



**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

**August 17, 2025  
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**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** (*Inspired by Jeremiah 23*)

Gary Coté

One: We gather here in God's sanctuary to follow dreams that arise from or shared faith.

**All: These dreams are much different from the dreams of the world around us.**

One: In the world around us, dreams are often focused on winning and getting ahead.

**All: Here in God's sanctuary, we dream of serving and following the way of Jesus.**

One: In the world around us, others dream of leading in order to wield power and influence.

**All: Here in God's sanctuary, we dream of leading to make way for justice and peace.**

One: In the world around us, people suffer prejudice for not conforming to other's expectations.

**All: Here in God's sanctuary, all are welcome... celebrated... and part of the family.**

One: Dear friends, the time for worship is now upon us...

**All: ...a time to dream about serving, leading, and celebrating together as a family of faith!**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens*

CH651

**Prayer for Transformation**

Creating God, When our spirits are at peace and centered, we can feel so very close to you and to one another. We can devote our whole selves to Jesus' call to discipleship and making the dream of a better world become a true reality. Yet we can occasionally become distracted. Our senses can be drawn to a voice that is not yours, or an alluring sign that does not come from you. Without even realizing it, we can turn our backs to you and lose our way. Yet, you keep calling us back...beckoning us with love...inviting us to return to you. Please inspire us to joyfully answer your offering of grace and new life as we open our hearts and souls to you now in silent reflection. Amen.

*moment of silence*

## Words of Grace

Beloved Ones, God is not surprised or angered when we depart from the path we have been shown. After all, it is God who created us, knowing that we are not perfect. That is why mercy and redemption are also part of God's grand design. So, return....receive...and rejoice! All is well! A new day begins now.

### \*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  
World with-out 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  
end, A - men. World with-out end, world with-out end, A - men.  
was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ev-er shall be, A - men.

## Hebrew Scripture

### Isaiah 5:1-7

5:1 I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. 2 He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes. 3 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. 4 What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes? 5 And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. 6 I will make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished garden; he expected justice but saw bloodshed; righteousness but heard a cry!

## Epistle

### Hebrews 11:29-30, 32-34, 39-40; 12:1-2

11:29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. 32 And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 39 Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect. 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

## Reflection

"Faith Lessons of the Beatles: *Paul — Always Leading*"

Rev. Chuck Ericson

## Hymn

*O Jesus, I Have Promised*

CH612

### Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price

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

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

The image shows two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple, with lyrics written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody and includes a double bar line at the end.

### Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

*Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is 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,  
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### Invitation to Generosity

Giving can be risky. It can sometimes mean setting aside one of our own needs so that we can help someone else. And often we may never know who that "someone else" is, or if our gift was ever received. Still, we give. We give out of faith and devotion. We give generously and gladly because being a follower of Jesus invariably involves sacrifice and selflessness. In this spirit, our offerings 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

"Let It Be" by Paul McCartney

Bobbi Giardina

### \*Doxology

5 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!

The image shows two staves of music in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and features several measures with a fermata (a semi-circle with a dot) over the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

Loving God, we bring these gifts and offerings to you today in faith — not needing to know how they will be used or who will receive the benefits of our giving. All we need to know is that we have been faithful in following the way of Jesus, and that someone...somewhere...will be blessed.  
In Jesus' name. Amen.

### **\*Closing Hymn**

*In Loving Partnership*

**CH497**

### **\*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...**

### **Sunday, August 17**

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle

5:00 p.m. PFLAG of Mansfield Tolland

### **Tuesday, August 19**

5:30 p.m. Worth Fighting For (Indivisible)

### **Wednesday, August 20**

5:30 p.m. Pastoral Search Committee

### **Sunday, August 24**

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle; Blessing of the Backpacks

2:00 p.m. Quiet Corner Indivisible

4:00 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal & potluck