



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

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church

Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

Amanda Boukus, Office Assistant

July 5, 2026 ~ Communion Sunday

Today's Worship Leader: Deb Hubbell

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

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Call to Worship (*inspired by Psalm 146*)

Dave Latrico

Praise the Lord, O my soul! Do not put your trust in princes, empires, or mortal leaders, in whom there is no lasting salvation.

Our breath is fleeting, but God's justice is forever.

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, who made heaven, earth, the sea, and all that is in them.

God keeps faith with the forgotten and executes justice for the oppressed.

The Lord gives food to the hungry, sets prisoners free, and opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord watches over the immigrants, upholds the orphan and the widow, and frustrates the ways of the wicked. Let us worship the One who reigns for all generations!

***Opening Hymn**

God of the Ages

CH 725

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Sovereign God, two hundred and fifty years ago, a new nation was birthed on promises of liberty and equality. We confess today that our practice has often fallen short of our ideals. We have built walls where you called us to build tables. We have chosen self-preservation over the radical loyalty shown by Ruth. We have loved our status more than our neighbors. Forgive us, O God. Heal our land, not by making us more powerful, but by making us more passionate for justice. Turn our hearts back to your greatest

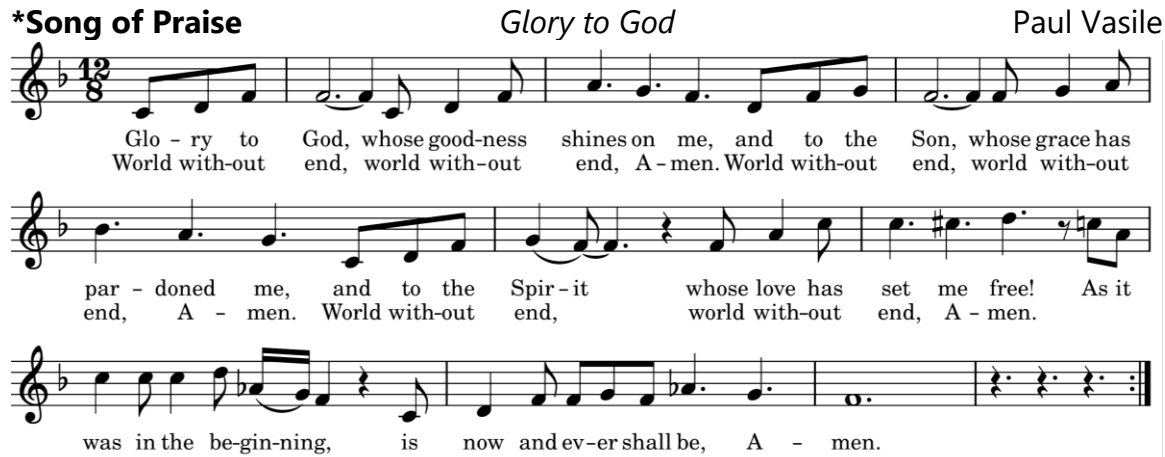
commandment, that we might truly love you and love our neighbors as ourselves.

Words of Grace

Hear the good news: God's yoke is easy and the divine burden is light. God does not look at our historical failings to condemn us, but to call us forward into deeper covenant. In the name of Jesus Christ – who ate with sinners, who welcomed the stranger, who was himself an immigrant child and a refugee – we are forgiven, freed, and empowered to love.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

***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.

Scripture Reading

Ruth 1:1-18

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had considered his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too

old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.” Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said,

*“Do not press me to leave you,
to turn back from following you!
Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people
and your God my God.
Where you die, I will die,
and there will I be buried.
May the Lord do thus to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!”*

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

“But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

“For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Reflection

Voices of Freedom

Deb Hubbell

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price



Prayers of the People, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

You are invited to pray in whatever language is most comfortable for you. The following offers examples:

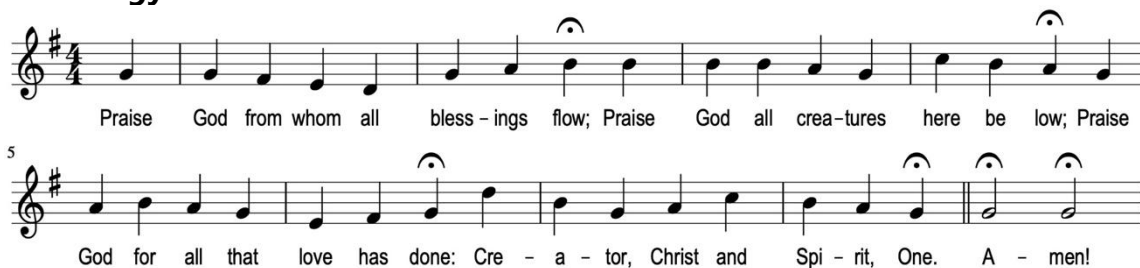
**Our Father/Mother/Creator,
who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts/sins/trespases,
as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/trespass against us.
And lead us not into/help us yield not to 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



