



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

SABBATH SUNDAY, *February 2, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.*

Children are invited to Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. returning to worship for communion. Nursery care is available during worship; please ask an usher. All prayers to be lifted today must be submitted in writing, given to a deacon before worship or no later than the Prayer of Confession.

GATHERING MUSIC *This Little Light of Mine*, arr. Albrecht

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

*INTROIT

In Christ There is No East or West, vs. 1

1. In Christ there is no east or west, In Him no south or north;
2. In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery - where Their high com - mu - nion find;
3. Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, What - e'er your race may be.
4. In Christ now meet both east and west, In Him meet south and north;

But one great fel - low - ship of love Through - out the whole wide earth.
His ser - vice is the gold - en cord Close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.
All chil - dren of the liv - ing God Are sure - ly kin to me.
All Christ - ly souls are one in Him Through - out the whole wide earth.

*CALL TO WORSHIP from the Iona Community

Elizabeth Young

One: Gather us in, the lost and lonely,
The broken and breaking, The tired and the aching
Who long for the nourishment found at your feast.

All: Gather us in

One: the done and the doubting, the wishing and wondering,
The puzzled and pondering who long for the company found at your feast.

All: Gather us in

One: the proud and pretentious,
The sure and superior, the never inferior,
Who long for the levelling found at your feast.

All: Gather us in

One: the bright and the bustling,
The stirrers, the shakers, the kind laughter makers
Who long for the deeper joys found at your feast.

All: Gather us in

One: from corner or limelight, from mansion or campsite,
From fears and obsession, from tears and depression,
From untold excesses, from treasured successes,
To meet, to eat, be given a seat, be joined to the vine, be offered new wine,
Become like the least, be found at the feast.

All: Gather us in!

*HYMN

Gather Us In vss. 1 & 2

**Here in this place new light is streaming,
Now is the darkness vanished away,
See in this space our fears and our dreamings,
Brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in – the lost and forsaken,
gather us in – the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

continued

**We are the young – our lives are a myst'ry,
We are the old – who yearn for your face,
We have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
Called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in – the rich and the haughty,
gather us in – the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Elizabeth Young

We gather, God of love and life to be your people - to be salt for the earth. We come bringing all parts of our lives to place before you that you might bless them. Bless our strivings and our goodness. Bless our hopes and our dreams. Give us courage, caring God to also bless the parts of our lives that have fallen short with the blessing of your forgiveness. Be with us compassionate God in these moments of silent confession as we gather in the safety of your everlasting arms.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

ANTHEM

Every Time I feel the Spirit, arr. Dawson

Choir

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

CONTEMPORARY READING *Sabbath Poems* (2002) Wendell Berry

David Anderegg

Teach me work that honours thy work,
the true economies of goods and words,
to make my arts compatible
with the songs of the local birds.

Teach me patience beyond work -
and, beyond patience, the blest
Sabbath of thy unresting love
which lights all things and gives rest.

Sharing the prayers left in our care

Make Me an Instrument of Peace (choir)

Make me an in - stru - ment,
 make me an in - stru - ment,
 make me an in - stru - ment of
 peace, _____ of peace. _____
 _____ of peace.

From: *Roll Down, Justice!* (CGBK72).

Text: Anonymous.

Music: *Make Me an Instrument of Peace*, by Mark A. Miller.

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One: Eternal Presence, we never journey alone.

We are students of the one true Teacher, who guides our way.

We pray that You will open our hearts and minds to see and know more clearly the truth about ourselves and the world around us.

All: Be with us in each moment, loving spirit.

Make Me an Instrument of Peace (congregation joins)

One: In the silences of resurrection life, may we encounter your holiness, and listen in a new way to the voices of the lost and forgotten who cry out in pain, in need, or in hunger –
The alienated, the oppressed, those who suffer abuse and violence;
And to those who turn their heads away from the suffering of others, and commit abuse and violence in ways direct and indirect.

All: Guide us in love to be agents of change where change is needed.

One: Christ, our redeemer, you invite us to extend a radical hospitality of justice and compassion to all who may need our care. Inspire us to open wide our arms to all as we continue our pilgrimage to the Kingdom following in your way.

All: Lead us to places of humility and refresh our spirits in the nurturing waters of your encouragement. Amen.

Make Me an Instrument of Peace (congregation joins)

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *My Lord, What a Morning*, arr. Wilson Choir

*DOXOLOGY (choir will sing once, then congregation repeats)

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711 William Farley Smith, 1941-

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all crea - tures
here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, - ye heav - en - ly host; Praise
Fa - ther, Son, - and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. The first system contains the first line of the doxology. The second system contains the second line. The third system contains the third line. The music is in 3/4 time and G major. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 6:1-10

Rich Geiler

One sabbath while Jesus was going through the cornfields, his disciples plucked some heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands, and ate them. But some of the Pharisees said, 'Why are you doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?' Jesus answered, 'Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and gave some to his companions?' Then he said to them, 'The Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.'

On another sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would cure on the sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against him. Even though he knew what they were thinking, he said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come and stand here.' He got up and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, 'I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?' After looking around at all of them, he said to him, 'Stretch out your hand.' He did so, and his hand was restored.

SUNG RESPONSE

I Danced in the Morning, vss. 1&3 pew hymnal #302

MESSAGE

Sabbath

Pastor Brent

*HYMN

Now to Your Table Spread

pew hymnal #515

SUNG COMMUNION LITURGY

by Mark Miller

One All One

May God be with you. And al - so with you. Lift

All One

up your hearts. We lift them up to our God. Let us give

All

thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

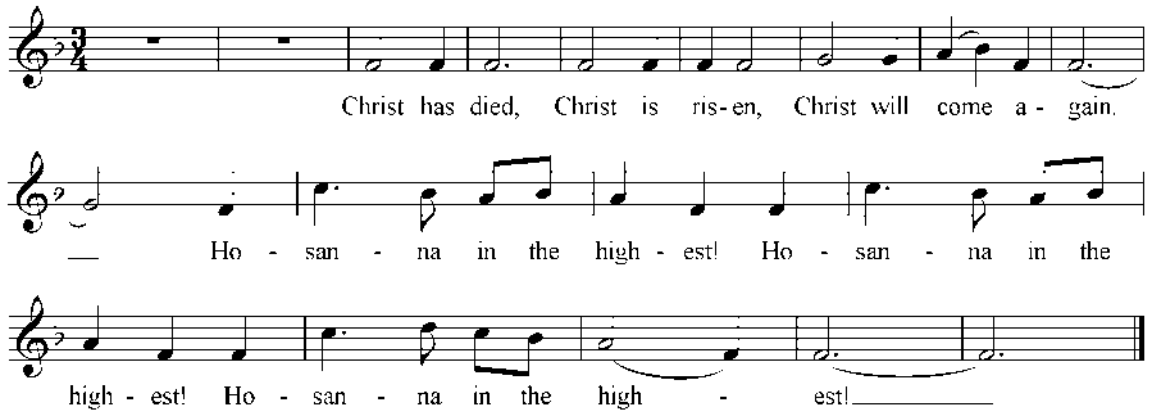
Pastor: We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy,
 for the gift of creation
 the beauty and bounty of the earth
 and for the vision and promise of the day
 when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none...
 ...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the choirs of
 heaven and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever
 sing to the glory of your name:

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord; God of pow-er and might. Heav-en and
 earth are full of your glo - - - ry. Ho - san - na in the
 high-est! Ho-san -na in the high-cst! Ho-san -na in the high - est! Blest is the
 one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
 high-est! Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Pastor: You are indeed holy O God of Majesty and blessed is your Son, Jesus
 Christ our Lord. Who came as the light of all people.
 The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome
 it...
 ...Together as one we proclaim the great mystery of our faith.

Memorial Acclamation



Christ has died, Christ is ris-en, Christ will come a - gain.
— Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the
high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Pastor: We remember the great story of this table

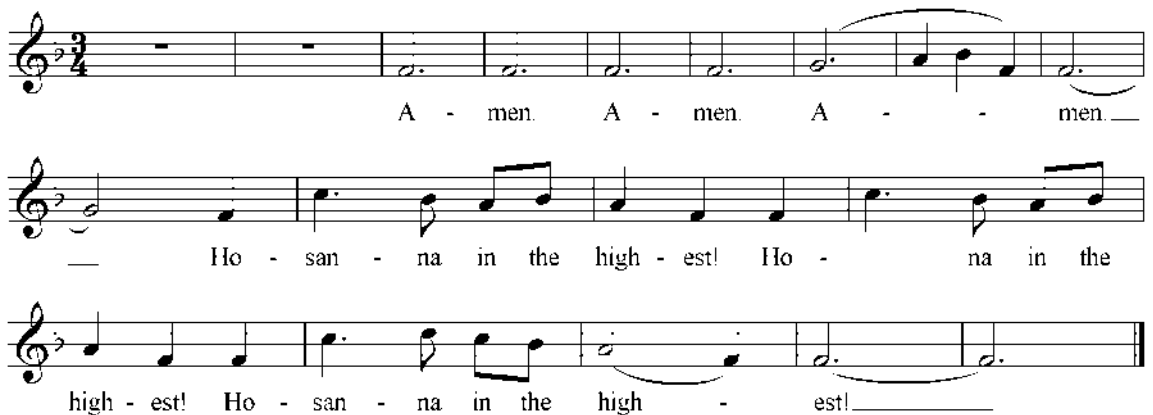
That on the night where Jesus gave himself for us

He gathered his disciples, his chosen family around him

For the feast of the Passover...

...Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

The Great Amen



A - men. A - men. A - - - men. —
— Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - na in the
high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Pastor Brent

BLESSING THE FEAST

We will be using the practice of intinction. You may come forward to receive the bread and cup. If you cannot come forward we will bring the meal to you.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

Let Us Break Bread Together

Choir

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Sung Lord's Prayer, Mark Miller see page 10

ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We invite you to support our neighbors in need. This month we are supporting the People's Pantry. Baskets are available at the doors for contributions.

