



**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

Mandy Boukus, Office Assistant

July 19, 2026 ~ The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Today's Worship Leader: Karen Christianson

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

Janna Pedersen

(from Kim Stafford's poem titled "Champion the Enemy's Need")

Ask about your enemy's wounds and scars.

Seek his hidden cause of trouble.

Feed your enemy's children.

Learn their word for "home."

Repair their well.

Learn their sorrow's history.

Trace their lineage of the good.

Ask them for a song.

Make tea.

Break bread.

***Opening Hymn**

Fill the World with Love

CH 467

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (unison)

Dear God of Peace and Passion, we are gathered here this morning with each other in this beautiful place in your loving presence to be reminded of not WHO we are, but WHOSE we are. We know too well WHO we are when

we allow ourselves to be ever-distracted by our busy lives, our to-do lists, our fears that we cannot get it all done or that we are somehow not sufficiently meeting the needs of this broken world. Let us use this time together to open ourselves to your grace, your forgiveness, and your delight. Let us also be aware that your love is being offered bountifully in the voices, the hugs, the smiles, the handshakes and high-5's of those here with us today. As we take a moment of silence, let us prepare our hearts and minds for the transformation available to us by gathering in your name.

(pause for a moment of silence)

AMEN.

Words of Grace

We made a choice today, an important choice. For some, it was an easy choice, but for some, it was a harder choice. We came here to acknowledge that we can't do this alone. Our lives can be complicated and challenging and messy and depleting. However, our God, the one who loves us unconditionally, is here with us. He's ready—right here, right now—to replenish us with faith, with purpose, and with partnership. God, who knows our limitations and forgives all our miscalculations, sees us this morning and assures us, "Great choice!"

***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
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 was in the be-ginning, is
end, A - men. World with-out e - nd, world with-out end, A - men.

1. now and ev - er shall be, A - men 2. World with-out men!

Epistle

Romans 15:1-6

(New Living Translation)

We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. ² We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. ³ For even Christ didn't live to please himself. As the Scriptures say, "The insults of those who insult you, O God, have fallen on me."^[a] ⁴ Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.

⁵ May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. ⁶ Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Matthew 5:38-47

"You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹ If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile,^[p] carry it two miles. ⁴² Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow.

⁴³ "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor'^[q] and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies!^[r] Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are kind only to your friends,^[s] how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that."

Reflection

Karen Christianson

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, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

You are invited to pray in whatever language is most comfortable for you. The following is offered as an example:

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

Offering Hymn

Sister, Let Me Be Your Servant

CH 490

***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**

Dear God, Bless these donations and multiply their impact with the power of love . May this money land in the hands of wise and creative stewards so that justice, peace, and provisions land in the lives of people in need. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

We Are Walking

CH 442

***Benediction**

***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 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.

Our Greeters today are Sharon Foster-Chalecki and Julie Menard.

Our Digital Minister is Deb Hubbell.

Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.

Coffee Hour is hosted by Howard and Carol Drescher.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship!

Worship Leaders this summer:

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 Circle is looking for donations 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
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The Cleaning Crew schedule is changing again!

The crew from Servitium will conduct their weekly cleaning on Fridays from 2:30-4:30 pm. If you have a late afternoon event scheduled on a Friday, please be in touch with Jean Bell so she can alert the cleaners.