



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

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 5, 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 Dana Sanchez and Mari Brennan, the new Nursery Care Providers. **On this World Communion Sunday prayers need to be written on a paper slip. Please 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

*Welcome* (Mark Miller)

PRAYER OF INVOCATION by Rev. Susan A. Blain, UCC Worship Ways

Grace Diggs

Mysterious God, You reveal yourself in Jesus, your Beloved Child  
who gives us a glimpse your glory  
and invites us to share in the unity of all that is Holy:  
the holiness that is You, your creation, your people,  
united in the Spirit that breaks through all boundaries of fear and injustice.

Meet us here today, O Unity, and teach us to be one: One in love for each  
other

One in understanding with all who find in Jesus the Way to You

One in peace with all who find other paths to your Truth.

We ask all this in the name of Jesus, whose fervent prayer was ever:

“May they all be one.”

\*HYMN

*Gather Us In*, vss. 1 & 2

see insert

\*CALL TO WORSHIP written by Rev Gord

Grace Diggs

One: Around the world people gather to break bread and pour wine.

**All: We gather with them in heart and mind.**

One: Around the world the broken body is made whole.

**All: As part of that body we join in its unity.**

One: Around the world the Banquet of God is prepared for the table.

**All: We, who share in the banquet, come eagerly to be fed.**

One: Let us worship together, let us share God's bounty.

**All: Let us pray and let us sing...**

\*HYMN

*Gather Us In*, vss. 3 & 4

see insert

TIME WITH CHILDREN *World Communion Sunday*

\*SHARING OF THE PEACE

## **OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Sean Lewis

\*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

PRAYER RESPONSE

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING John 17:20-24

Liza Catino

I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

REFLECTION

*Glorify*

\*HYMN

*The Church's One Foundation*

see page 7

## GATHERING AT THE TABLE

CONTEMPORARY READING *And It Was Good*, by Madeleine L'Engle

Ronnie Cunningham

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. We look at a world undone by strife, torn by violence, separated by hatred. Yet you call us to walk the way of peace. Forgive us, O Lord, for refusing to follow you on this path because the cost is too high, the direction too confusing, the conditions too harsh. Forgive us our complacency. Grant us clarity of vision to see the light, And the strength to walk behind you. In the power of your Spirit we pray, Amen.**

\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Pastor Brent

BRINGING THE FEAST *Gather Your People*

Choir

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: Matzah is unleavened bread reminds us of all who eat their bread in haste. It symbolizes for us all the refugees who, like the ancient Israelites, leave their homes and flee from danger. May it remind us, too, of the homeless in our own city and country.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church among those with no place to call home. May we learn from their searching faith, and may we be a place of welcome for all who seek safety.**

One: Frybread reminds us of Africa, the birthplace of humankind where Christianity continues to flourish. It also reminds us of a legacy of slavery, and of a people who endured.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church in places where it flourishes, and we confess the times and places when we have enslaved our brothers and sisters. May we learn from the vibrant faith of our African brothers and sisters, and may we build a more just and peaceable world.**

One: Nom Chakie is a Cambodian bread that reminds us of Asia, where Christians are a minority among Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others. It represents for us the ways our faith calls us beyond our culture and reminds us of our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their beliefs.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church in places where Christianity is dangerous, politically or socially. May we learn from the steadfast faith of our Asian brothers and sisters and walk with Jesus through every trial.**

One: Tortillas remind us of Central and South America, where faith and culture have colored one another beautifully; but also a place where Christians live with violence, drugs, and conflict as a daily reality.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church in places beset by violence and still colored by hope. May we learn from the persistent faith of our Latino brothers and Latina sisters, and may we look upon them with compassion as our neighbors.**

One: The baguette reminds us of Europe, with its vast cathedrals that are often empty. It represents those who keep the faith alive in lean times and reminds us that the church is not a building, but a community of people.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church in places where its power is diminished**

**and its followers are few. May we learn from the age-old faith of our European brothers and sisters, and may we live our faith so that our faith might live.**

One: Cornbread reminds us of Native Americans who first recognized God in the rhythms of nature. It reminds us that the land we call home once belonged to others.

**All: We pray, O God, for your church as it exists in every land. May we learn from the earthly faith of our Native American brothers and sisters, and may we care for the land and all those who call it home.**

**Come, Holy Spirit, dwell in these breads and in this cup that they might be for us the body and blood of Christ. Come, dwell in your people of every land and language that we might be united with one another to be the body of Christ in every corner of the world today. Amen.**

#### 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.*

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Gary: Today, Christ-followers meet in public worship and secret gatherings to break bread together. Today, in wealthy churches and hovels of poverty, wine is shared. In many different languages, by ordained clergy, volunteer pastors, and by people in the pews, these words of institution are given:

**All: On the night he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus, gathered for supper with twelve of his closest friends, his disciples. He took the unleavened bread of the Passover feast, and when he had given thanks to God for it, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."**

Gary: In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This cup is the new covenant – a new relationship with God, marked by the forgiveness of your sins. Drink of it, all of you."

**All: And so today, every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, we remember our Lord's death, and we hope for the day when he shall come again. These are the gifts of God for all the people of God.**

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION    *Come, Share the Lord*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SUNG LORD’S PRAYER, by Mark Miller

see page 8

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            Neighbors in Need

\*HYMN                    *In Unity We Lift Our Song*

see insert

\*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE

Sean Lewis

**Thank you** to all who helped with today’s service, including Deacons Elizabeth Young, Drea Pecor, Jo Ann Levitt, and Helen McCormick; readers Liza Catino, Ronnie Cunningham, and Grace Diggs; outside greeter Holland Eaton; usher Don Rodgers; fellowship Susan Moor and Chuck Gillett; Storytellers and Teachers Jeremy Ridenour, Madonna Meagher, and Gary Cilley. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream. Mari Brennan and Dana Sanchez are in the nursery. Thanks to Cathy Clark for the flowers.

*Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Church 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.*

(413) 298-3137 | [office@stockbridgeucc.org](mailto:office@stockbridgeucc.org) | [stockbridgeucc.org](http://stockbridgeucc.org)

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*Eph. 2:13-22; 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:11**Samuel J. Stone, 1866; alt.*

1 The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ our Lord;  
 2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,  
 3 'Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of our war,  
 4 Yet we on earth have un - ion with God, the Three - in - One,

we are Christ's new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word;  
 one char - ter of sal - va - tion, one God, one faith, one birth,  
 we wait the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more;  
 and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won.

From heaven Christ came and sought us in love to set us free;  
 One name to - geth - er bless - ing, one ho - ly food we share,  
 Till with the vi - sion glo - rious, our long - ing eyes are blessed,  
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! God, give us grace that we,

with pre - cious blood Christ bought us for all e - ter - ni - ty.  
 to one hope we are press - ing, at one in work and prayer.  
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.  
 like them, the meek and low - ly, may live e - ter - nal - ly.

*Like the writings of Ambrose many centuries earlier, this hymn was born out of a doctrinal dispute. The young priest Samuel J. Stone composed twelve hymns on the articles of the Apostles' Creed in support of those reacting against nontraditional views of biblical scholarship. This hymn is based on article nine, "the holy Catholic Church."*

Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6.D.  
*Samuel S. Wesley, 1864*

*The New Century Hymnal (1995)*

# 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. —