



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

**WORSHIP: THE PROMISE OF PASSOVER**

*September 29, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.*

A reminder: children are invited to Sunday School starting at 10:00 a.m. and will come to worship after the offering. Nursery care is available during the worship service; please ask an usher.

Note: We will lift prayers of joy and concern this morning in worship. If you would prefer to submit a prayer to be read, please write it on one of the prayer slips in the folders in each pew and return it to the prayer box in the Narthex or give it to a Deacon before our prayer time.

**PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

GATHERING MUSIC      Mazurkas Op. 7, Nr. 2 and Op. 7, Nr. 4

Tracy Wilson

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

**GATHERING IN WORSHIP**

\*INTROIT (Congregation invited to join.) *Gather Us In*, verse 4

**Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light-years away,  
but here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the Kingdom, now is the day.**

**Gather us in and hold us forever, gather us in and  
make us your own; gather us in all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Drea Pecor

One: The Spirit of the Lord was upon the faithful in Ancient Egypt

**Left: God said be ready for liberation is coming**

*Right: And they listened and obeyed – ready to set forth.*

One: The Spirit of the Lord is hear ready to alight upon us.

**Left: Can we hear God’s whisper to be ready for liberation is coming**

*Right: Can we listen and obey – will we be ready to be on the move.*

One: For the Spirit is doing what it always does

**Left: The Spirit anoints us and sends us forth to bring good news**

*Right: To bind up, to proclaim favor, to comfort, to provide, to set free.*

One: The day of the Lord is coming.

**Left: The day of the Lord has come.**

*Right: We are ready to worship, come Holy Spirit, Come!*

\*HYMN

*We Hail You God’s Anointed* vss. 1 & 4

See page 6

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

CONTEMPORARY READING *Instruction – Pekudei*, by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Hannah Fries

\*HYMN

*God Moves in a Mysterious Way*, verse 1

See page 7

SCRIPTURE READING Exodus 12:1-13, 13:1-8

Hannah Fries

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter

herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the Lord. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

The Lord said to Moses: Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the Israelites, of human beings and animals, is mine.

Moses said to the people, 'Remember this day on which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, because the Lord brought you out from there by strength of hand; no leavened bread shall be eaten. Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this observance in this month. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a festival to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen in your possession, and no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory. You shall tell your child on that day, "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt."

SERMON

*Ready, Set, Go!*

Pastor Brent

\*HYMN

*God Moves in a Mysterious Way, vss. 2-4*

See page 7

MOMENT FOR ENGAGEMENT Board of Growth & Fellowship

## **OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

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.**

PRAYER RESPONSE

Tracy Wilson

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Pastor Brent

OFFERTORY            Scenes from Childhood, Opus 15, by Schumann

\*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

TIME WITH CHILDREN

\*SHARING OF THE PEACE

## GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

\*HYMN

*Sent Forth by God's Blessing*    tune: The Ash Grove

Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.

The service is ended, O now be extended the fruits of our worship  
in all who believe.

The seed of the teaching, receptive hearts reaching,  
shall blossom in action for God and for all.

God's grace did invite us, and love shall unite us  
to work for God's realm and to answer the call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,

The tasks of our everyday life we will face.

Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,

Embracing God's children of each tribe and race.

With your grace you feed us,

with your light now lead us, unite us as one in this life that we share.

Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving  
give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

SUNG BENEDICTION (congregation is seated)

*Go Now in Peace*, Natalie Sleeth

Kid's Choir

POSTLUDE

Mazurka Op 24, Nr. 2, Chopin

The Connections class will meet after worship in the Conference Room.

### **Music Notes** ~ Tracy Wilson

Special thanks to Liza Catino for leading our kids choir this month.

Chopin is one of my favorite composers. The mazurkas are Polish dances in triple time with accents on the second or third beats.



**Thank you** to all who have helped with today's service, including Deacons Sarah Conly and Drea Pecor; reader Hannah Fries; fellowship John and Janet Canning; storytellers Terry Wise and Cathy Clark. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Scarlett Ritcher is in the nursery.

# We Hail You God's Anointed

James Montgomery, 1821; alt.

Ps. 72

1 We hail you God's a - nointed, the long - a - wait - ed One!  
 2 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;  
 3 The wise shall bow be - fore you and gold and in - cense bring;  
 4 O'er ev - ery foe vic - to - rious, you on your throne shall rest;

Hail in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!  
 and joy and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.  
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, and praise all peo - ples sing;  
 from age to age more glo - rious, all - bless - ing and all - blessed:

You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive free;  
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald, go,  
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows be said,  
 The tide of time shall nev - er your cov - e - nant re - move;

to take a - way trans - gres - sion, and rule in eq - ui - ty.  
 and righ - teous - ness, in foun - tains, from hill to val - ley flow.  
 your realm is still in - creas - ing, with you, O Christ, as head.  
 your name shall stand for - ev - er, your change - less name of Love.