*Prayer of Dedication

**Holy One, bless these gifts. May they feed the hungry, welcome the migrant,
and provide rest to those weary of carrying heavy burdens. Use our
resources, and our lives, to dismantle oppression and craft true liberation.
Amen.**

~ The Service of Holy Communion ~

Invitation to the Table of True Freedom

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Open up your hearts.

We open them up to God and one another.

Let us give thanks to God, the Creator of all.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Let us continue in the spirit of prayer:

God of liberty, ...

... Therefore, with those who have labored for justice in every generation, and with all our siblings across the globe, we sing your praise:

Musical Response

Santo Santo Santo

Traditional Argentine

San - to, san - to, san - to. Mi co - ra - zon te a - do - ra! Mi
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you! My

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co - ra - zon te sa - be de-cir: San - to eres, Se - nor!
heart knows how to say to you: Ho - ly are you, Lord!

Sharing the Bread and Cup

All are welcome at Christ's table; we offer non-alcoholic juice and gluten-free bread.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We thank you, O God, that you have fed us at this table of grace. You have reminded us that our ultimate citizenship is in your peaceful kingdom. Send us out from this place into our communities and our nation, equipped with courage to seek justice, humility to confess truth, and love to heal what is broken. Amen.

***Closing Hymn** For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table *bulletin back page*

*Benediction

*Passing the Peace

May the peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of that peace.

Postlude

Prayers and responses were custom-crafted for the US Semiquincentennial drawing from Worship Ways (a liturgical ministry of the national setting of the United Church of Christ) and Illustrated Ministry (curated curriculum and illustration resources).

Our Greeters today are Julie Menard and Steve Lane.

Our Digital Minister is Robert Johnson.

Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.

Our Communion Servers are Julie Menard, Steve Lane, Ray LaPointe, and David Darnell.

Coffee Hour is hosted Cheryl Chase and Laurel Thurman.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!

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 to 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.

Special Communion Sunday Offering

An envelope labeled **Blessing Box** is included in your bulletin on Communion Sundays (every first Sunday of the month.) You may place donations in this envelope and drop it into the offering plate during worship. Every contribution goes directly toward purchasing food for our pantry.

Community Giving for July - Natchaug Hospital

- T-shirts (long or short sleeves)
- Sweatshirts (crewneck; no hoods or strings)
- Sweatpants

These can be any size, from small to XXL. Please leave your contributions in the basket at the front of the Sanctuary, beneath the information table near the Brown's Road entrance.

THE WEEK AHEAD...

Wednesday, July 8 6:00 pm Strategic Planning

Thursday, July 9 6:00 pm Governing Board

Worship Leaders for July:

July 12	Julie Menard
July 19	Karen Christianson
July 26	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster

For Everyone Born

1. For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,
2. For wo - man and man, a place at the ta - ble,
3. For young and for old, a place at the ta - ble,
4. For just and un - just, a place at the ta - ble,
5. For ev - every-one born, a place at the ta - ble,

for ev - ery - one born, clean wa - ter and bread,
and all those be - tween, be - yond, and be - sides;
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
a chance to re - pent, re - form, and re - build.
to live with - out fear, and sim - ply to be.

a shel - ter, a space, a safe place for grow - ing,
ex - pand - ing our world, dis - man - tle - ing pow - er,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrin - kled,
pro - tect - ing the wronged, with - out shame or pres - sure,
to work, to speak out, to wit - ness and wor - ship,

for ev - ery - one born, a star o - ver - head.
each val - ued for what their voice can pro - vide.
for young and for old, the right to be - long.
for just and un - just, God's vi - sion ful - filled.
for ev - ery - one born, the right to be free.

Refrain
And God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and
joy, com - pas - sion and peace. Yes, God will delight when we are cre
- a - tors of jus - tice, jus - tice and joy.

TEXT: Shirley Erena Murray, 1998; adapted by Avery Arden

MUSIC: Brian Mann, 2006

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