



*The First Congregational Church, UCC
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 9, 2025 10:00a.m.

Children are invited to Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. returning to worship for Joys and Concerns. 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 Offering.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC Medley of Spiritual Selections Bell Choir

FRAMING WORDS The Reverend Dr. Richard L. Floyd

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

*INTROIT

In Christ There is No East or West, vs. 2

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.

TIME OF SILENCE / BRINGING IN OF THE LIGHT

*HYMN *We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding* See page 5

*CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 119) Ted Randolph

One: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

**All: I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,
to observe your righteous ordinances.**

One: I am severely afflicted;
give me life, O Lord, according to your word.

All: Let us worship God!

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Dr. Floyd

*PASSING OF THE PEACE Dr. Floyd

CONTEMPORARY READING Ted Randolph

by Jim Friedrich from "the Religious Imagineer"

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

THE GOSPEL READING Luke 7:1-17 Ronnie Cunningham

After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.' And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, "Go", and he goes, and to another, "Come", and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this", and the slave does it.' When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.' When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had

died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favourably on his people!' This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

SERMON	<i>Compassion</i>	Dr. Floyd
*HYMN	<i>O Word of God Incarnate</i>	See page 6

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING	Dr. Floyd
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Remember to place your prayer slips in the offering plates if you would like them lifted. They will be read as written.

OFFERTORY	<i>I'm Just A Poor Wayfaring Stranger</i>	See note on page 7
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*DOXOLOGY

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

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*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison) Gary Cilley
God, receive these gifts – and give us open hands
Fill our lives – and give us open hearts
Touch us with prophecy – and give us open minds
Bless this church – and give us open doors. (Maren C. Tirabassi)

OFFERING OURSELVES

JOYS AND CONCERNS Gary Cilley
TIME OF SILENCE Dr. Floyd
PASTORAL PRAYER Dr. Floyd

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 *With Doubt & Striving Ended* Ron Hanft
TIME WITH CHILDREN Elisabeth Bellows

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

MOMENT FOR MISSION Warm Up the Winter, Anna Smith & Tristan Osgood
*INVITATIONS Dr. Floyd
*HYMN *Arise, Your Light Is Come* See page 7
*BENEDICTION Dr. Floyd
BRINGING OF THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD / TIME OF SILENCE
POSTLUDE *We Shall Overcome*, traditional spiritual, arr. Samuel Stokes

1 We have come at Christ's own bid - ding to this high and
 2 Light breaks through our clouds and shad - ows, splen - dor bathes the
 3 Strength-ened by this glimpse of glo - ry, fear - ful lest our

ho - ly place, Where we wait with hope and long - ing for some
 flesh-joined Word, Mo - ses and E - li - jah mar - vel as the
 faith de - cline, We, like Pe - ter, find it tempt-ing to re -

to - ken of God's grace. Here we pray for new as -
 heav - enly voice is heard. Eyes and hearts be - hold with
 main and build a shrine. But true wor - ship gives us

sur - ance that our faith is not in vain, Search - ing
 won - der how the Law and Proph - ets meet: Christ with
 cour - age to pro - claim what we pro - fess, That our

like those first dis - ci - ples for a sign both clear and plain.
 gar - ments drenched in bright - ness, stands trans - fig - ured and com-plete.
 dai - ly lives may prove us peo - ple of the God we bless.

Ps. 119:105

William W. How, 1867; alt.

1 O Word of God in - car - nate, O Wis - dom from on high,
 2 O God, we hold this trea - sure from you, its source di - vine,
 3 O make your church, dear Sav - ior, a lamp of pur - est gold,

O Truth un - changed, un - chang - ing, O Light of cloud - ed sky:
 a light that to all a - ges through - out the earth will shine;
 to bear be - fore all peo - ple your true light as of old!

We praise you for the ra - diance that from the hal - lowed page,
 It is the chart and com - pass that all life's voy - age through,
 O teach your wan - dering pil - grims by this their path to trace,

a lan - tern to our foot - steps, shines on from age to age.
 'mid mists and rocks and tem - pest, still guides, O God, to you.
 till, doubt and striv - ing end - ed, they meet you face to face.

William W. How, author and hymnwriter, is remembered especially for his work among the poor of London's East End. Felix Mendelssohn harmonized this German hymn tune, which appeared with a different text for his oratorio *Elijah*.

Tune: MUNICH 7.6.7.6.D.
 Neuvermehrtes Gesangbuch, Meiningen, 1693
 Harm. Felix Mendelssohn, 1847

Isa. 60:1; 61:1-2; Luke 4:14-21

Ruth Duck, 1973

1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
 2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
 3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,
 4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song!

Show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day!
 Pro - claim the cap-tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.
 Bind up the bro-ken - heart-ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
 Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

This hymn was first published by the Ecumenical Women's Center of Chicago in the 1974 collection of hymn adaptations, *Because We Are One People*. Ruth Duck later included it in her own collection, *Dancing in the Universe*.

Tune: FESTAL SONG S.M.
 William Walter, 1872

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Music Notes

The Gathering Music/Prelude will be provided by the Handbell Choir. We are happy to be sharing a medley of some of the following spirituals: *There Is A Balm in Gilead* arr. by Costen, *Steal Away* arr. by Larson, *Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow* arr. by Dobrinski, and *Michael Row the Boat Ashore* arr. by Wagner. For the Offertory, Liza Catino will accompany the Handbell Choir for *I'm Just a Poor Wayfaring Stranger*, an Appalachian folk melody arranged by Tammy Waldrop. Please enjoy!!!

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including the Rev. Dr. Richard Floyd, Ron Hanft, and Deacons Gary Cilley, Sarah Conly, and Helen McCormick; readers Ted Randolph and Ronnie Cunningham; usher Terry Wise; storytellers Elisabeth Bellows and Emilie White. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Scarlett Ritcher and Rae Geddes are in the nursery.

On Wednesday, Feb 12, the Minister of Music candidate will be attending the 5:30 pm Community Supper. Plan on staying after dinner for a selection of musical pieces on the organ and the piano in the sanctuary. He will also play some hymns for us to sing.

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. At these moments, the pastor will encourage applause, or ask "Do I hear an Amen?"

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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