Mary Blinn, Alisha Colon, and Richard Blinn

by Deb Richards and Mark Messier in memory of George and Joyce Richards and Dick and Betty Messier

by Dale and Joy Truman in memory of Ruth Sutro and Betty Truman

in honor of the beloved members of the Waide and Wunschel families



The Week Ahead...

Sunday, December 24

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle

7pm Christmas Eve Worship with Paper Bag Pageant, Communion, and Candle Lighting

Sunday, December 31

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle