



**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

September 6, 2026 ~ Communion Sunday

Today's Worship Leader: Rev. Chuck Ericson

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

Greeting and Announcements

Prelude

Erik Haeger

Centering in the Spirit (*inspired by Exodus 12:14*)

Gary Coté

Leader: Our ancestors in faith set aside Passover as a day of remembrance.

**People: Other days of remembrance have been added as time went on:
Christmas... Easter... Pentecost and many more.**

Leader: This very morning can become a day of remembrance for us, too:

People: A day to remember the love we have for one another...

Leader: ...the prayers that have been offered and answered...

People: ...the bread and cup that we have shared...

Leader: ...the grace that has been offered and received...

**People: ...the spirits that have been lifted and souls that have been
revived!**

Leader: Friends, let us rejoice together...

All: ...for this day of remembrance in the making!

***Opening Hymn**

God Is Here!

CH#280

Prayer for Transformation (unison)

All: In a short while, Loving God, we will share the sacrament that comes from grapes and grains. As we do, we are reminded that you have made us like grapes: varied in shape and size, character and complexion, sometimes sweet and occasionally bitter or sour. We are also like stalks of grain: fed by

the goodness of the earth, vulnerable and bendable, yet steadfast against storms of adversity. We bring ourselves to you this day like grapes and grains: affirmed and acceptable as we are, yet ready and able to become human sacraments that celebrate, feed, unify and quench parched souls in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

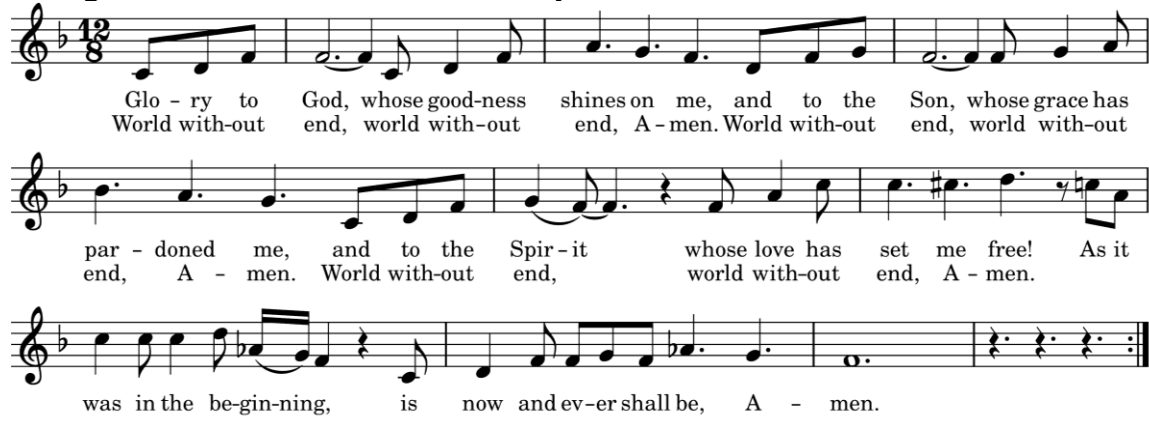
moment of silence

Words of Grace

Leader: Friends, when Jesus gathered the disciples for a final Passover meal together, he offered them all the cup and the bread that would forever assure them of God's forgiveness, mercy, redemption and grace. This morning, as we worship in word and sacrament, this same assurance is promised anew: God knows us...loves us...and will never turn us away. Grace abounds! Receive it with joy and new life!

All: Thanks be to God!

***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 was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ev-er shall be, A - men.

Hebrew Scripture Reading Ezekiel 33:7-11

7 So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. **8** If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. **9** But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life. **10** Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel: Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" **11** Say to them: As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:15-20

15 "If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. **16** But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **17** If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. **18** Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. **19** Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Reflection

A Simple Solution Rev. Chuck Ericson
(Or, What a Difference a Few Centuries Make)

Call to Prayer

Hear Us O Lord

Don Besig and Nancy Price



Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

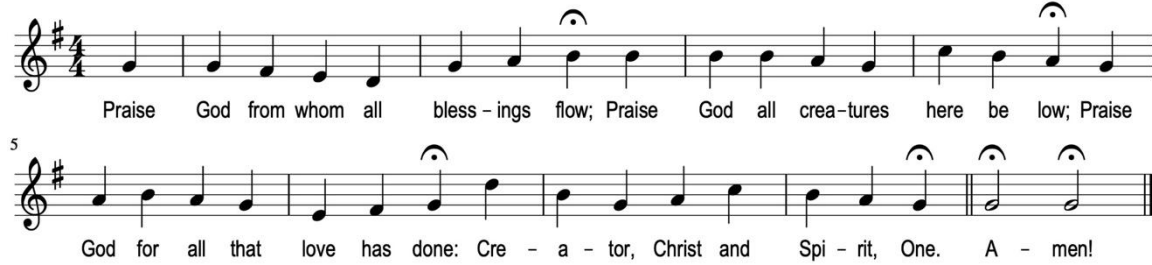
You are invited to pray in whatever language is most comfortable for you. The following examples are offered:

**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 temptation / 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

Musical Offering

*Doxology



*Prayer of Dedication

God of Hope and Reconciliation, we ask you to receive and bless our morning offerings, as well as the gifts we dedicate to you at other times and in other ways. Guided by your Spirit, may our giving help to support and transform the lives of our neighbors, near and far, who yearn for better opportunities, lasting peace, long-awaited healing and true hope. We pray this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

~ The Service of Holy Communion ~

Communion Hymn

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

CH#518

Invitation to Communion

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:

Holy God, our loving Creator, close to us as breathing and distant as the farthest star, we thank you for your constant love...

...Gifted by the presence of your Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves to you as we unite our voices with the entire family of your faithful people everywhere, and as we sing together:

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 give thanks, Almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

CH#431

*Benediction

Now may God bless you and keep you;
May God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;
May God's countenance be lifted up upon you and give you peace. Amen.

*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

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.*

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 this morning are Julie Menard and Janna Pedersen.

Our Cantor is Laurel Thurman.

Our Communion servers are Gary Cote, David Darnell, Ray LaPointe, & Janna Pedersen.

Our Digital Minister is Deb Hubbell.

Our Coffee Hour hosts are Gary Cote and David Darnell.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall or refreshments after worship!
All are welcome!

THE WEEK AHEAD...

TODAY 11:15 am Celebrate Mansfield Festival planning meeting

Monday, Sept 9 6:30 pm Take Note! Rehearsal

Wednesday, Sept 11 1:00 pm Book Group
5:00 pm Meditation Group

Thursday, Sept 10 6:00 pm Governing Board

Saturday, Sept 12 9:00 am WAIM Work day at WAIM in Willimantic
11:30-2:30 Consonare retreat

Celebrate Mansfield Festival!
Saturday, September 26th, downtown Storrs

We will be hosting an activity table with crafts for children and conducting a short community needs survey that will be used to inform our Strategic Plan.

There will be a planning meeting today after the service.

Please join us for the meeting if you are interested.

We will also be looking for volunteers on the day of the event - between 2pm and 6pm. Please contact Deb Richards or Olivia Russell if you are interested in volunteering but cannot make the planning meeting.

SAVE THE DATE!

ANNUAL LASAGNA DINNER & AUCTION

Friday, December 4 at 6:00 p.m.