



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

August 3, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children start in worship with an optional activity after the baptism. Nursery care is available during worship. **Today, prayer requests need to be written on paper. Please give prayer slips to a Deacon or place it in the offering plate.**

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

Sean Lewis

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

## GATHERING IN WORSHIP

INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP      written by Thom Shuman

Liza Catino

One: When we stand at the edge of fear and worry,

**All: God invites us to step into the waters of faith and trust.**

One: When we stand at the edge of the world's pain and need,

**All: Jesus invites us to step into the land of humble service.**

One: When we stand at the edge of our hunger and thirst:

**All: the Spirit invites us to sit at the Table of grace.**

\*HYMN

*At the Font We Start Our Journey*

see page 7

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things.

Let those who are wise pay attention to these things and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Steadfast*

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Hannah Russell Cha

INTRODUCTIONS AND ADDRESS

Pastor Brent

\*THE LITANY OF BAPTISM

Elizabeth Young

One: We are gathered to present Hannah to the church and to dedicate her to God. What can we affirm about her?

**Many: That she is a child of God and made in the image of God.**

One: As this child grows in our congregation, how will she know that she is a child of God, made in God's image?

**Many: We will give her our love and include her in the life and ministry of this congregation.**

One: How will she learn of the Christian faith?

**Many: Through our programs and by our lives, we will teach her about Abraham, the father of our faith; about Sarah, the mother of Isaac; about Moses and Miriam who led our ancestors out of bondage; about Ruth's example of faithfulness; about Mary and Joseph's openness to mystery; about the Savior, Jesus and about the history of the church as the people of God.**

One: And what, in turn, will we expect of her?

**Many: We look forward to sitting with her at the Lord's Table, sharing with her the costs and joys of discipleship, learning and growing with her in the Christian pilgrimage, and declaring with one voice our faith in God and God's son, Jesus.**

Brent: Do you, Will and Kimberly, parents, assume your primary responsibility for fulfilling these expectations by growing with this child in the Christian faith, helping her to become a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, and by offering her the nurture and support of the Christian church?

Parents: With the help of God, we happily and genuinely accept this serious duty.

Brent: Do you, the assembled body of Christ here in Stockbridge, pledge to work toward creating and maintaining a nurturing and challenging Christian environment for this child?

**Many: We do, for she belongs to us as well.**

Brent: And do all of you promise by the grace of God to help raise Hannah that she might discover the joys of being Christ's disciple, following in the way of Jesus, resisting oppression and evil, showing love and justice and witnessing to the work and word of Jesus Christ? Will you bring her into the loving company of the local church and the church universal?

**Many: We promise with the help of God**

Brent: Then, may God be with us.

**Many: God help us. Amen.**

THE PRAYER OF BAPTISM

Rev. Becky Hart

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Rev. Hart

CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME

Drea Pecor

SUNG RESPONSE

*Come Here By The Waters* vss. 1-2

see page 8

**\*\* Children leave to prepare communion. \*\***

## **OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*Simple Song*, by Bernstein

Rich Geiler

\*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

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS Today, prayer requests need to be written on paper. Please give prayer slips to a Deacon or place it in the offering plate.

PASTORAL PRAYER / PRAYER RESPONSE

**THE GIFT OF THE WORD**

CONTEMPORARY READING

Gary Cilley

Poem by Sarah Klassen (Mennonite poet; editor of *Sophia* magazine)

**On poverty**

Let's do an inventory of the poor. The garrulous man next door lost his job and his sullen teen-aged daughter denied braces, the steadily humming fridge empty and the rent not paid. Mrs. B who inhabits that ostentatious multi-level with her cute poodle and her usual run of bad luck at the casino is poor too, she claims. And let's include that new family, that so disgraceful rust bucket rattling daily down our street, they can't be rich. You get the picture. The poor are everywhere. We have them with us in abundance and the sun shines, rain falls equally on each, as on the rich who are not promised kingdoms but are sent empty away. And look we haven't even got beyond the poor we know and like to dislike.

Shall we continue with the distant destitute whose dearth is brought about by war, by corporate greed or government mismanagement? Whose anguish, mercifully, we can't see or hear. Or should we stop while there is time to stop and catch our breath and fall to our knees, indeed, upon our faces, begging forgiveness? Pleading empty-handed for a portion of the bread of mercy.

SOLO

*Through All the World, a Hungry Christ*

Rich Geiler

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

REFLECTION

*Rich Toward God*

Pastor Brent

\*HYMN

*Now To Your Table Spread*

see page 9

## GATHERING AT THE TABLE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

\*SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

SUNG PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *Lord's Prayer*, Mark Miller see page 10

ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*It is a tradition of this church on Communion Sunday to invite people to bring items or donations for the People's Pantry – please place in boxes at doors.*

## GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

### INVITATIONS

\*SUNG BENEDICTION    *Go, My Children, with My Blessing*    see page 11

POSTLUDE    Sean Lewis



### **Music Notes ~ Sean Lewis, Minister of Music**

As this beautiful summer continues to spread sunshine and joy on a daily basis, I am starting to plan for what is ahead in September and beyond. I'm eager to work on a variety of music with so many of you. To help me plan and prepare for those opportunities, I need to know more about those involved in the musical life of this church.

Join me on Wednesday, August 20, from 6:30-8:00pm, here in the church. I invite all singers (returning and new/prospective) to gather for a time of food, fellowship, and some music that evening. Singers ages 15+ are encouraged to attend. And for those non-singers who wish to be involved in musical opportunities, you are welcome to come as well!

Please email me ([music@stockbridgeucc.org](mailto:music@stockbridgeucc.org)) with any questions or to RSVP regarding your attendance for August 20. Hope to see many of you there.

# At the Font We Start Our Journey

308

Jeffery Rowthorn, 1992

Col. 3:15; Acts 10:36-43

1 At the font we start our jour - ney, in the Eas - ter  
 2 At the pul - pit we are fash - ioned by the Eas - ter  
 3 At the al - tar we are nour - ished with the Eas - ter  
 4 At the door we are com - mis - sioned, now the Eas - ter

faith bap - tized; doubts and fears no long - er blind us,  
 tale re - told in - to wit - nes - ses and proph - ets,  
 gift of bread; in our break - ing it to piec - es  
 vic - tory's won, to re - store a world di - vid - ed

by the light of Christ sur - prised. Al - le - lu - ia,  
 by the power of Christ made bold. Al - le - lu - ia,  
 see the love of Christ out - spread. Al - le - lu - ia,  
 to the peace of Christ as one. Al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia! Hope held out and re - al - ized.  
 al - le - lu - ia! Faith pro - claimed, yet still un - told.  
 al - le - lu - ia! Life em - braced, yet free - ly shed.  
 al - le - lu - ia! Eas - ter's work must still be done.

*This text was written for a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, where the author served as bishop suffragan. Born and educated in Britain, Rowthorn has held positions at Union Theological Seminary and Yale University Divinity School, and more recently was appointed bishop in charge of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe.*


Tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY 8.7.8.7.8.7.  
 Henry Purcell, c. 1680  
 Arr. Ernest Hawkins, 1842

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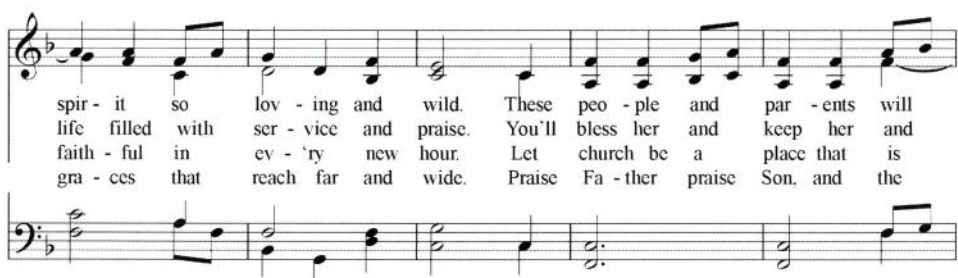
# Verses

# Come Here By the Waters

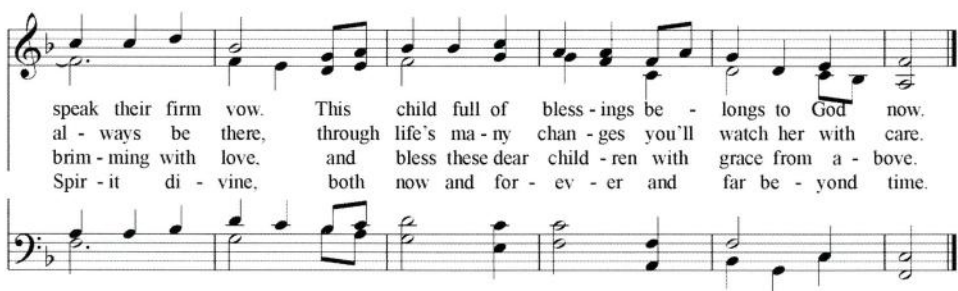
1 & 2



1. Come here by the wa--ters, come bring us your child. We'll call on God's  
 2. Your prom-ise en - dur - ing will fol - low her days, and lead to a  
 3. Bless us with your pre - sence, Your word and your pow'r that we might be  
 4. We praise you and thank you for all you pro - vide, for bless - ings and



spir - it so lov - ing and wild. These peo - ple and par - ents will  
 life filled with ser - vice and praise. You'll bless her and keep her and  
 faith - ful in ev - 'ry new hour. Let church be a place that is  
 gra - ces that reach far and wide. Praise Fa - ther praise Son, and the



speak their firm vow. This child full of bless - ings be - longs to God now.  
 al - ways be there, through life's ma - ny chan - ges you'll watch her with care.  
 brim - ming with love, and bless these dear child - ren with grace from a - bove.  
 Spir - it di - vine, both now and for - ev - er and far be - yond time.

