



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

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church

The Rev. Don Erickson, Pastor

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

Mandy Boukus, Office Assistant

May 17, 2026 – Seventh Sunday of Easter

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!

Privacy Notice: 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.

Playing the Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Call to Worship (based on the writing of Gregory of Nyssa)

Gary Coté

Kindness, Lord flows from you pure and continual.

In your grace, you have clothed us with worth and value;

you opened the prison gates and gave the condemned a pardon,

you sprinkled us with clean water and washed away the dirt.

The flaming sword will nevermore whirl about the walls of your realm

Nevermore will a welcome be refused to those who approach you.

All has been changed into rejoicing, for we now have access to your realm.

The whole creation, heaven and earth, is at one again,

its former differences forgotten, all joining their voices with the angels...

**Jesus Christ – the one that is and was and will be. Blessed is Christ,
now and throughout the ages. Amen**

Silent Prayer of Confession

Words of Grace (based on writing of Gregory of Nyssa)

**Beloved of God, let us not approach the Divine confined by fear.
As we loosen the bonds of others, our own souls are released.
By the mercy of Christ, who transforms us to be closer to the Divine,
We are no longer defined by our failures.
No, we are clothed in the divine robe of grace.
Our God, like a loving parent, looks upon the vulnerable
with eyes of love and restores us home.
In Christ Jesus, we are forgiven.
May we rest in divine freedom as the beloved ones of God.**

***Opening Hymn**

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

CH 540

Prayer for Illumination

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 119:121-128

*O God, you have done what is just and right;
do not leave me to my oppressors.
Guarantee your servant's well-being;
do not let the godless oppress me.
My eyes fail from watching for your salvation
and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.
Deal with your servant according to your steadfast love,
and teach me your statutes.
I am your servant; give me understanding,
so that I may know your decrees.
It is time for you, O Lord, to act,
for your law has been broken.
Truly I love your commandments
more than gold, more than fine gold.
Truly I direct my steps by all your precepts;
I hate every false way.*

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.

Gospel Reading*John 17:1-11*

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶ "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you, ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Pastoral Meditation

*Christian Mysticism:
Macrina & Gregory of Nyssa*

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

The Prayer of Jesus

Please pray with 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/those who trespass against us.
And help us yield not to temptation/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

Offertory

Erik Haeger

*Doxology

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

*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

Laurel Thurman

Unifying God of Grace, you have entrusted us with the joy of community and the calling of witness. As Jesus prayed that we might be one, we bring these gifts as a sign of our shared commitment to your mission in the world. Let our giving reflect our love, our unity declare your glory, and our generosity embody Christ's presence among us. Use these offerings to strengthen the church, to bless our neighbors, and to glorify your name. In Christ, we belong to you. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

They Will Know We Are Christians

CH 494

*Poetry Prayer

Sonnet 9

Madeleine L'Engle

*Resurrection's not resuscitation.
What, in heaven's name, do we expect?
I'm satisfied with no one's explanation
Which seem to me more fancy than correct.
I know that hour beloved body's gone
And heaven's not pie in some ethereal sky.
It's you I want, familiar flesh and bone.
But my flesh, too, is mortal. I will die.
So what, then, do I hope from resurrection?
I hope beyond my wildest hope unseen
That there will still be some aware connection
'TwiXt what we will be and 'twixt what we've been,
And you and I and all we love will meet
When Love has won, and we're at last complete.*

***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

*Our Greeter this morning is Janna Pedersen.
Today's Digital Ministers are Robert Johnson and Penny Guerin.
Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.
Coffee hour is hosted by Cheryl Chase and Laurel Thurman.
Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday, May 17

10:15 a.m. Worship & Worship Circle

5:00 p.m. PFLAG Mansfield Tolland

Monday, May 18

6:30 p.m. Take Note! rehearsal

Wednesday, May 20

1:00 p.m. Book Group

4:00 p.m. Pastoral Support Team

5:00 p.m. Meditation Group

Friday, May 23

12:30 p.m. Girl Scouts

LOOKING AHEAD

Meditation Group Schedule Update

- **May 27:** No meeting.
- **Summer Schedule:** June, July, and August.
- **Frequency:** First Wednesday of the month only.

Celebrations of Life

- **Loris Masteron:** Saturday, May 30 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Ellen Boehle:** Saturday, June 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Community Outreach

- **Mansfield Nursing & Rehab Center:** Monthly service is on hiatus.
- **Duration:** June, July, and August.

Save the Date: June Congregational Meeting

- **Date:** Sunday, June 28.
- **Time:** Immediately following worship service.