



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

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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

**November 9, 2025
Twenty-second 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!*

We welcome the Rev. Don Francois as our Guest Minister.

Playing the Chimes

Greeting and Announcements

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Centering in the Spirit (*inspired by Psalm 17*)

Dave Litrico

One: Guard me as the apple of your eye, O God.

Many: You wondrously show us your steadfast peace

One: Hide me in the shadow of your wings, Divine Spirit.

Many: You wondrously show us your steadfast strength.

One: I behold your face in righteousness, Christ of Hope.

Many: You wondrously show us your steadfast love.

***Opening Hymn**

Let the Whole Creation Cry

CH21

Prayer for Transformation

God of the Heavenly Breath and Earthy Air,

On this side of heaven, in your earthly Realm, there are many hurting from the pains accumulated in this life. From illnesses to poverty, and from the lack of kindness to the overwhelming injustices, we overlook the needs of our siblings. Open our hearts to the gaps happening in our world. Allow us to be more compassionate and less judgmental about our neighbors who need additional help. Forgive us when we fail to breathe your living, loving and healing breath into the world.


moment of silence

Words of Grace

Brothers and sisters, God shares hope. May God's grace transform us here in this world as we build the Realm of God here on earth. Amen.

Song of PraiseGlory 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.

Epistle Reading

2 Thessalonians 1.1-4; 2.13-17

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

² Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.³ We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. ⁴ Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.¹³ But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ For this purpose he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.**Hebrew Scripture**

Ezekiel 37.1-14

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' ¹² Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring

you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

Reflection

“Can These Bones Live?”

Rev. Don Francois

Hymn

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

CH254

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.

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/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.**

Moment for Stewardship: A Season of Thankfulness

Mark Phelps

Invitation to Generosity

God is calling us to care for our communities and churches here on this side of Heaven. May we name the ways we can create Heaven on earth for our neighbors. By using our talents, treasures, and time, may we seek to build safety and sanctuary for all of God’s children.

Musical Offering

Erik Haeger

***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!

***Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

Generous God, you have planted generosity in our hearts. Receive our gifts as part of your redemptive work to save the world from inequities, pain, and despair. May our resources be renewed and magnified so that all needs are met and your name be praised. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

CH592

***Benediction**

As we abide together on this side of Heaven,
May the Christ of Hope lead us to righteousness and justice,
May the Spirit of Strength fill our hearts with courage,
May God, our Joyful Creator, graciously settle our hearts with peace.
May we find ourselves on journeys seeking glimmers of paradise and the presence of the Divine among us. 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 source of our liturgy this morning is adapted from ***Worship Ways*** written by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois.

Guest Minister: The Rev. Don Francois is a semi-retired pastor of the Tolland Association, UCC. He served as a pastor of the Ellington Congregational Church for twenty-four years, as Bridge Pastor at Enfield and Columbia UCC churches and as Interim Pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Coventry which is now his spiritual home. Don and his wife, Laurie, reside in Ellington.

*Our Cantor today is Laurel Thurman.
Coffee Hour hosts are the DeAngelis/Woodley Family*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH...

Monday, November 10

6:30 p.m. Take Note!

Wednesday, November 12

1:00 p.m. Book Group

5:00 p.m. Meditation Group

Thursday, November 13

6:00 p.m. Governing Board (zoom)

7:00 p.m. Choir

ANNUAL LASAGNA DINNER & SILENT AUCTION
Friday, November 14, 6:00 p.m.

Be sure to mark your calendar for one of our church community's favorite events! A delicious lasagna dinner followed by lots of laughter and friendly competition during the silent auction.

Tickets are available from Donna Clauson and Laurel Thurman
Adults \$20, Children under 8 \$10

Consider donating something to the auction. Every one of us has gifts or talents that others would love to own. The more items of value donated, the more \$\$\$\$ we can raise. In the past we've raised as much as \$5000. Do your holiday shopping and help First Church at the same time!

Contribution Forms can be found in the sanctuary pews and in Fellowship Hall. There is a box in Fellowship Hall for completed forms. There is also a link to an electronic submission form in the weekly email. **Today is the deadline to submit your Contribution Sheet(s).**

Items may be dropped off in Fellowship Hall any time this week, but no later than 10 a.m. on Friday morning.

Holiday Outreach

The Mansfield Senior Center is sponsoring a Giving Tree. You are invited to donate gently used or new scarves, mittens and hats. Much like our Blessing Box, it will be outside and people who need can choose items. There will be a box in Fellowship Hall or you can drop off items at the Senior Center.

WAIM WALK FOR WARMTH

Winter is coming, rental and energy prices are skyrocketing. Many in our community will continue to struggle to stay housed and manage their heating costs. This year, our **33rd ANNUAL WALK FOR WARMTH**, we are fundraising for WAIM's energy, rental assistance, and additional basic needs fund.

Please help make a difference as we come together again this year, as members of WAIM's faith communities, to reach our fundraising goal of \$55,000. These funds will help ensure that our neighbors are not left out in the cold.

Please join us for our 2-mile Walk (or 1-mile if you choose!), at St. Joseph's Church in Willimantic on Sunday, November 23rd, or walk at your own time and place as a 'virtual' walker. While you can register as an individual, join a team that has already registered, or create your own team. You can also register in-person the day of, at 12:30 pm. The Walk will be preceded by our Interfaith Thanksgiving service at 1:30 pm also at the church, 99 Jackson Street in Willimantic. The Walk will follow at 2:15 pm.

If you would like to donate online, you can go to <http://www.pledgereg.com/517078> and search under Sharon Foster-Chalecki or First Church of Christ Mansfield. Penny Guerin and Diane Wright are also collecting if you would prefer not to donate online.