*Written as a Christmas hymn for the Moravian settlement in Yorkshire, England, this hymn has enjoyed widespread popularity from the beginning. It is characteristic of Montgomery's deep faith and passion for social justice.*

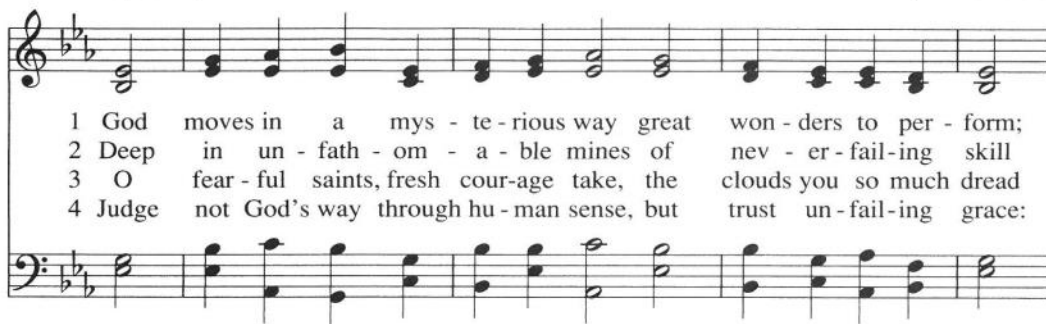
Tune: ELLACOMBE C.M.D.  
 Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Wirttembergischen katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

# God Moves in a Mysterious Way

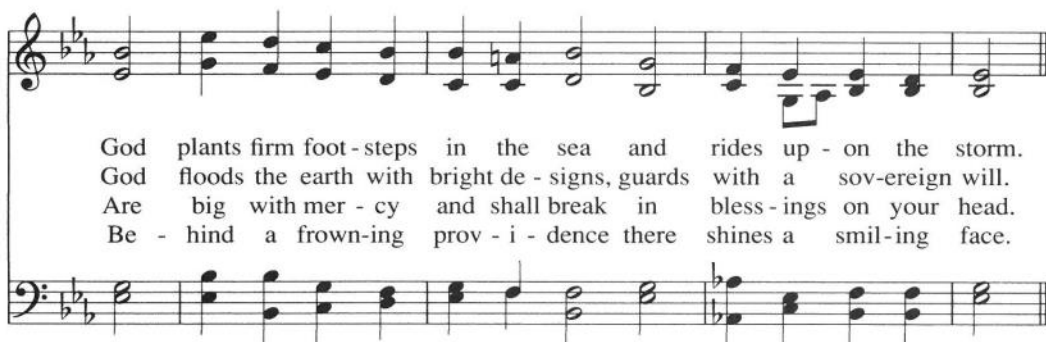
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William Cowper, 1774; alt.

Ps. 77:19; Rom. 11:33-36



1 God moves in a mys - te - rious way great won - ders to per - form;  
2 Deep in un - fath - om - a - ble mines of nev - er - fail - ing skill  
3 O fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take, the clouds you so much dread  
4 Judge not God's way through hu - man sense, but trust un - fail - ing grace:



God plants firm foot - steps in the sea and rides up - on the storm.  
God floods the earth with bright de - signs, guards with a sov - ereign will.  
Are big with mer - cy and shall break in bless - ings on your head.  
Be - hind a frown - ing prov - i - dence there shines a smil - ing face.

5 God's pur - pos - es will rip - en fast,  
un - fold - ing ev - ery hour;  
The bud may have a bit - ter taste,  
but sweet will be the flower.

6 Our un - be - lief is sure to err  
and scan God's work in vain;  
God is God's own in - ter - pret - er,  
whose truth shall be made plain.

*This hymn by the English poet William Cowper seems to have been written a few months after his suicide attempt. It was first published in John Newton's Twenty-six Letters on Religious Subjects.*

Tune: DUNDEE C.M.  
The 150 Psalms of David, Edinburgh, 1615

*The New Century Hymnal (1995)*

### **Service for Dr. John Miner**

On Saturday, October 5 at 1:00pm, we will gather in the sanctuary to celebrate the life of our friend and a long-time member of the church, Dr. John Miner.

### **Youth Group Expedition**

Sunday, October 6, 11:30-3:00

Another chance to RSVP with names, food restrictions, and which transportation you will use. Church youth age 10 or older, and their friends, are invited. We will hike around the pond, swim (we hope), get in boats, eat lunch around the fire, make s'mores, and play games. Parents are welcome to come and stay. We're looking forward to

this! Find Ted Randolph, Terry Wise, Diane Piraino, Elisabeth Bellows, Joshua Hall, or Pastor Brent at Fellowship.

### **Active Prayer of Thanksgiving**

On World Communion Sunday, Oct 6, we will continue the practice of bringing food or money for a local pantry as an act of gratitude for the gift of communion. Please bring non-perishable food items/toiletries and/or cash or check for People's Pantry. Make checks payable to First Congregational Church, memo line: People's Pantry.

### **Community Supper**

Bring your appetite! The next supper will be Wednesday, October 9, starting at 5:30pm.

*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.*

(413) 298-3137 | office@stockbridgeucc.org | stockbridgeucc.org

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