Text: Richard Floyd, 2015

Tune: William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)



11 11 11 11  
 CRADLE SONG

[www.hymnary.org/text/away\\_in\\_a\\_manger\\_no\\_crib\\_for\\_a\\_bed](http://www.hymnary.org/text/away_in_a_manger_no_crib_for_a_bed)

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# Now to Your Table Spread

515

Shirley Erena Murray, 1987

LOVE UNKNOWN 6.6.12.4.4.8

John Ireland, 1918

1. Now to Your ta - ble spread We come, each one in faith That  
 2. Hands of the world stretch out Your mys - ter - y to touch In  
 3. Here is our com - mon wealth In shar - ing what is good, As

You a - lone pro - vide the words of life and death: In  
 long - ing to be - lieve a truth be - yond our reach, To  
 though all hu - man - kind a - round one ta - ble stood, This

wine and bread, In prom-ised food We find Your lov - ing heart, O God.  
 sing in joy, To cry in grief, To know Your mean-ing for our life.  
 bread to break, This wine to taste: One peo - ple in the name of Christ.

Alternate tune: RHOSYMEDRE, 534

$\text{♩} = 52-56$

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 Music: Copyright © John Ireland Trust. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

# 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.---

## Go, My Children, with My Blessing

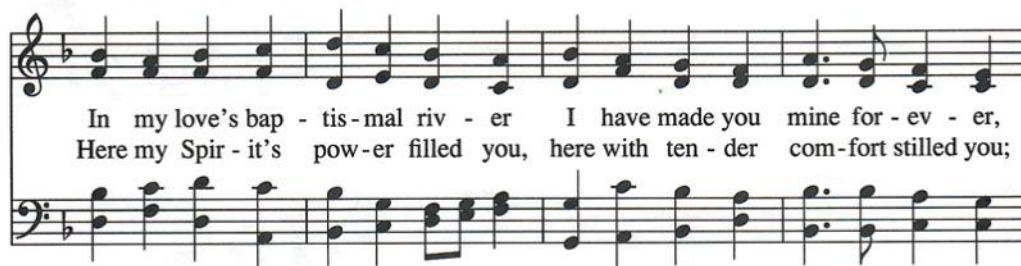
Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983, 1990; alt.



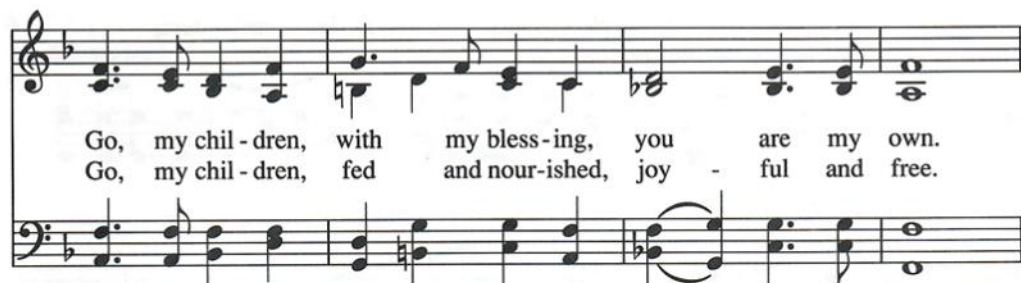
1 Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, nev - er a - lone;  
2 Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos - er to me;



Wak - ing, sleep-ing, I am with you, you are my own;  
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis-mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er,  
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here with ten - der com-fort stilled you;



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless-ing, you are my own.  
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour-ished, joy - ful and free.

American hymnwriter and translator Jaroslav Vajda crafted this benediction text as though God were "dismissing the congregation after worship, while drawing together a review of the events that transpired during the service." The wedding stanza was a later addition.

Tune: AR HYD Y NOS 8.4.8.4.8.8.4.  
Traditional Welsh melody  
For another harmonization, see 425

**Thank you** to all who helped with today's service, including soloist Rich Geiler, Deacons Gary Cilley, Elizabeth Young, Drea Pecor, and Helen McCormick; readers Liza Cantino and Ronnie Cunningham; usher Don Rodgers; greeter Margo Davis; fellowship Tom Ruffing and Charlotte Rodgers. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and Rae Geddes is in the nursery. Thanks to Ron Hanft for the flowers, in memory of Paul & Blanch Hanft.

**Please help build a new directory!**

On Sept 7, Rally Sunday, we will put new church directories into the hands of our congregation. The Connections Committee has been working with the staff to design a new format that will be both efficient and easy to use. But we need your help updating contact information and photographs.

Here is how you can help: During Fellowship today, stop by the Connections table to check your information.

- Make sure that phone numbers and emails are correct.
- Make sure we have both a mailing and a physical address (looking at you, Stockbridge residents!)

(Please note: marital status and birthdates are helpful, but will not be printed in the directory.)

Cindy Brown will be here next Sunday, August 10, to take photos. Or you can attach your individual and family photos to an email sent to [office@stockbridgeucc.org](mailto:office@stockbridgeucc.org).

*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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