



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

October 15, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.

Each week in worship we welcome people to share their prayers. If you like for a worship leader to read your prayer, please fill out a prayer slip.

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

Ron Hanft

PRELUDE

My Heart Ever Faithful Cantata 68, J. S. Bach

FRAMING WORDS

Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT / TIME OF GRATITUDE

*SONG

Come Away from Rush and Hurry, vss. 1 & 3

See page 5

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Gathering

Terry Wise

adapted from Cheryl Lawrie, based on Mark 3:33-35

One: We gather - people of faith

All: and no faith,

One: people of hope

All: and no hope,

One: people of peace

All: and no peace.

continued

One: we gather with the longing to be made whole again

All: if just for this time, here and now

One: we gather with a prayer,

All: however vague and tenuous,

One: we gather as a family - siblings in Christ

All: Beloved children of God

One: we gather

All: as ready as we'll ever be.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Family, based on Mark 3:33-35

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

Who is My Mother, Who is My Brother, vs. 1

Jack Brown

CONTEMPORARY READING

John O'Donohue, *For a Brother or Sister*

Margo Davis

The knowing that binds us
Is older than the apostrophe of cell
We formed from within the one womb.
All that flowed into us there
From the red village of ancestry
Sowed spores of continuity
That would one day flower
Into flickers of resemblance:
An unconscious gesture
Could echo an ancestor,
And the look of us stir
Recognition of belonging

That is ours alone;
And our difference finding
Its own rhythm of strangeness,
Leading us deeper into a self
That would always know its own
Regardless of difficulty and distance;
And through hurt no other could inflict;
Still somehow beside each other
Though the night is dark
With wind that loves
To clean the bones of ruins,
Making further room for light.

*HYMN

Who is My Mother, Who is My Brother vss. 2-4 See page 6

WELCOME

Pastor Brent

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Ruth 1:1-17

Cathy Clark

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there for about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons or her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had had consideration for his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.' Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, 'No, we will return with you to your people.' But Naomi said, 'Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.' Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, 'See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.' But Ruth said,

'Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die — there will I be buried.

May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!

SERMON *Clinging* Pastor Brent
*HYMN *This Is My Song* See page 7

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* Jack Brown
C. Hampton/D. Lasky

*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

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT Jeremy Ridenour

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

PRAYER RESPONSE *God's Great Peace, Este's Psalms, 1592*

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS Pastor Brent

SENDING PRAYER from the Narrative Lectionary Terry Wise
God of the people, your servant Ruth showed great love when she clung to Naomi. Teach us to show great compassion, and to turn to you when we are in need. Amen

*HYMN *Sent Forth by God's Blessing* See pages 8-9

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent



POSTLUDE *O God, Our Help, Charles Callahan*

Verses
1 & 3

Come Away from Rush and Hurry 83

F B \flat B \flat /C C7 F

1 Come a - way from rush and hur - ry to the still - ness of God's peace;
2 In the pas - tures of God's good - ness we lie down to rest our soul.
3 Come, then, chil - dren, with your bur - dens—life's con - fu - sions, fears and pain.

F B \flat B \flat /C C7 F

from our vain am - bi - tion's wor - ry, come to Christ to find re - lease.
From the wa - ters of God's mer - cy we drink deep - ly, are made whole.
Leave them at the cross of Je - sus; take in - stead his king - dom's reign.

Am7 Dm Am7 Dm Am B \flat

Come a - way from noise and clam - or, life's de - mands and fren - zied pace;
At the ta - ble of God's pres - ence all the saints are rich - ly fed.
Bring your thirsts, for he will quench them—he a - lone will sat - is - fy.

C7 F B \flat B \flat /C C7 F

come to join the peo - ple gath - ered here to seek and find God's face.
With the oil of God's a - noint - ing in - to serv - ice we are led.
All our long - ings find at - tain - ment when to self we glad - ly die.

Words: Marva J. Dawn, 1948—
Music: *The Sacred Harp*, 1844; arr. Jack Schrader, 1942—
Words © 1999 Marva J. Dawn
Music arr. © 1992 Hope Publishing Company

U.S.A.
8.7.8.7.D.
BEACH SPRING
For four-part arrangement see 46

Verses
2 & 4

Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother? 336

E♭ *B♭* *E♭* *B♭7* *E♭*

1 Who is my moth - er, who is my broth - er?
 2 Dif - ferent - ly a - bled, dif - ferent - ly la - beled
 3 Love will re - late us— col - or or sta - tus
 4 Bound by one vi - sion, met for one mis - sion

A♭ *Gm* *Cm* *F* *Cm6* *B♭*

All those who gath - er round Je - sus Christ:
 wid - en the cir - cle round Je - sus Christ:
 can't seg - re - gate us, round Je - sus Christ:
 we claim each oth - er, round Je - sus Christ:

E♭ *B♭* *E♭* *B♭m* *E♭7*

Spir - it - blown peo - ple born from the gos - pel
 crutch - es and stig - mas, cul - tures' e - nig - mas
 fam - i - ly fail - ings, hu - man de - rail - ings—
 here is my moth - er, here is my broth - er,

A♭ *E♭* *B♭7* *E♭*

sit at the ta - ble, round Je - sus Christ.
 all come to - geth - er round Je - sus Christ.
 all are ac - cept - ed, round Je - sus Christ.
 kin - dred in Spir - it, through Je - sus Christ.

