



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP

August 31, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children start in worship with an optional activity after Time with Children. Nursery care is available during worship. **Prayer requests can be shared verbally during worship. Or you may give a prayer slip 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

David Anderegg

Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, Pastor, First Church Congregational, Rochester, NH

One: Creator God, you call us to hospitality;

to give as generously to others as you have given to us.

All: For there are angels among us.

One: Loving God, you call us to give you glory

in the compassion we show to one another.

All: To love without judgment, of ourselves or of others.

One: We gather as one Body,

seeking to walk in the way you have set for us.

All: We gather as one Body, to worship the one who is Love.

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 14:1, 7-11

Drea Pecor

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Choosing*

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

(Children may participate in an activity.)

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 14:12-14

Helen McCormick

He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

SERMON

Throwing a Party

Pastor Brent

*HYMN

Children of God

see page 6

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*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

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

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN

They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love

see page 7

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE

Sean Lewis

Fall Adult Christian Education Studies

The Board of Christian Education invites you to participate this Fall. We will be offering two different studies - the first focusing on "The Parables of Jesus" with the second exploring "Great Characters of the Bible." These studies will take place on Thursday evenings here at the church in the classroom beginning at 6:00pm. (Please note - there will also be an on-line version of the "Great Characters" Study offered Thursdays at Noon).

Exploring the Parables of Jesus

Every other Thursday 6:00 - 7:00pm (in person)

September 11 & 25, October 9, & 23, November 6 & 20

Led by Rick Floyd and Jeremy Ridenour

We'll study and discuss some of our old favorites as well as some of the thorny and head-scratching parables. Each session will stand alone and there is no sign up. It should be fun; hope you will come!

The Great Characters of the Bible

Every Other Thursday 6:00 - 7:15pm

September 18, October 2, 16, and 30, November 13

(A separate online section available on the same Thursdays Noon - 1:15)

Led by Brent Damrow

Following a dynamic new curriculum, we will get to know some of the great characters of the Bible starting in the including some familiar ones like Jonah, Elijah, Moses and David and some less familiar ones like Hannah, Caleb and Joshua, Esther, and Saul. There will be some reading to do and questions to ponder for each session but the load is not heavy. Sign-ups are encouraged to make sure that you have the study guide, the reading materials and discussion questions.

God Is Here! As We Your People Meet

Fred Pratt Green, 1978; alt.

1 God is here! As we your peo-ple meet to of - fer praise and prayer,
 2 Here are sym-bols to re - mind us of our life - long need of grace;
 3 Here our chil-dren find a wel-come in the Shep - herd's flock and fold;
 4 Sov - ereign God, of earth and heav-en, in an age of change and doubt

May we find in full - er mea-sure what it is in Christ we share.
 Here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit, here the cross has cen - tral place.
 Here as bread and wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.
 Keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel, help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach-ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in wor-ship to ex - plore
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;

wait the com-ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new-ness and re - new-al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with-out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Though he retired in 1969, this distinguished British poet has continued to write hymns. In addition to administering several circuits and local congregations, Fred Pratt Green published plays, translations, and poems. Emory University in Atlanta awarded him an honorary doctor

Tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7.D.
 Cyril V. Taylor, 1941

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

Eph. 4:31-5:2 .

John Greenleaf Whittier, 1848; alt.

1 Chil - dren of God, lift hearts to one an - oth - er;
 2 For God whom Je - sus loved has tru - ly spo - ken:
 3 Fol - low with rev - erent steps the great ex - am - ple
 4 Then shall all shack - les fall; the storm-y clan - gor

where pit - y dwells, the peace of God is there;
 the ho - lier wor - ship which Christ deigns to bless
 of Christ whose ho - ly work was do - ing good;
 of wild war mu - sic o'er the earth shall cease;

To wor - ship right - ly is to love each oth - er,
 Re - stores the lost, and binds the spir - it bro - ken,
 So shall the wide earth seem a ho - ly tem - ple,
 Love shall tread out the bale - ful fire of an - ger,

each smile a hymn, each kind - ly deed a prayer.
 and feeds the wid - ow and the par - ent - less.
 each lov - ing life a psalm of grat - i - tude.
 and in its ash - es plant the tree of peace.

Of Puritan ancestry and Quaker parentage, the American poet and journalist John Greenleaf Whittier was a strong supporter of the abolition of slavery. This hymn is comprised of the final stanzas of "Worship," a poem expressing his views on the life of faith.

Tune: WELWYN 11.10.11.10.
 Alfred Scott-Gatty, 1900

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

2223 They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love



1. We are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,
2. We will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,
3. We will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,
4. All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come,



we are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,
we will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,
we will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,
and all praise to Christ Je - sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:
and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:
and we'll guard hu - man dig - ni - ty and save hu - man pride:
and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:

Refrain



And they'll know we are Chris - tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris - tians by our love. —

WORDS: Peter Scholtes (John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:4-6)
MUSIC: Peter Scholtes

ST. BRENDAN'S
76.76.86 with Refrain

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The Faith We Sing (2000)

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Drea Pecor, David Anderegg, and Helen McCormick; ushers Janet and John Canning; fellowship Joanne Conroy and Vicky Cooper. Will Curtis is running the Livestream. The nursery is unstaffed, but available to caregivers with their small children.

Church Directory – Final Chance!

Stop by the table in JE Room after fellowship today or contact the church office tomorrow. Photos and information can be emailed to office@stockbridgeucc.org.

- check phone numbers and emails.
- Make sure we have both a mailing and a physical address
- (Please note: marital status and birthdates are helpful, but will not be printed in the directory.)

September 7 is Rally Sunday

Sunday School starts!

Super special fellowship time!



- September 10 starting 5:30pm: Community Supper. In the JE Room, theme "Favorite School Lunch."
- September 21 Special Worship: Blessing of the Solar Panels & Honoring the 50th Ordination Anniversary of Rev. Dr. Rick Floyd.

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.

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

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