



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

RALLY SUNDAY

September 7, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children start in worship with an optional activity after Time with Children. Nursery care is available during worship. Please welcome Mari Brennan, the new Nursery Care Provider. **Today prayers need to be written on a paper slip. Give the 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

Psalm 139 (Pote)

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(based on Jeremiah 18:4-6)

Jo Ann Levitt

One: The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words."

All: So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel.

One: The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

All: Then the word of the Lord came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord.

One: We come to worship you – womb of all creation.

All: We are formless; shape us now.

*HYMN

God the Sculptor of the Mountain

see page 6

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Clay*

*BLESSING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

One: Jesus said "let the little children come unto me." (Matthew 19:14, Mark 10:14, and Luke 18:16)

All: We give thanks for the children in our midst, and ask you loving God, to bless them with open hearts, inquisitive minds, and caring spirits.

One: The Book of Proverbs proclaims this truth: "A wise teacher makes learning a joy; a rebellious teacher spouts foolishness." (Proverbs 15:2)

All: We give thanks for all who will step forth to teach our children and ask you God, source of all truth, to bless them with wisdom and joy.

One: As a congregation, we are called to support our students and teachers; to pray for them, to listen to them, and to share with them the costs and joys of discipleship. (UCC Statement of Faith)

All: We give thanks that we are part of this church family and ask you parent God, to bless us with courage, companionship, and compassion.

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

(Children may participate in an activity.)

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Janet Canning

Jeremiah 18:7-10 At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

SERMON

Choose!

Pastor Brent

*HYMN

Now in the Days of Youth

see page 7

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

*BLESSING OF THE CHOIR

Following each petition, the congregation is invited to respond in song:



CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Praise His Holy Name (Hampton)

***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

Drea Pecor

UNISON PRAYER adapted from Richard Fairchild

We give you thanks and praise always, O God, for your love surpasses all and your will is ever good. Like a potter at the wheel you created every part of us. Keep your hand upon us that we might always be shaped by your love and grace.

God of compassion, we pray for your hand of blessing to be upon those we have named in our prayers whether in silence or out loud. Bless our lives with humility that we might follow you. Bless our hearts with strength that we might believe. Bless our spirits with courage that we might always pray to you fully in joy and in sorrow.

We ask these things through Christ Jesus our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and evermore. Amen

PRAYER RESPONSE

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

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.

ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN *God of Grace and God of Glory* see pew hymnal #420

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE Sean Lewis

Mark your calendar

Sunday, September 21

A celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of the
Rev. Dr. Rick Floyd

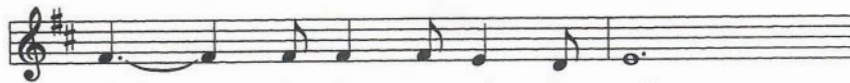
and

the dedication of the solar panels.

2060 God the Sculptor of the Mountains



1. God the sculp - tor of the moun - tains,
 2. God the nui - sance to the Pha - raoh,
 3. God the dress - er of the vine - yard,
 4. God the un - ex - pect - ed in - fant,



God the mill - er of the sand,
 God the cleav - er of the sea,
 God the plant - er of the wheat,
 God the calm, de - ter - mined youth,



God the jewel - er of the heav - ens,
 God the pil - lar in the dark - ness,
 God the reap - er of the har - vest,
 God the ta - ble - turn - ing proph - et,



God the pot - ter of the land:
 God the bea - con of the free:
 God the source of all we eat:
 God the re - sur - rect - ed truth:



You are womb of all cre - a - tion,
 You are fount of all de - liv - 'rance,
 You are host at ev - ery ta - ble,
 You are pres - ent ev - ery mo - ment,



we are form - less; shape us now.
 we are sight - less; lead us now.
 we are hun - gry; feed us now.
 we are search - ing; meet us now.

WORDS: John Thornburg
 MUSIC: Amanda Husberg

JENNINGS-HOUSTON
 87.87.87

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The Faith We Sing (2000)

Now in the Days of Youth

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Walter J. Mathams, 1913; alt.
Adapt. Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1992

Eccles. 12:1; 1 Cor. 16:13; Deut. 30:19–20

1 Now in the days of youth when life is filled with choice, when
2 Teach us to use our lives with pur- pose and with power for
3 Teach us to love in truth, to give and to re - ceive with
4 Teach-er, Cre - a - tor, God, en - fold us in your arms; be

hope and doubt touch ev - ery hour, when all thoughts find a voice,
vi - sions of a bet - ter world and for de - ci - sion's hour;
joy - ful and with o - pen hearts, with all that we be - lieve;
with us as we try our wings, and keep us safe from harm.

We turn, O God, to you for guid-ance and for grace. In
To choose the way of life, re - ject the way of death, un -
To seek an - oth - er's good, to hon - or what is right, to
All good and per - fect gifts come to us from your hand. O

all our days, in all our ways, help us to seek your face.
til the ra - dian - t force of God fills mind and strength and breath.
let our will and our de - sire be held in ho - ly light.
help us use them care - ful - ly and live by love's com - mand.

When the Rev. Walter J. Mathams of London wrote this hymn for use at Christian Endeavor and Sunday School conventions, he did not realize it would receive wide circulation. It was introduced in the United States in 1913 in Worship and Song.

Tune: DIADEMATA S.M.D.
George J. Elvey, 1868

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Drea Pecor, David Anderegg, Jo Ann Levitt, and Helen McCormick; reader Janet Canning; fellowship Casey Jones. Will Curtis is running the Livestream. Our new Nursery Care Provider, Mari Brennan, will be in the nursery. Thanks to David Anderegg for the flowers.

Adult Christian Education Studies

The Board of CE invites you to 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 at the church 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 Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00pm (in person) September 11 & 25, October 9 & 23, November 6 & 20.

Led by Rick Floyd and Jeremy Ridenour
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

Thursday 6:00 - 7:15pm (in person) Sept 18, Oct 2, 16, and 30, Nov 13. A separate online section available on the same Thursdays 12 - 1:15

Led by Brent Damrow. We will get to know some of the great characters of the Bible including Jonah, Elijah, Moses, David, Hannah, Caleb, and Joshua.

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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