



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

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church

The Rev. Charles Ericson, Intentional Interim Minister

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

**May 11, 2025  
Fourth Sunday of Easter  
Mothers' Day**

**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!*

**Playing the Chimes**

**Greeting and Announcements**

**Prelude**

Erik Haeger

**Centering in the Spirit**

Gary Côté

Leader: This holy hour is a precious gift *from* God...*for* God...and *to* God..

**All: So for this holy hour, we silence our phones and tuck them away.**

Leader: We file our to-do lists in a locked compartment in the back of our minds.

**All: We relax our tense muscles and take in a deep breath or two.**

Leader: And we open ourselves completely to the power and presence of God.

**All: We open our ears to God's living Word;**

Leader: We open our eyes to the love that surrounds us.

**All: We open our souls wide to the beckoning, gathering, uplifting Spirit of our God.**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us*

CH231

**Prayer for Transformation**

Eternal and Everlasting God, our early church ancestors were known for performing many signs and wonders. When we think of this, we usually imagine miraculous healings, dramatic jailbreaks and sudden conversions. In these next few moments of silence and reflection, please remind us that signs and wonders still take place in our lives, but they are usually less spectacular these days. They come in the form of broken friendships that become reconciled, lingering grief that gradually dissolves into peace, misdirected souls that find a way back home. Hear us now, we pray, as we share with you our hopes for transformation for ourselves and those we love. Amen.

*moment of silence*

## Words of Grace

If there is one thing that this season of Easter teaches us, it is that healing, resurrection and redemption are real. They are gifts that are offered to us constantly and ceaselessly by our unconditionally loving and ever-merciful God. May we accept these gifts often, with gratitude and with joy!

### \*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!

### Hebrew Scripture

Psalms 23

unison reading

**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil, for you are with me;  
Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
My cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life,  
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
My whole life long.**

### Gospel

John 2:1-12

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup> When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." <sup>6</sup> Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. <sup>8</sup> He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the person in charge of the banquet." So they took it. <sup>9</sup> When the person in charge tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), that person called the bridegroom <sup>10</sup> and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." <sup>11</sup> Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed his glory, and his disciples

believed in him. <sup>12</sup> After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples, and they remained there a few days.

## Reflection

"Mary's Example"

Rev. Chuck Ericson

## Hymn

*Of Women, and of Women's Hopes We Sing*

CH686

## Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price



## Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

*Please pray the Lord's Prayer with the words that are 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/trespases,  
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,  
the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## Invitation to Generosity

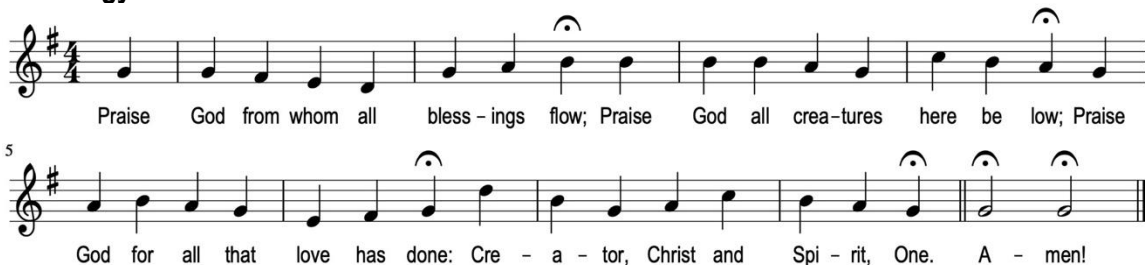
As jars of water were once turned into wine to gladden the hearts of wedding guests, we bring our gifts and offerings now to God, praying that they may likewise be turned into acts of mercy and healing that overflow with hope and good news, gladdening the hearts of our neighbors near and far. Our morning offering will now be received.

*Your financial offerings may be placed in the collection plates as they come around,  
or mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC, PO Box 36, Mansfield Center, CT 06250*

## Musical Offering

Erik Haeger

## \*Doxology



**\*Prayer of Dedication**

We ask your blessing, Loving God, upon the gifts and offerings we dedicate now to you. Through our church's ministries and missions, may they become like the good wine that turns despair into hope... hatred into loving-kindness... and fear into courage. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

**\*Closing Hymn**

*The Gift of Love*

CH526

**\*Benediction**

Now may God bless you and keep you;  
May God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;  
May God's countenance be lifted up upon you and give you peace. 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**

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**The Week Ahead**

<b>Today</b>	2 p.m. Quiet Corner Indivisible
<b>Monday, May 12</b>	6:30 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal
<b>Wednesday, May 14</b>	1 p.m. Book Group 7 p.m. Pastoral Search Committee (remote training)
<b>Sunday, May 18</b>	10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle (in-person worship only) 5 p.m. PFLAG of Mansfield Tolland

**IMPORTANT NOTE: THERE WILL NOT BE A LIVESTREAM ON YOU-TUBE ON SUNDAY, MAY 18.**

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Please join the Pastoral Search Committee for a  
**Second Hour presentation on Sunday, June 1**  
where they will share an overview of the survey results.

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# All-Church Visioning Retreat

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025  
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

The Governing Board invites everyone to participate in this retreat that will explore our hopes and vision for First Church as we seek a new settled pastor.

**8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

**Programming for all participants**

**2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Governing Board and Ministry Team Leaders**

Coffee and bagels will be available in the morning.

Lunch will be provided.

We hope that with this advance notice, members who work will be able to secure time off to attend.



Our facilitator will be the Rev. Monica Lewis, a mission interpreter and visioning specialist on the UCC Church Building and Loan Fund team.

She is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with a business background, and she has spent most of the previous decade working with churches, non-profits, and higher education institutions to prepare, plan, and implement strategic change. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado and her master's of divinity from Louisville Theological Presbyterian Seminary.