



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

CONSECRATION SUNDAY

November 10, 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 not lift prayers of joy and concern this morning in worship. If you have a prayer concern, please fill out a prayer slip and place it in the offering plate. All prayers will be shared with Pastor Brent.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE *Hymn of Thanksgiving*, arr. Lorenz Bell Choir

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME Rev. Brent Damrow

LOOKING THE WORLD IN THE EYE

*HYMN *How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies*, vss. 1 & 2 See page 5

*UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Adapted from the prayer originally offered by Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks at the US Senate in November 2011 (after the events of 9/11)

Sovereign of the Universe, who created all in love,

Teach us to love all that is good and beautiful in this world.

Teach us to honour the dignity of difference,

Recognising that one who is not in our image Is none the less in Your image;

Never forgetting that the people not like us,

Are still people – like us.

At this fateful moment in the human story,

continued

**Bless us that we may be a blessing to others.
Guide the leaders of our land
To honour You by honouring one another.
So that by reaching out in love, we may turn enemies into friends,
And become your family on earth as You are our Parent in Heaven.
Beloved God, bless those elected and guide their deliberations
That they may govern this nation of great hope and purpose. Amen**

Naming What We Bring with Us Today:

The Congregation is invited in one word or a very short phrase to name what emotions, hopes, fears...they bring with them on this day.

*HYMN *How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies*, vss. 3 & 4 See page 5

DIVING DEEPER IN WORSHIP

*CALL TO WORSHIP written by Joanna Harader, posted on *Spacious Faith*,
based on Jonah 3-4 Sarah Conly

One: The word of God came to Jonah

All: The word of God comes to us:

One: Go

All: Despite your fears

One: Speak

All: the truth of God

One: Love

All: your neighbor and you enemy

One: Forgive

All: as you have been forgiven

One: Receive

All: grace upon grace overflowing from the fullness of God.

*HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* verse 1

**Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art--
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.**

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *O God Beyond All Praising* (Thaxted), arr. Frizzell

*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

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING *Jonah 1:1-17* Cathy Clark

REFLECTION *The Lord Provides* Pastor Brent

SOLO *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* Jack Brown

SCRIPTURE READING *Jonah 3:1-10*

REFLECTION *Changes of Hearts and Minds* Pastor Brent

SOLO *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* Jack Brown

SCRIPTURE READING *Jonah 4:1-11*

REFLECTION *The Lord Cares* Pastor Brent

*HYMN *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*, verse 3 See page 6

*UNISON PRAYER *The Prayer of St. Francis*

Gary Cilley

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me bring love.

Where there is offence, let me bring pardon. Where there is discord, let me bring union.

Where there is error, let me bring truth. Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.

Where there is despair, let me bring hope. Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.

Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.

O Lord, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love, for it is in giving that one receives, it is in self-forgetting that one finds, it is in forgiving that one is forgiven, it is in dying that one awakens to eternal life. Amen.

*PRAYER RESPONSE

Sharing the Peace

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Consecration

The Lord's Prayer

RESPONDING TO GOD'S CALL *Consecrating our Pledges*

SUNG RESPONSE (please remain seated)

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples, verse 4

**May we in service to our God act out the living Word,
And walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord
To God who calls us all to be Disciples of the Lord.**

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*SUNG BENEDICTION

God Be With You Till We Meet Again

See page 7

POSTLUDE

Let There Be Peace on Earth, arr. Sherman

How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies

St. 1, Katharine Lee Bates, 1893; alt.
St. 2, 3, 4, Miriam Therese Winter, 1993

1 How beau-ti-ful, our spa-cious skies, our am-ber waves of grain;
2 In-dig-e-nous and im-mi-grant, our daugh-ters and our sons:
3 How beau-ti-ful, sin-cere la-ment, the wis-dom born of tears,
4 How beau-ti-ful, two con-ti-nents, and is-lands in the sea

our pur-ple moun-tains as they rise a-bove the fruit-ful plain.
O may we nev-er rest con-tent till all are tru-ly one.
the cour-age called for to re-pent the blood-shed through the years.
that dream of peace, non-vi-o-lence, all peo-ple liv-ing free.

A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! God's gra-cious gifts a-bound,
A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! God grant that we may be
A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! God grant that we may be
A-mer-i-cas! A-mer-i-cas! God grant that we may be

and more and more we're grate-ful for life's boun-ty all a-round.
a sis-ter-hood and broth-er-hood from sea to shin-ing sea.
a na-tion blessed with none op-pressed, true land of lib-er-ty.
a hem-i-sphere where peo-ple here all live in har-mo-ny.

On her first trip west in the summer of 1893 the distinguished New England educator Katharine Lee Bates was inspired to write "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies." One hundred years later Miriam Therese Winter wrote new stanzas to clearly include all of the Americas.

Tune: MATERNA C.M.D.
Samuel A. Ward, 1882

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

Text: Frederick William Faber, 1854; alt.

Tune: ST. HELENA – Calvin Hampton



1. There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy like the wide-ness of the_ sea;
 2. There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in__ heaven;
 3. For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sure of the_ mind;



there's a kind-ness in God's jus - tice, which is more than lib - er - ty.
 there is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind-ly judg - ment given.
 and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly__ kind.



There is wel - come for the sin - ner and more gra - ces for the
 There is plen - ti - ful re - demp - tion in the blood that has been
 If our love were but more faith - ful, we would glad - ly trust God's



good; there is mer - cy with the Sa - vior; there is heal - ing in Christ's
 shed; there is joy for all the mem - bers in the sor - rows of the
 word; and our life would be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of our



blood.
 Head.
 God.

540 God Be with You Till We Meet Again

Jeremiah Eames Rankin, 1880; alt.

RANDOLPH 9.8.8.9

Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Unison *Harmony*

1. God be with you till we meet a - gain; Lov - ing coun - sels
 2. God be with you till we meet a - gain; Un - seen wings pro -
 3. God be with you till we meet a - gain; When life's per - ils
 4. God be with you till we meet a - gain; Keep love's ban - ner

guide, up - hold you, With a Shep-herd's care en - fold you:
 tect - ing hide you, Dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you:
 thick con - found you, Put un - fail - ing arms a - round you:
 float - ing o'er you, Smite death's threat - ening wave be - fore you:

Unison

God be with you till we meet a - gain.

Music: From the *English Hymnal*, 1906. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.

Hymns, Psalms, & Spiritual Songs (1990)

Holiday Centerpiece Design and Construction

Come help make evergreen decorations on Wednesday, December 4. They will be sold at the Holly Fair on December 7. Bring gardening shears. Sign-up on J.E. Room bulletin board or call or text Anne Hutchinson (413-854-7798).

Advent Study

Christian Education is offering a three week study focused on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's devotional *God is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*. Mondays from 5:00-6:00 p.m, December 9, 16, and 23. Please let Jeremy Ridenour if you are interested in participating.

Music Notes ~ Tracy Wilson

Thank you to Jack Brown for singing, and to the Bell Choir for ringing, at today's service.

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Gary Cilly and Sarah Conly; reader Cathy Clark; usher Terry Wise; storyteller Elisabeth Bellows. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Scarlett Ritcher and Rae Geddes are in the nursery.

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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