



**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 EASTER + APRIL 21, 2024

Chimes and Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia

Hymn

Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

CH222

Confessing our Brokenness and Opening Prayer

Hear these words from the First Letter of John: We know love by this, that Christ laid down his life for us--and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

When in this past week have we failed to love in truth and action?

Silence

**Shepherd of all, by laying down your life for your flock you reveal your love for all.
Lead us from the place of death to the place of abundant life, that guided by your
care for us, we may rightly offer our lives in love for you and our neighbors. Amen.**

Song of Praise

Glory to God

Paul Vasile

Glo-ry to God, whose good-ness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has
end, world with-out end, A - men. World with-out end, world with-out

par - doned me, and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free! As it was in the be-ginning, is
end, A - men. World with-out e - nd, world with-out end, A - men.

now and ev - er shall be, A - men World with-out men!

Christian Scripture

Acts 4:5-12

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Psalter

Psalm 23

CH79

Gospel

John 10:11-18

Jesus continued, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away--and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

Reflection

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price

Hear us, O Lord, as we come now in prayer, shar - ing our joys, our trou- bles, and our cares.

9

Help us, O Lord, to be o - pen to your word, and teach us to put our trust in you.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that we may distinguish the voice of the Good Shepherd from all the other messages that we hear and faithfully respond to all Christ's invitations

For greater stewardship of the earth: that God will inspire us to care for God's creation and ensure that it benefits all of God's children

For leaders of nations: that God will give them a heart like the Good Shepherd, compassion toward those who are suffering, and wisdom to develop policies that advance the common good

For an end to violence: that the Good Shepherd will protect all of God's children from random shootings, domestic violence, hate crimes, and acts of terrorism

For all who are laying down their lives in caring for sick children, the developmentally disabled, the elderly, or terminally ill: that God will renew them and fill them with energy and love

For all who are searching: that the Good Shepherd will find them and lead them to a fuller life with purpose and a sense of belonging

For all run-away teens: that the Good Shepherd will care for them and lead them to a place of safety and healing

For all who are burdened by debt in the third world: that the Good Shepherd will touch hearts and open our understanding toward the longings and hopes of all who struggle with poverty

*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

My Shepherd You Supply My Need

CH80

*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 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

Gracious God, through the resurrection of Jesus, you have shown us the power of life and love. May our offerings reflect the grace we have known and symbolize lives committed to your service. Amen.

Hymn

Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us

CH558

Benediction

The Week Ahead...

Sunday, April 21	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle 5pm PFLAG in Fellowship Hall
Monday, April 22	10am First Church Leads Worship at St Joe's
Wednesday, April 24	1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall
Thursday, April 25	12:15pm Contemplative Communion 2:30pm Church Preparedness Team 6pm CPR Training (Group 1, session 2)
Sunday, April 28	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle