



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

October 13, 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

PRELUDE *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* Nettleton by J. Wyeth, arr. Krug

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

GATHERING IN WORSHIP

*CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT

God is so good, God is so good.

God is so good, God's so good to me.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Elizabeth Young

One: God is good all the time.

All: All the time, God is good.

One: God gives strength to the weak,

All: and breaks the power of the mighty;

One: God gives food to the famished,

All: and makes those already full work for their bread;

continued

One: God raises the poor from the dust,
All: and humbles the proud and arrogant.

One: God is good all the time.

All: All the time, God is good.

*HYMN

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

See page 5

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

CONTEMPORARY READING *On Prayer*, by Czeslaw Milosz

Gary Cilley

You ask me how to pray to someone who is not.
All I know is that prayer constructs a velvet bridge
And walking it we are aloft, as on a springboard,
Above landscapes the color of ripe gold
Transformed by a magic stopping of the sun.
That bridge leads to the shore of Reversal
Where everything is just the opposite and the word 'is'
Unveils a meaning we hardly envisioned.
Notice: I say we; there, every one, separately,
Feels compassion for others entangled in the flesh
And knows that if there is no other shore
We will walk that aerial bridge all the same.

HYMN (please remain seated) *In Solitude*, verse 1

See page 8

SCRIPTURE READING 1 Samuel 1:9-11, 19-20; 2:1-10

Jo Ann Levitt

After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the Lord. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head.'

They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.' [Upon leaving Samuel in the care of the priests at the Temple,] Hannah prayed and said,

'My heart exults in the Lord;
 my strength is exalted in my God.
 My mouth derides my enemies,
 because I rejoice in my victory.
 'There is no Holy One like the Lord,
 no one besides you;
 there is no Rock like our God.
 Talk no more so very proudly,
 let not arrogance come from your mouth;
 for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
 and by him actions are weighed.
 The bows of the mighty are broken,
 but the feeble gird on strength.
 Those who were full have hired themselves
 out for bread,
 but those who were hungry are fat with
 spoil.
 The barren has borne seven,
 but she who has many children is forlorn.
 The Lord kills and brings to life;

he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
 The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
 he brings low, he also exalts.
 He raises up the poor from the dust;
 he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
 to make them sit with princes
 and inherit a seat of honour.
 For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
 and on them he has set the world.
 'He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
 but the wicked shall be cut off in
 darkness;
 for not by might does one prevail.
 The Lord! His adversaries shall be
 shattered;
 the Most High will thunder in heaven.
 The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
 he will give strength to his king,
 and exalt the power of his anointed.'

SERMON	<i>A Prayerful Life</i>	Pastor Brent
*HYMN	<i>In Solitude</i> , verses 2-5	See page 8
MOMENT FOR ENGAGEMENT	Stewardship	Frank Russell
SUNG RESPONSE (please remain seated)		

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples, verse 1

**Today we all are called to be Disciples of the Lord,
 To help to set the captive free, Make plowshare out of sword,
 To feed the hungry, quench their thirst, Make love and peace our fast,
 To serve the poor and homeless first, Our ease and comfort last.**

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.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER RESPONSE *Amen* Danish Amen

CALL TO THE OFFERING Pastor Brent

OFFERTORY *Faith of Our Fathers*
St. Catherine by Henri F. Bent; refrain by James Walton; arr. Krug

*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 *Great is Your Faithfulness* See pages 6-7

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE *Simple Gifts* Shaker melody, arr. Fisher

Music Notes ~ Tracy Wilson

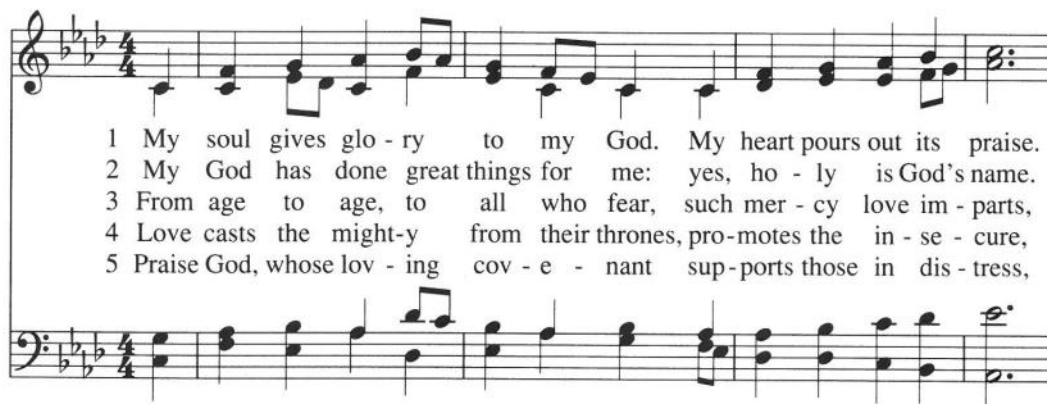
We welcome back the Bell Choir after several months of much needed rest. Thank you, Mary Jo Erickson Connor, for leading the ensemble and for your joyful ringers.

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

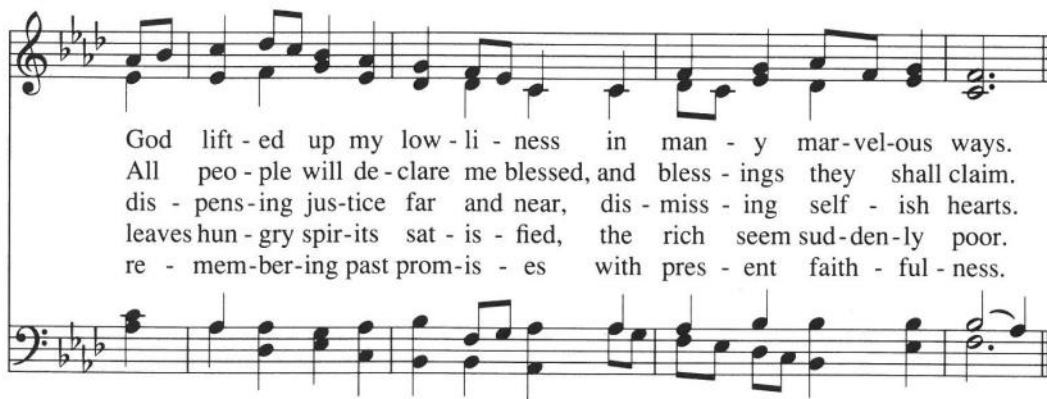
119

Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Sam. 2:1-10



1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
2 My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.
3 From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,
4 Love casts the might-y from their thrones, pro-motes the in - se - cure,
5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup-ports those in dis - tress,



God lift - ed up my low - li - ness in man - y mar-vel-ous ways.
All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
dis - pens-ing jus-tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.
leaves hun - gry spir-its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud-den-ly poor.
re - mem-ber-ing past prom-is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

This New Testament canticle, with its mosaic of liberation motifs that proclaim the justice of God, is known as the "Magnificat," the opening word of its Latin translation.

Tune: MORNING SONG C.M.
Melody from Kentucky Harmony, 1816
Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

Update on Minister of Music Search

The Church Council formally appointed a Search Committee at its last meeting. The Committee will be chaired by Liza Catino and includes the following: Cindy Brown, Brian Farrell, Jon Geldert, Deb McMenemy, Gary Schieneman, and Pastor Brent (ex-officio). Tracy Wilson is posting the position in several places including the American Guild of Organists and the UCC. Materials related to the search are available to share with prospective candidates and input is welcome and will be sought through the process.

Lam. 3:22-23

Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923; alt.

1 Great is your faith - ful - ness, O God, Cre - a - tor,*
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring-time and har - vest,
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace so en - dur - ing,

with you no shad - ow of turn - ing we see.
 sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove,
 your own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide.

You do not change, your com - pas - sions they fail not;
 Join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness
 Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,

all of your good - ness for - ev - er will be.
 to your great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.
 bless - ings all mine with ten thou - sand be - side.

*originally "my Father"

This hymn was one of a number sent by poet Thomas O. Chisholm to composer William M. Runyan for musical settings. It became a favorite of Will Houghton, president of Moody Bible Institute, whose enthusiasm helped establish its popularity.

Tune: FAITHFULNESS 11.10.11.10, with refrain
 William M. Runyan, 1923

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The New Century Hymnal (1995)

Refrain

Great is your faith-ful-ness! Great is your faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by
 morn-ing new mer-cies I see; All I have need-ed your
 hand has pro-vid-ed, Great is your faith-ful-ness, God, un-to me!

Thank you to all who have helped with today's service, including Deacons Gary Cilley and Elizabeth Young; reader Jo Ann Levitt; fellowship Donna Jacobs; storytellers Elisabeth Bellows and Cindy Brown. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Scarlett Ritcher is in the nursery.

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. In 2024, the Neighbors in Need theme is "Mental Health Justice For All!" A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter where one is in life's mental health journey. Please look for a giving envelope in today's bulletin.

Rom. 8:26–27; Eph. 5:18–20

Ruth Duck, 1983

1 In sol - i - tude, in sol - i - tude, I come to God in prayer.
 2 When-e'er the world is troub-ling me, and stress is all a - round,
 3 In sea - sons of per - plex - i - ty, in times of deep de - spair,
 4 And when my heart is bur - dened down with cares for those I love,
 5 With psalms and hymns and songs of praise be - fore my God I'll come,

In si - lence and sim - plic - i - ty, my spir - it blos - soms there.
 I seek the pres - ence of my God, and heal - ing light is found.
 I light a can - dle in the night and turn to God in prayer.
 too deep for words, with groans and sighs, de - scends the ho - ly dove.
 till death it - self is past and gone, and I ar - rive at home.

Ruth Duck has commented that "these words were inspired by a pentatonic melody which came to me as I taught myself to play the mandolin." They are an expression of her "deep-rooted southern spirituality."

Tune: LAND OF REST C.M.
 Traditional United States melody
 Harm. Annabel Morris Buchanan, 1938
The New Century Hymnal (1995)

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.

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

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