Words: Shirley Erena Murray, 1931—
 Music: Jack Schrader, 1942—
 Words and Music © 1992 Hope Publishing Company

New Zealand/U.S.A.
 10.9.10.9.
 KINDRED

1 This is my song, O God of all the na-tions, a song of
2 My coun-try's skies are blu-er than the o-cean, and sun-light

peace for lands a-far and mine. This is my home, the
beams on clo-ver-leaf and pine; But oth-er lands have

coun-try where my heart is; here are my hopes, my
sun-light, too, and clo-ver, and skies are ev-ery-

dreams, my ho-ly shrine; But oth-er hearts in oth-er lands are
where as blue as mine. O hear my song, O God of all the

beat-ing with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.
na-tions, a song of peace for their land and for mine.

These stanzas, published during the period between the two world wars, express a hope for lasting peace among all nations, races, and cultures. Finlandia is derived from a "tone poem" of the same name by Finnish composer Jean Sibelius.

Tune: FINLANDIA 10.10.10.10.10.
Jean Sibelius, 1899
Arr. for The Hymnal, 1933

648

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

C F C F Dm Gm C

1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing our true faith con-fess-ing, the
2 With praise and thanks-giv-ing to God ev-er liv-ing, the

F Bb F C7 F C

peo-ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave. The
tasks of our ev-ery-day life we will face. Our

F C F Dm Gm C

sup-er is end-ed; oh, now be ex-tend-ed the
faith ev-er shar-ing, in love ev-er car-ing, em-

F Bb F C7 F

fruits of our wor-ship in all who be-lieve. The
brac-ing God's chil-dren of each tribe and race. With

F C7 F C7 F C

seed of the teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls reach - ing, shall
 your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us: u -

F C#dim7 Dm C G C

blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all. God's
 nite us as one in this life that we share. Then

F C F Dm Gm C

grace did in - vite us, and love shall u - nite us to
 may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing give

F Bb F C7 F

work for God's king - dom and an - swer the call.
 hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

News and Announcements

Neighbors in Need

In 2023, the Neighbors in Need theme BEHOLD! continues. This year's focus is on environmental justice. Plastics, electronics, and other non-compostable wastes are being shipped across, and even tossed into, our waterways, launched into space, as well as buried in landfills. As people of faith, we believe these egregious acts are sinful and unholy. We must be better stewards of our planet!

Southern Berkshire Winter Coat Drive

Keep your neighbors warm this winter! This coat drive is taking place through November 9. Please donate gently used outerwear for children and adults, e.g. winter coats, boots, snowpants, hats, gloves and scarves. All must be in wearable condition, clean with no stains or tears. The goal is 1,000 coats!

Drop-off boxes:

Great Barrington: Berkshire South Regional Community Center; Muddy Brook Elementary, WEB Du Bois Middle School, Berkshire Co-Op. Sheffield: Undermountain Elementary School, Mt Everett High School, Christ Trinity Church. West Stockbridge: Congregational Church.

If you can't get to one of these locations, contact Cindy Brown for pick-up or

hand-off at church (email: cindytoddbrown@gmail.com, text: 413-446-2623). Distribution: November 11, Berkshire South Regional Community Center, Great Barrington.

Volunteers Welcomed!

Roles include: Hospitality – we need both greeters for the front walkway and hosts for fellowship hour. Worship – we would love to identify folks who want to help usher or read. Storytellers and assistants need for our kids in the classroom. Please see the weekly email, the church website, or call the office for more information. Thanks!

Save the Date - Music on Main

Saturday, November 4 at 3:00pm

The concert series continues! Muneko Otani, violin; Ronald Feldman, cello; and Hui-Mei Lin, piano, will present works by Lili Boulanger, Beethoven, and Brahms. Suggested donation: \$25. For more information visit the church website, stockbridgeucc.org

Making Connections

Have you been visiting this church for a while and thinking about calling it home? Please contact Pastor Brent to set up a time to learn more about what membership means, our bold and progressive history, and our open and hopeful vision for the future.



Stewart Colley, 1953

A Childhood in Words and Song Part Two

presented by
Ronnie Cunningham
Saturday, October 21, 2023
4:00pm

The First Congregational Church, UCC, Stockbridge
4 Main Street

Admission: \$15 at the door. Donations in any amount
are welcome!

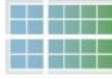
All funds raised go to the restoration of the church organ.

For more info: 413/298-3137 or
stockbridgeucc.org



Veronica and Michael with
Eric Brunch, Romisgate, 1950

Reception to follow



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Stockbridge, Massachusetts

Music Notes

In all of the 14 hymnals in my personal collection, I was able to find only one hymn that expressed the text for this week from Mark 3:33: "Who is my Mother, Who is my Brother?" Jack Brown will introduce the hymn in the Introit. After the reading that follows, the congregation is invited to complete singing this hymn. The Offertory is based on the 1980s Calvin Hampton tune for the well-known text, "There's a Wideness In God's Mercy," written in the early 19th Century by Frederick William Farber. In our version today, the Hampton tune is further developed in a 2018 setting by David Lasky, which conveys the mystery of God's mercy. Jack Brown brings it all together for us today. It takes a village to raise a hymn.

~ Ron Hanft

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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