



**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

Ministers: All the Members of the Church
The Rev. Don Erickson, Pastor
Erik Haeger, Organist
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator
Mandy Boukus, Office Assistant

April 5, 2026 – Easter Sunday

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!*

Our worship service is made available digitally for those who cannot attend in person. Footage from this service may also be used in marketing materials for our community. If you do not wish to have your likeness recorded, streamed, or photographed please inform a Greeter who can seat you appropriately.

Introit *Christ is Risen, Hallelujah* FCC Choir

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude Erik Haeger

Alleluias Return

Call to Worship Gary Cote

On Friday, we thought the good news had been silenced.

On Friday, we thought the good news had taken its last breath.

On Friday, we thought the good news had been buried.

But today, we know the good news is alive and well.

The good news is dancing!

The good news is on the loose!

The good news is out in the world, calling your name!

Alleluia! Even death has lost its sting.

Let us worship our good-news Christ.

Silent Confession & Words of Grace

Family of faith,

even when we are an out-of-tune chorus of "alleluias," we belong to God.

Jesus died and rose for you. And there is nothing that could keep God's love at bay.

So join me in this good news declaration:

Through Jesus Christ we are seen, saved, loved, and claimed.

This is the good news of the gospel! Thanks be to God.

Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Gary Cote

We give thanks to you, O Lord, for You are good;
 Your steadfast love endures forever!
 Let your people say,
 "God's steadfast love endures forever."
 You are my strength and my might;
 You have become my salvation.
 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:
 "Your right hand, O Lord, does valiantly;
 Your right hand, O Lord, is exalted;
 Your right hand, O Lord, does valiantly."
 I shall not die, but I shall live
 and recount your deeds...
 You did not give me over to death.
 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
 that I may enter through them
 and give thanks to you, O Lord.
 This is your gate;
 the righteous shall enter through it.
 I thank you that you have answered me
 and have become my salvation.
 The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the chief cornerstone.
 This is the Lord's doing;
 it is marvelous in our eyes.
 This is the day that the Lord has made;
 let us rejoice and be glad in it.

*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.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 28:1-10

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord,

descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Hymn

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

CH 216

Pastoral Meditation

Re/Newing Your Baptism

Rev. Don Erickson

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.

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 Pastoral Prayer

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

"Risen Indeed" by Allen Pote

FCC Choir

*Doxology

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 Dedication (in unison)

Laurel Thurman

God of New Beginnings, you roll away more than stones. You roll away despair and doubt, fear and failure. On this Resurrection morning, we offer our gifts in gratitude for the new life we have found in Christ. Let these offerings be signs of our commitment to live differently -- eyes open, hearts awakened, hands ready to serve. May what we give today help announce to the world that hope is alive, love has triumphed, and joy cannot be contained. Use us and what we offer to keep telling the story: Christ is risen, indeed! Amen.

~ The Service of Holy Communion ~

Invitation to the Table

Communion Litany

“The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body broken for you” (distribute bread)

One: O God, just as this broken loaf was scattered over the hill as grain, and, having been gathered together, became one; in like fashion, may your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

All: Because yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.

This is God's restoration for you. (*partake*)

“In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the lifeblood of the new covenant, lifeblood poured out for you.” (distribute juice)

One: O God, just as this juice comes from a gathering of grapes grown on a vine rooted deep, in like fashion, may we be rooted in the Vine that is Christ, and bear good fruit together as we look to your kingdom.

All: Because yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.

“This is God's joy for you.” (*partake*)

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 help us yield not to/Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

***Closing Hymn**

Christ is Risen, Shout Hosanna

CH 222

***Poetry Prayer**

Easter Challenge

by Joyce Rupp
read by Julie Menard

*Every year it happens:
earth shakes her sleepy head,
still a bit wintered and dull,
and feels new life stirring.*

*Every year cocoons give up their treasures,
fresh shoots push through brown leaves,*

*seemingly dead branches shine with green,
and singing birds find their way home.*

*Every year we hear the stories:
empty tomb, surprised grievors,
runners with news and revelation,
unexpected encounters,
conversations on the road,
tales of nets filling with fish,
and breakfast on a seashore.*

*And every year
the dull and dead in us
meets our Easter challenge:
to be open to the unexpected,
to believe beyond our security,
to welcome God in every form,
and trust in our own greening.*

***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

Before departing after the service, all are invited to gather at the front of the Sanctuary for the first annual Church Family Photo. Lay leaders will provide instructions and guidance.

Our Greeters today are Julie Menard and Steve Lane.

Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.

*Our Communion Servers are Frank Ball, Barbara Dobrocki, Ray LaPointe, and Julie Menard
Coffee Hour is hosted by John & Katie Clauson*

About Communion at First Church

At the Last Supper, Jesus turned no one away and imposed no restrictions on receiving the bread and the cup. Neither do we here at the First Church of Christ in Mansfield. Christ's table is open at all, and we extend an extravagant welcome to you to join us. The communion elements will be brought to the pews by servers. Plates containing pieces of bread will be distributed first, followed by trays containing individual cups of grape juice. Each time, worshipers are asked to hold the elements until all have been served and an invitation to partake is spoken from the communion table. For those who wish to know, the cup contains non-alcoholic grape juice and the bread is gluten-free.

