



**The 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
Erik Haeger, Organist
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator
Amanda Boukus, Office Assistant

July 12, 2026 ~ Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Today's Worship Leader: Julie Menard

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

Centering in the Spirit

Julie Menard

Call to Worship

Steve Lane

Leader: Let us quiet our minds and open our awareness to the wisdom of the earth. Just as the Sower casts seeds upon the ground, the universe constantly offers us invitations to grow, transform, and expand.

Gathered: *We open our hearts to the seeds of new beginnings.*

Leader: May we recognize the hardened paths within ourselves—the rigid habits and closed minds that refuse the gifts of growth. Let us soften our edges so that wisdom may find a home.

Gathered: *We release our resistance and welcome the journey.*

Leader: May we look closely at our shallow, rocky spaces—the places where we seek quick comfort but lack deep roots. When the burning heat of adversity arrives, may our foundations hold strong.

Gathered: *We plant our roots deep in the soil of truth.*

Leader: May we clear away the tangled thorns of daily noise, restless anxiety, and the pursuit of endless distractions that choke our inner peace and stifle our purpose.

Gathered: *We cultivate space for what truly matters.*

All: May we become fertile ground, nurturing the unique gifts planted within us. Together, may we blossom into a rich harvest of compassion, wisdom, and peace, enriching the world around us.

***Opening Hymn**

Open My Eyes, That I May See

CH 586

A Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Gentle and Loving Guide, may we cultivate a receptive mind that is open to growth and learning. May we recognize the hard, rocky, or overgrown places within our thinking, and may we find the patience to clear them out. Give us the strength to nurture our intentions so that the seeds of new life, wisdom, and positive change may take deep root and flourish in our daily actions.

(Silence is kept)

Assurance of Grace

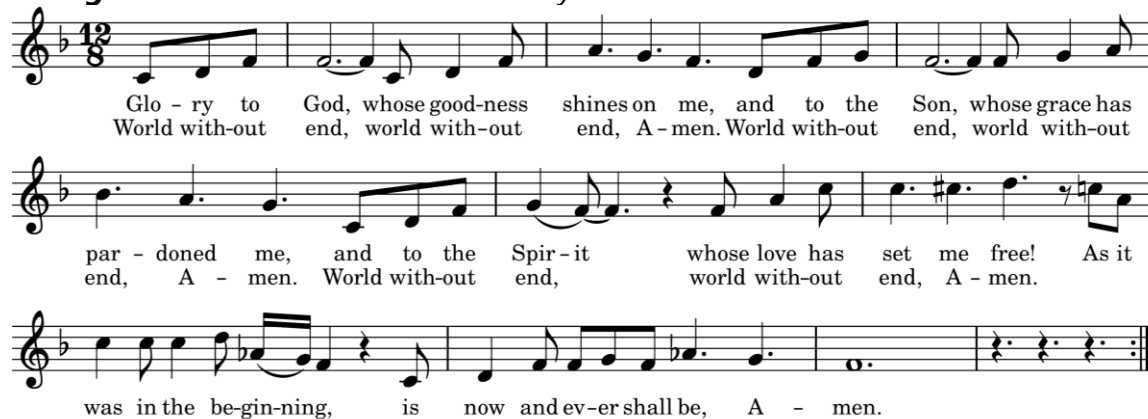
May you rest in the assurance that God's love is scattered wildly and unconditionally over your life, not because of the perfection of your soil, but because of the goodness of the Spirit's heart. Where your heart is weary or hardened by the cares of this world, may the gentle energy of the Spirit soften the ground, pull up the thorns, and breathe new life into you.

May it be so. 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.

Young People's Message

Steve Lane

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 55:10-13

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the Sower and bread to the eater,

so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13:1-9

(New Living Translation)

Parable of the Farmer Scattering Seed

Later that same day Jesus left the house and sat beside the lake. A large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat there and taught as the people stood on the shore. He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:

"Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."

Reflection

From Seed to Harvest of Possibilities

Julie Menard

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price



Poetry Prayer

A Blessing with Roots, by Jan Richardson

Karen Christianson

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 examples are offered:

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/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

Garden Song, by Dave Mallet
 Bobbi Giardina, Cheryl Chase, Youth

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea - tures 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

May these gifts be our promise to honor our commitment to lead with love,
live lightly on this good earth, and care deeply for one another in this
community and beyond. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

All Things Bright and Beautiful

CH61

*Benediction (unison)

May we cultivate spaces that allow all people to thrive. May we offer the
same care, patience, and nourishment to ourselves, family, friends, and
community that the earth provides to a seed - ensuring that everyone has
the room they need to grow and flourish.

*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

Our Greeters today are Janna Pedersen and Bill Briggs.

Our Digital Minister is Deb Hubbell.

Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.

Coffee Hour is hosted by Frank Ball and Eleanor Joyce.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!

Worship Leaders this summer:

July 19	Karen Christianson
July 26	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster
August 2	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster
August 9	Rev. Dr. Sue Foster
August 16	Rev. Chuck Ericson
August 23	Bobbi Giardina
August 30	Laurel Thurman

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 Children's Worship is looking a donation of clean, used items for a variety of activities:

- a hand blender and a regular blender
- 8x10" old frames
- plywood at least 8x10" -16x20" sheets
- thicker felt at least 8x10"
- 2 large glass bowls
- 1 or 2 large aluminum pots