



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

June 23, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Each week in worship we welcome people to share their prayers. If you would like for a worship leader to read your prayer, fill out a prayer slip. Nursery care is available during the worship service; please ask an usher.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE *Lobe den Herren*, by Dorothy Sheets Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

*GATHERING SONG *Heleluyan (Alleluia)*

Native American (Muscogee) Transcribed by Charles Webb, 1989
Native American (Muscogee)

He - le - lu - yan, he - le - lu - yan; he - le, he - le - lu - yan;
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia; al - le, al - le - lu - ia;

he - le - lu - yan, he - le - lu - yan; he - le, he - le - lu - yan.
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia; al - le, al - le - lu - ia.

* *May be sung as a canon.*

Hymns, Psalms, & Spiritual Songs (1990)

Music: Transcription © 1989 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Terry Wise

One: Strength is commanding the wind and sea to obey,

All: Strength is wielding a slingshot in the face of a raging giant.

One: Strength is accepting vulnerability from inside the boat,

All: Strength is standing in solidarity with the powerless.

One: Strength is turning a cheek, Strength is loving an enemy.

All: We come to worship a God who redefines our vision of strength.

~ written by Katherine Hawker

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Strength*

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.**

CONTEMPORARY READING

Terry Wise

Jesus invites us into a story that is bigger than ourselves, bigger than our culture, bigger even than our imaginations, and yet we get to tell that story with the scandalous particularity of our particular moment and place in time. We are storytelling creatures because we are fashioned in the image of a storytelling God. May we never neglect the gift of that. May we never lose our love for telling the tale. ~ Rachel Held Evans, *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*

*HYMN *Up In The Air So High* by Joan and Roger Bradfield

**Up in the air so high, we're flying up in God's blue sky, we're looking down
on God's green world, God put it there for us.**

**Up in the sky so blue, we're looking for a friend or two, or three or four or
even more, God put them there for us!**

**The world is such a great big place and we're so very small, but we know that
we are all God's children, and we know God loves us all!**

**Up in the air so high, we're flying up in God's blue sky, we're looking down
on God's green world, God put it there for us.**

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS 1 Samuel 17: 1a, 4-11, 32, 38-49

Rich Geiler

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armoured with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield-bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, 'Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.' And the Philistine said, 'Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together.' When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. David said to Saul, 'Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.'

Saul clothed David with his armour; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. David strapped Saul's sword over the armour, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, 'I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them.' So David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. The Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, 'Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.' But David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand.'

When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

SERMON *Getting Used to It* Pastor Brent

*HYMN *If You But Trust in God to Guide You* See page 5

MOMENT FOR MINISTRY Riverbrook Bible Study Jeremy Ridenour

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Frühlingsnacht* (Spring Night) Schumann/Liszt; Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

*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 *God be with you*, by Dorsey and Hutchins (1940)

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN *To God Be the Glory* See pages 6-7

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent

*SUNG RESPONSE *God Be With You Till We Meet Again*, vs. 1

God be with you till we meet again;

Loving counsels guide, uphold you,

With a Shepherd's care enfold you:

God be with you till we meet again.

POSTLUDE *Widmung* (Dedication) Schumann/Liszt; Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

If You But Trust in God to Guide You

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Georg Neumark, 1641

Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.

Ps. 55:22

1 If you but trust in God to guide you, with hope-ful heart through
2 On - ly be still, and wait God's plea - sure in cheer-ful hope, with
3 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways un - swerv-ing; of - fer your ser - vice

all your ways, you will find strength, with God be - side you,
heart con - tent, trust-ing that grace which knows no mea - sure
faith - ful - ly, and trust God's word, though un - de - serv-ing,

to bear the worst of e - vil days; For those who trust God's
will by un - bound - ed Love be sent; Nor doubt our in - most
there find the truth to set you free; God will not fail to

change-less love build on the rock that will not move.
wants are clear to One who holds us al - ways near.
guide and bless those who em - brace God's faith - ful - ness.

The comforting words of Psalm 55:22 inspired this beautiful hymn by Georg Neumark, who wrote both words and music. Neumark was a German poet who suffered much during the Thirty Years' War.

Tune: NEUMARK 9.8.9.8.8.8.
Georg Neumark, 1657

To God Be the Glory

TO GOD BE THE GLORY 11.11.11 with refrain

Fanny Jane Crosby, 1875

William Howard Doane, 1875

1. To God be the glo - ry, great things He hath done!
 2. Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,

So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
 And great our re - joic - ing through Je - sus the Son;

Who yield - ed His life an a - tone - ment for sin,
 But pur - er, and high - er, and great - er will be

And o - pened the life - gate that all may go in.
 Our won - der, our trans - port, when Je - sus we see.

Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the peo - ple re - joice!

O come to the Fa - ther through Je - sus the Son,

And give Him the glo - ry: great things He hath done!

Music Notes ~ Peter Frost

From the Abstract of Hui-Mei Lin's doctoral dissertation,
Liszt Solo Transcriptions of Schubert's Winterreise:

Liszt wrote approximately 600 piano pieces, of which only 218 are original compositions. The rest are transcriptions, fantasies, and variations that are based on music of other composers. This study examines the purposes of Liszt's transcriptions: first, to bring masterpieces to a wider public where piano is accessible in private homes; second to promote the lesser-known composers at the time, such as Schubert and Wagner.

~On a side note; the postlude *Widmung* was actually one of the Schumann songs Hui-Mei and I chose to be sung at our wedding.

Church Picnic - August 18

Save the date! Kay Schneyer Holden and Neil Holden have once again graciously agreed to be our hosts for the annual Church Picnic at idyllic Mohawk Lake in Stockbridge. Mark your calendar now. Dig out your swimsuit, dust off your favorite side dish recipe, and “relish” the anticipation!

Pride Month

As an Open and Affirming (and extravagantly welcoming) Congregation we celebrate our LGBTQ+ Community. The community conversation about Austen Hartke's *transforming – the Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians* is off to a great start. Registration is closed, but if you would like a copy of the book for a future discussion, contact the office.

Welcome! We are Open and Affirming, 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.

As followers of Christ and committed to Isaiah's charge to “maintain justice and do what is right,” we acknowledge with gratitude and humility that we are learning, speaking, gathering, and worshiping on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

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