



*The First Congregational Church
of the United Church of Christ
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*

RALLY SUNDAY

September 10, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.

****For those worshipping at home: you are invited to text the names of those attending to 413-644-6435 that we might welcome you. Please also include prayers of joys and concerns as we will name them in worship. ****

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

Peter Frost

PRELUDE

Horns (18th century), anon.

FRAMING WORDS

Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT / TIME OF GRATITUDE

*GATHERING SONG

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

1. I have de - cid - ed to fol-low Je - sus, I have de -
cid - ed to fol-low Je - sus, I have de - cid - ed to fol-low
Je - sus — no turn-ing back, no turn-ing back.

2. The world behind me, the cross before me ...
3. Though none go with me, still I will follow ...

*CALL TO WORSHIP based on Mark 1:14-20, written by Carolyn Brown
Rich Geiler

One: For just this hour,

All: Follow me

One: Listen to my word

All: Follow me

One: Think about your life as my disciple every day

All: Follow me

One: Pray

All: Follow me

One: Sing

All: Follow me

One: Come, let us worship God!

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Disciples*

The Lord's Prayer Our God, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Children may go to music / story time.

INTROIT *Gather Us In, Peter Frost*

CONTEMPORARY READING *The World I Live In, Mary Oliver* Donna Jacobs

I have refused to live
locked in the orderly house of
reasons and proofs.
The world I live in and believe in
is wider than that. And anyway,
what's wrong with *Maybe?*

You wouldn't believe what once or
twice I have seen. I'll just
tell you this:
only if there are angels in your head
will you
ever, possibly, see one.

*HYMN *Morning Has Broken* See page 6

WELCOME Pastor Brent

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 2:4b-25

Elizabeth Young

At the time when YHWH made the heavens and the earth, there was still no wild bush on the earth nor had any wild plant sprung up, for YHWH had not yet sent rain to the earth, and there was no human being to till the soil. Instead, a flow of water would well up from the ground and irrigate the soil.

So YHWH fashioned an earth creature out of the clay of the earth, and blew into its nostrils the breath of life. And the earth creature became a living being. YHWH planted a garden to the east, in Eden—“Land of Pleasure”—and placed in it the earth creature that had been made. Then YHWH caused every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, to spring from the soil. In the center of the garden was the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

A river flows through Eden to water the garden, after which it branches into four tributaries. The first stream is named Pishon, or “Spreader.” It circles through Havilah, a land rich in gold, gold of the highest quality. There are gum resins there, and precious onyx stones. The second stream is named Gihon, or “Gusher,” and it flows through the entire land of Cush. The third stream is the Tigris, which borders Assyria on the east. The fourth stream the Euphrates.

Then YHWH took the earth creature and settled it in the garden of Eden so that it might cultivate and care for the land.

YHWH commanded the earth creature, “You may eat as much as you like from any of the trees of the garden— except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. You must not eat from that tree, for on the day you eat from that tree, that is the day you will die— yes, die.”

Then YHWH said, “It is not good for the earth creature to be alone. I will make a fitting companion for it.” So from the soil YHWH formed all the various wild beasts and all the birds of the air, and brought them to the earth creature to be named. Whatever the earth creature called each one, that became its name. The earth creature gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals. But none of them proved to be a fitting companion, so YHWH made the earth creature fall into a deep sleep, and while it slept, God divided the earth creature in two, then closed up the flesh from its side. YHWH then fashioned the two halves into male and female, and presented them to one another. When the male realized what had happened, he exclaimed,

“This time, this is the one! Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh! Now, she will be Woman, and I will be Man, because we are of one flesh!”

This is why people leave their parents and become bonded to one another, and the two become one flesh. Now, the woman and the man were both naked, though they were not ashamed.

SERMON

Origin Stories

Pastor Brent

*HYMN

Creating God, Your Finger's Trace

See page 7

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Remember to place your prayer tags in the offering plates if you would like them lifted. They will be read as written.

OFFERTORY

Ev'ry Time I feel the Spirit, spiritual arr. William Dawson

John Demler, *soloist*

*DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low; Alleluia, Alleluia.

Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

PRAYER RESPONSE

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

Pastor Brent

*SENDING CHARGE

written by Carolyn Brown

Rich Geiler

One: As you go out into the world

All: Follow me

One: At home with your household

All: Follow me

One: At school and work

All: Follow me

One: In everything you do this week

All: Follow me

One: And as you do, remember that I am with you always,
even to the end of the world.

*HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

See insert

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent



POSTLUDE

Fugue in D, by William Selby

Music Notes ~ Peter Frost

William Selby (1738-1798)

Selby, the composer of this morning's postlude, had an interesting life. He was born in England and began his career on the organ bench at age 17. William Selby published both sacred and secular music.

Selby emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts in 1773. His brother John, also an organist, emigrated in 1771. Selby became organist at King's Chapel in Boston where he organized the first colonial music festival.

Over his career he published psalms and hymns for solo voice, numerous choral works, six songs, as well as music for guitar and keyboard. In addition to his musical career, he managed a liquor store and a grocery.

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Church which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.

The Rev. Brent Damrow, Pastor

Peter Frost, Minister of Music

Will Garrison, Administrator | Marion Pomeroy, Financial Secretary

Will Curtiss and Will Pohl, Livestream Technicians

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Morning Has Broken

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BUNESSAN 5.5.5.4 D

Eleanor Farjeon, 1931

Gaelic melody
Arr. Dale Grotenhuis, 1985

C Am Dm G Dm G C

1. Morn - ing has bro - ken Like the first morn - ing, Black-bird has
2. Sweet the rain's new fall Sun - lit from heav - en, Like the first
3. Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing Born of the

Em Am Em F G C Am F C

spo - ken Like the first bird. Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the
dew - fall On the first grass. Praise for the sweet - ness Of the wet
one light E - den saw play! Praise with e - la - tion, Praise ev - ery

Am G C G Am Dm G7 C

morn - ing! Praise for them, spring - ing Fresh from the Word!
gar - den, Sprung in com - plete - ness Where God's feet pass.
morn - ing, God's re - cre - a - tion Of the new day!

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace

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1. Cre - at - ing God, your fin - gers trace the
 2. Sus - tain - ing God, your hands up - hold earth's
 3. Re - deem - ing God, your arms em - brace all
 4. In - dwell - ing God, your gos - pel claims one



bold de - signs of far - thest space; let sun and moon and
 mys - teries known or yet un - told; let wa - ter's fra - gile
 now de - spised for creed or race; let peace, de - scend - ing
 fam - ily with a bil - lion names; let ev - ery life be



stars and light and what lies hid - den praise your might.
 blend with air, en - a - bling life, pro - claim your care.
 like a dove, make known on earth your heal - ing love.
 touched by grace un - til we praise you face to face.



May be sung as a canon

WORDS: Jeffery Rowthorn, 1974

MUSIC: Thomas Tallis, 1561

TALLIS' CANON

LM

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News and Announcements

Bible Study - Starting September 20

There is simply nothing quite like reading and considering the full Bible together. This year, Pastor Brent will lead a new curriculum *Kerygma: Discovering the Bible (A New Generation)*. There will be hybrid sessions mid-day each Wednesday, and in-person sessions the 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of the month. There are thirty lessons to this study, and it is laid out to take us from Genesis to Revelation. For more information and to sign up, contact the church office.

"Wholehearted Faith"

This year, the Board of Christian Education invites you to join us as we read Evans' final book, *Wholehearted Faith*. We are offering three to four small group sessions that will meet monthly beginning in late September and ending in April. We plan to offer this study in three different ways, all beginning in late September. For more information, contact the church office.

Wednesday Dinners Continue

Eating together nourishes our bodies and our souls. All are welcome to dinner on September 13 at the church. The food will be served 5:30 to 7:30pm or so. The food will be simple, nut-free, and include a vegetarian and gluten-free option. No

one is obligated to bring anything. Those who wish to contribute, help cook, or bring a dish can.

Join the Choir

It is time to sing again! The choir will be welcomed back into worship on September 10. We are in need of sopranos, altos, and tenors to balance our group. We rehearse from 7-8:30 on Thursdays. Questions? Contact Peter.

"Storymapping"

The Justice Task Force is delighted that Maggie Bennett, who is visiting her homeland from the Stockbridge Munsee Community in Wisconsin, will be speaking with us after church on September 24. Maggie uses story mapping, a technique which bridges geographic info systems, photography, history, and archaeology, to tell the story of the travels of the Stockbridge-Munsee people. Please join us to learn more about the descendants of the first members of this church.

Sopranos Riot for Church

On Saturday, September 30 at 7:30 pm, there will be a Soprano Riot in our sanctuary! Nellie Rustick and Amy Shake will team up with pianist David Anderegg to present a concert of new and improved music for one and two sopranos. The proceeds from the riot will support all the programs of the church.