

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

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Ministers: All the Members of the Church The Rev. Charles Ericson, Bridge Minister Erik Haeger, Organist Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost ~ September 22, 2024

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 and Prelude

Greeting and Announcements

Centering in the Spirit

When we draw near to God, we can also feel God drawing near to us.

We have drawn near to God, and to one another, by gathering here to worship.

Now we will begin to experience God coming near to each of us, and to all of us:

Bringing us wisdom as we listen to the sacred words of our tradition...

Lifting us with joy and inspiration as hymns and anthems are sung and played...

Listening...responding...embracing us with peace and calm as prayers are shared.

May all of this, and more, strengthen our faith and enrich our lives...

As our God lovingly and wondrously comes near to us now as we worship!

*Opening Hymn God Is Here! CH280

Prayer for Transformation

Sometimes, in the midst of a busy week, we cannot sense you drawing near to us, Ever-Present God. There are distractions that divert our attention from you, and pressing demands that call us away from you. Please enable us to turn our hearts toward you, during the week as well as Sunday mornings, so that we can truly feel you drawing near at all times...breaking through the distractions and burdens... and transforming our lives.

moment of silence

Words of Grace

The Psalmist proclaims that "God is good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you". As we remember to pause and call to God when life becomes overwhelming, our God will surely draw near with steadfast love and new life. Amen.



Epistle James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace,

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? 2You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. 7Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you doubleminded.

Gospel Mark 9:30-37

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." 32But they did not understand what he was saving and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" 34But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 35He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." 36Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

Reflection "The Power of Humility" The Rev. Charles Ericson



Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is comfortable for you.

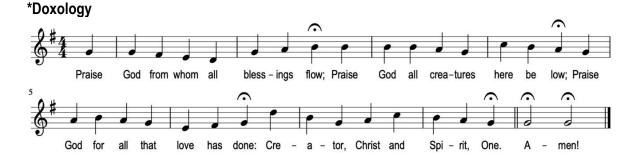
The following are offered as examples...

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/trespass against us.
And 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

Your financial offerings may be placed in the collection plates as they come around, or mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC, PO Box 36, Mansfield Center, CT 06250, or given online at: www.myfcc.info

Musical Offering Bobbi Giardina



*Prayer of Dedication

We bring these gifts to you, Holy One, out of devotion to you and our desire to follow Jesus' example of selflessness and sacrifice. We pray that you would bless our offerings, and use them through our church's ministries and missions to provide food and shelter, promote peace and justice, teach our faith story to all ages, and spread good news in every corner of your glorious creation. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

*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

The Week Ahead....

Monday, September 23

7:00pm Take Note! rehearsal in Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, September 25

1:00pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, September 29

10:15am Worship and Worship Circle