INVITATIONS

*SENDING SONG

I Danced in the Morning, vs. 5

pew hymnal #302

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent

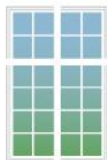
POSTLUDE

Just a Closer Walk, arr. Schrader

Choir

**The Annual Budget Meeting of The First Congregational Church,
UCC, Stockbridge, will be after the worship service today.**

**We invite you to bring your food – found in the JE Room – back to
your pew for the meeting.**



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Stockbridge, Massachusetts


Sung Lord's Prayer

Mark Miller

mp




Our God, ___ in hea-ven, ___ ho - ly is your name, ___ your



reign come, ___ your will done, ___ on earth as in hea-ven. ___

slower



Give us to-day our dai - ly bread, and help us for-give, as we have been for-giv-en. ___

mf

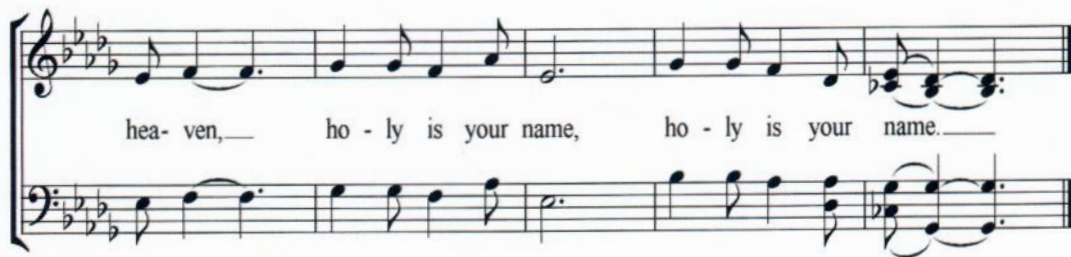


In the time of tri-al ___ lead us in - to light, ___ for yours is ___ the kin- dom, and the

f *mp*



po- wer, ___ and the glo- ry, ___ for - e - ver. Our God, ___ in



hea- ven, ___ ho - ly is your name, ho - ly is your name. ___

Music Notes

Tracy Wilson,

Minister of Music pro tem

The music making during the month of February will celebrate Black History Month showcasing the three main types of Black American sacred music: spirituals, gospels and hymns. My prelude, *This Little Light of Mine*, is a traditional spiritual that has been arranged by many people. The Introit is an example of a traditional hymn as we know it (a song of adoration and praise to God) with some interesting melodic and rhythmic influences by Harry Burleigh (1866-1949), a highly educated singer and composer. Burleigh named the tune MCKEE for the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in NYC where he served as baritone soloist for over 50 years. The choir's two anthems are the epitomes of spirituals - expressing deep religious feelings. The Doxology uses music composed

by William Farley Smith (1941-1997) with the traditional words by The Right Reverend Thomas Ken in 1695, revised in 1709. Farley Smith was highly educated and served as minister of music at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Harlem, NY for a number of years. He was known as a researcher and restorer of African-American music, playing a large role in the African Diaspora of Sacred Music and Musicians. He served as composer and arranger for the 1989 edition of the United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville, 1989).

Our Sung Communion Liturgy is by Black composer Mark A. Miller. He is Professor of Church Music at Drew Theological School and is a lecturer in the practice of sacred music at Yale University. He is also the Minister of Music at Christ Church in Summit, New Jersey. He is a life-long United Methodist.

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons David Anderegg, Gary Cilley, Helen McCormick, and Elizabeth Young; reader Rich Geiler; ushers Jo Ann Levitt and Susan Moor; fellowship Donna Jacobs; greeter Carl Bradford; storytellers Jon Geldert and Cindy Brown. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream, and Scarlett Ritcher and Rae Geddes are in the nursery.

News and Upcoming Events

Lenten Study: Understanding the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Rick Floyd and Jeremy Ridenour are offering a six-week course during Lent discussing the doctrine of the atonement. Atonement theories provide a narrative to understand how the death and resurrection of Jesus saves us from sin, death, and evil. The group will read portions of Rev. Floyd's book *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross: Reflections on the Atonement*. The group will meet for six consecutive Thursdays: March 6, 13, 20, 27 and April 3 and 10, 6:00-7:00 pm at the church. Please email office@stockbridgeucc.org for more information.

Pastor Brent will be on a study and spiritual renewal retreat for the first two weeks of February. If there is an emergency and you need to reach

him, please call Will Garrison during office hours or Jon Geldert at other times. They will relay the information to Brent so that he can be in touch.

Applause is a wonderful reaction to events that bring us joy, and is often given in recognition of being entertained. In church, where we are worshipping God, however, applause can be a distraction from the celebration of the Holy Spirit. To express appreciation for music that is part of worship, we ask that applause be saved until after the postlude (when worship is over).

We do encourage applause as an expression of joyful approval following some activities that occur during church service, such as welcoming new members, recognizing significant milestones (birthdays, anniversaries), or appreciating a special gift to the congregation.

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 worshipping 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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