



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

August 25, 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 *This is My Father's World*, arr. Penny Rodriguez

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME Rev. Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING SONG

Psalm 84

Response *Unison* *Antiphon: Peter Niedmann, 1994*

Hap-py are those who live in your house, ev - er sing-ing your praise.

R ¹How lovely is your dwelling place,
O God of hosts!

²My soul longs, indeed it faints
for the courts of God;
my heart and my flesh sing
for joy to the living God.

³Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may lay her young,
at your altars,
O God of hosts, my Ruler
and my God.

⁴Happy are those who live
in your house,
ever singing your praise. *R*

*CALL TO WORSHIP Based on Psalm 84

Sarah Conly

One: How beautiful are the places where you dwell, O Lord!

**All: This house cannot contain your glory;
even the heavens are bursting with the goodness of your presence!**

One: Happy are those who find their strength in you.

**All: Hear our prayers this day, Holy God,
as we proclaim your praises to all the earth!**

~ written by Amy Loving. Posted on *The Worship Closet* website.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Beauty*

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.**

*HYMN

All Things Bright and Beautiful

See page 5

Refrain will be sung before verse 1 and after verse 4.

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Liza Catino

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors--Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor--lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

"Now, therefore, revere the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the LORD.

Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

continued

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

SERMON *Who will We Serve?* Pastor Brent

*HYMN *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* See page 6

A BLESSING AT THE BEGINNING OF SERVICE

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING Pastor Brent

OFFERTORY *How Sweet to Reflect*, by Alice Parker Rich Geiler, *tenor*

*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

MOMENT FOR MINISTRY Planned Giving John Canning,
Tom Ruffing, Frank Russell

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

PRAYER RESPONSE *From A Year of Amens*, by David Anderegg

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN *This is My Father's World* See page 7

*SENDING CHARGE/BENEDICTION by Nathan Nettleton David Anderegg

Deacon: Hear this: the Lord our God is the one and only Lord.

Therefore go out into the world and love the Lord your God
with all your heart, soul, mind and strength,
and love others as you love yourself.

continued

People: Blessed with God's love we go to be that love.

Pastor: And may God give you justice and freedom;
May Christ Jesus set you free for love;
and may the Holy Spirit go where you go
and protect you on your way.

People: Take our hearts, O, God, and seal it for your very own.

*SUNG RESPONSE *Walking Each Other Home* See insert

POSTLUDE *This Little Light of Mine*, arr. Nancy Raabe

Music Notes

Today's Offertory anthem is from Alice Parker's *Melodious Accord: A Concert of Praise*, and uses the hymn tune Eden of Love from *Harmonia Sacra*. The tenor soloist is reflecting on the joys that await him in heaven, the Eden of Love.

Today's Amen comes from David Andereggs's *A Year of Amens*, which we will be doing into the Advent season.

Thank you to Rich Geiler for providing the special music this morning!

Tracy Wilson, Minister of Music pro tempore

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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All Things Bright and Beautiful

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ROYAL OAK 7.6.7.6 with refrain

*Refrain will be sung before verse 1 and after verse 4.

English melody, 17th century

Adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915

Harm. for *The Hymnbook*, 1953

Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

Refrain

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, All crea-tures great and small,

All things wise and won - der - ful: The Lord God made them all.

1. Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, Each lit - tle bird that sings:
 2. The pur - ple-head - ed moun-tain, The riv - er run - ning by,
 3. The cold wind in the win - ter, The pleas - ant sum - mer sun,
 4. God gave us eyes to see them, And lips that we might tell

God made their glow - ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
 The sun - set, and the morn - ing That bright - ens up the sky,
 The ripe fruits in the gar - den: God made them ev - ery one.
 How great is God Al - might - y, Who has made all things well.*

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 400

1. Come, thou Fount of ev - ery bless - ing, tune my heart to
 2. Here I raise mine Eb - e - ne - zer; hith - er by thy
 3. O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con -

sing thy grace; streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing,
 help I'm come; and I hope, by thy good plea - sure,
 strained to be! Let thy good - ness, like a fet - ter,

call for songs of loud - est praise. Teach me some me - lo - dious
 safe - ly to ar - rive at home. Je - sus sought me when a
 bind my wan - dering heart to thee. Prone to wan - der, Lord, I

son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove. Praise the mount! I'm
 stran - ger, wan - dering from the fold of God; he, to res - cue
 feel it, prone to leave the God I love; here's my heart, O

fixed up - on it, mount of thy re - deem - ing love.
 me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
 take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

WORDS: Robert Robinson, 1758 (1 Sam. 7:12)
 MUSIC: Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813

NETTLETON
 87.87 D

This Is My Father's World

1. This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-tening ears all
 2. This is my Fa-ther's world, the birds their car-ols raise, the
 3. This is my Fa-ther's world. O let me ne'er for - get that

na - ture sings, and round me rings the mu - sic of the spheres.
 morn - ing light, the lil - y white, de - clare their mak - er's praise.
 though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul - er yet.

This is my Fa-ther's world: I rest me in the thought of
 This is my Fa-ther's world: he shines in all that's fair; in the
 This is my Fa-ther's world: why should my heart be sad? The

rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won-ders wrought.
 rust-ling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev-ery-where.
 Lord is King; let the heav-ens ring! God reigns; let the earth be glad!

WORDS: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1901
 MUSIC: Trad. English melody; adapt. by Franklin L. Sheppard, 1915

TERRA BEATA
 SMD

September 1 – Outdoor Worship

As the summer begins to give way to the Fall we will gather out on the lawn for worship as the new beginning of the program year is close at hand.

Our text for the day is, so wonderfully, the story of Creation from Genesis. Amidst the wonder of this place we will sing, we will pray, and we will revel in the joy of God's abundance. We will also get a chance to view the spectacular work done on the front of the church and to the steeple.

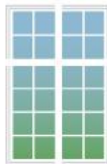
Feel to bring a chair that is comfortable for you or feel free to use the church chairs we will have out in abundance.

September 8 – Rally Day

To the sound of the choir in the loft and the children in the church we will once again launch the program year. Our worship will center on the idea of covenant and grace and our time together will be full of story, re-connection, and re-commitment.

After worship we will enjoy a meal together outside complete with games, information on upcoming programs, and the chance to linger in the beautiful fall weather.

Come and see. Come and share your stories. Come and remember the gift of church!



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CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

— Stockbridge, Massachusetts —