



First Church of Christ in Mansfield (Congregational) United Church of Christ

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church
Erik Haeger, Organist
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

September 15, 2024 ~ Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Today's Worship Leader: Don Baxter

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

Welcome and Announcements

*Hymn

Down to the River to Pray

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Remembering Water in the Season of Creation

This month we are in the Season of Creation, thinking about our planet Earth. This morning, I invite us to reflect on the gift of Water.

Recall a special memory of water that has stirred the Spirit and created a sense of wonder. Trips to beaches. Witnessing baptisms. The waters of the womb. the rain that nourishes crops.

Let us also remember and confess that we have become alienated from water. That we have treated our planet as disposable, as a source of endless resources, as a mere stopping place enroute to heaven. For we have polluted earth's waters with toxins. We have turned our greed into global warming. We have helped cause arctic regions to melt. We have loved progress more than the planet.

We remember too, that Christ hears our confession. That he forgives our sins.

May the Spirit empower us to love this Earth as our home, to work to heal its ills, and to know Earth as precious sanctuary. 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.

Responsive Psalm

Psalm 19

The heavens declare your glory, O God, and the firmament shows your handiwork.

**One day tells its tale to another,
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard,

**Their sound has gone out into all lands,
and their message to the ends of the world.**

In the deep you have set a pavilion for the sun;
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;

**it rejoices like a champion to run its course.
It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens**

and runs about to the end of it again;
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

**Your law, O God, is perfect and revives the soul;
your testimony is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.**

Your statutes are just and rejoice the heart;
your commandment is clear and gives light to the eyes.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, O God, my strength and my redeemer.**

Gospel

Mark 8:27-38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

*Gospel Response

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

CH344

Reflection on "Thy Will Be Done"

Don Baxter

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.

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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

We pray for the church in every place, that wherever people gather in worship, you oh God may make us able to listen to each other with open hearts.

Give your people unity, oh God. Replace divisiveness with reconciliation.

We pray for our siblings of faith in every place. For Muslims, Jews. For Hindus, Buddhists. For peoples of indigenous religions everywhere, that their path may lead with ours to greater understanding of the goodness of faith in its many forms and languages.

We thank you for this gift of hope. For clean water, rich soils, abundant sunshine, and all the foods you have made for our health and for our enjoyment. Give your people gratitude to share, especially those that do not have such riches and who, today, are hungry.

We pray for the leaders of our nation. Our President and members of Congress, for leaders asserting power in other nations, for nations in trouble at this time, for peacemakers and diplomats.

We pray for those who suffer the horror of wars and famine. For children who do not know the reason for their pain. For those that have power to change their lot. For animals and plants damaged by human conflict.

We pray for those suffering from all forms of injustice, brokenness, and illness, especially those who have asked for our prayers.

Friends, these are the prayers that I bring to our community today. I invite you to bring your own prayers to God. You are welcome to come forward to light a candle as a sign of these prayers. You may speak your prayers aloud at the microphone or remain silent, allowing the candle to speak for you.

It is into your very heart, oh God, that we place all of these prayers, trusting in your mercy and saying the words that Jesus taught us:

**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.**

Call to Give

Friends, I invite you to consider the ways we too will share our gifts for the ministry of Christ in this place. Financial gifts can be sent in by mail to PO Box 36 in Mansfield Center, through our website at myFCC.info or in the plates that we will pass shortly.

Musical Offering

Erik Haeger

*Doxology

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

*Prayer of Dedication

Let us pray.

God, our Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and our concern for those in need, including our fellow creatures on planet Earth.

*Closing Hymn

We are Walking (Siyahamba)

CH 442

*Benediction

Go forth into the world in peace to make peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor everyone; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and may the blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore. Amen.

*Passing the Peace

The peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, is with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of that peace.

Postlude

The Week Ahead...

Sunday, September 15	10:15 am Worship and Worship Circle 11:30 am Rally Day Potluck 5:00 pm PFLAG of Mansfield Tolland in Fellowship Hall
Monday, September 16	7:00 pm Take Note! Rehearsal in Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, September 17	1:00 pm Stewardship meeting in Fellowship Hall (all are welcome)
Wednesday, September 18	1:00 pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall
Thursday, September 19	9:30 am Quilting Group in Fellowship Hall
Sunday, September 22	10:15 am Worship & Worship Circle in-person only - NO YouTube LIVESTREAM*