Much of this morning's liturgy and poetry reading were written by the Rev. Sarah A. Speed for the Lent series "Tell me something good... Grounding ourselves in the good news this Lent." Permission for use has been granted by A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



This Lent and Easter season we have been using the creative ministry resources from A Sanctified Art LLC. The overarching theme for Lent 2026 is “**Tell me something good... Grounding ourselves in the good news this Lent.**”

We often describe Jesus’ ministry as “radical” which comes from the Latin word “radicalis,” meaning “root” or “ground.” Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God’s unending grace. This Lent, may the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.

THIS WEEK’S THEME:

 **the good news is...**
alive in the world

THE WEEK AHEAD...

Monday, April 6

6:30 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal

Tuesday, April 7

10:30 a.m. Monthly service at Mansfield Center for Nursing & Rehab

11:30 a.m. Coffeetime with Rev Don (Price Chopper food court)

Wednesday, April 8

1:00 p.m. Book Group

5:00 p.m. Meditation Group

Thursday, April 9

6:00 p.m. Governing Board (via Zoom)

Saturday, April 11

8:30 a.m. Windham Theatre Guild

12:30 p.m. Girl Scouts

New First Hour Series Coming - April 19th at 9:00 a.m.

“Peter & Paul and the Christian Revolution”

In this 4-week series we will view a documentary on the lives of Saints Peter and Paul as they spread the message of Jesus throughout the Roman Empire. It is part of the PBS “Empire” series that looked at people and passions that changed the world. Each week we will view a 30-minute segment of the video, followed by 30 minutes of discussion. (Video is closed-captioned.)

Our Easter flowers have been given by:

Mary Anne Baker, in loving memory of her husband, John Baker.

Sandy & Don Baxter, for Carol Fineout, with the hope they bring her comfort and light and spring.

Genevieve Beebe, in memory of Richard Beebe.

Pam Bridgeford, in loving memory of her mother, Ruth Dyer, and in fond memory of Adelaide Corcoran.

Jack & Donna Clauson, in memory of Durward & Clemma Gebbie, Darwin Gebbie, and Oscar & Lorraine Clauson.

Gary Coté & David Darnell, in memory of George & Evelyn Cote, and Frances Darnell.

Artemis Damble, in honor of Jennie Gaudette and Paul Gaudette.

Christine & Arthur Dimock, in memory of Winston & Norma Hawkins.

Barbara Dobrocki, in memory of Edeltraud Dobrocki and Roman Dobrocki.

Carol & Howard Drescher, in memory of their parents, Ruth & Steve, and Howard & Toni.

Sharon Foster-Chalecki & Bob Chalecki, in memory of loved ones.

The Hall Family, in memory of Roswell Hall, Pauline Ott, Harriet Hall, Douglas Fur.

Alex Hewes & Daniel E. Paredes, in memory of Daniel Paredes and Susan Hewes.

Dorothy Michaelis and the Hubbell family, in memory of loved ones George H. Hubbell, Jr. and Werner F. Michaelis.

Eleanor Joyce, in memory of Dorothy Mead and Martin Joyce.

Lisa Peterson-Blinn, in memory of Alisha Colon, Mary & Richard Blinn, and Ricky Blinn.

Deb Richards & Mark Messier, in memory of their parents, Tom & Allison Richards.

The Thurman-Chase Family, in memory of Susan, Ellen, Loris, and Kimberlie.

Joy & Dale Truman, in memory of Ruth & Louis Sutra, and Horace & Betty Truman.

Linda Wenner, in memory of Donald Wenner, Pauline Wenner, and Marion Brotzman.

Jo-Ann, Frank & Frankie Wunschel, in memory of beloved members of the Waide family, the Wunschel family, and the First Church family.



✦ All-Church Visioning Retreat ✦

Hosted by the Capital Campaign Committee



Think of this as a community brainstorm — a chance for all of us to come together, listen to one another, and imagine what's possible. We'll explore the gifts already present in our congregation: our heart, our people, and our property — and prayerfully consider how those gifts can meet the real needs of our community.



SAVE THE DATES

- **Friday, May 1st** | 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, May 2nd** | 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (lunch provided)



SPECIAL GUEST LEADER

Jill White

Mission Interpreter

United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund (CB&LF)



WHY ATTEND?

- **Share Your Voice:** Every perspective is needed to shape our path forward.
- **Dream Big:** Moving from where we are today toward exciting new possibilities.
- **Make an Impact:** Discover how our congregation can make a lasting difference.



IMPORTANT DETAILS

- **Childcare:** Provided on both days.
- **Sign-up:** Please **add your name to the sign-up sheet** today!

Every voice matters. Every perspective is needed.