



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

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

October 12, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children start in worship with an optional activity after Time with Children. Nursery care is available during worship. **On this 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)

*CALL TO WORSHIP written by Katherine Hawker

Jon Geldert

One: Jesus offers a new-old commandment,

All: that we should love each other.

One: With the incredible power and the unfathomable depth of God's love for
us

All: we can, we must, love one another.

One: And it is in this our love for one another

All: that the world will know whom and what we worship.

One: Come, children of God, in this house and home of God, let us love one
another.

All: We come in love to make our home together.

*HYMN *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* vss. 1 & 2 see page 8

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

INTRODUCTIONS

LITANY OF BAPTISM

Elizabeth Young and Pastor Brent

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

Many: She is a child of God and made in the image of God.

One: As she 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.

One: Do you, Randy and Stacey, Godparents, accept your responsibility for helping Kaylin to grow in the Christian faith, helping her to become a faithful member of the church, and by supporting her in the journey she initiates today?

Godparents: We undertake that sacred task humbly and sincerely.

One: Will you, members of the church family here in Stockbridge work toward creating and maintaining a nurturing and challenging Christian environment for Kaylin?

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

One: Will you walk with Kaylin, offering your support and wisdom even as you accept hers?

Many: We will, with the help of God.

One: Do you, Kaylin, renounce the powers of evil and desire freedom of new life in Christ?

Kaylin: I do.

One: Do you accept the gift freely offered through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and promise to open yourself to living more fully into that gift?

Kaylin: I do.

One: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of Jesus, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

Kaylin: I promise with the help of God.

One: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Kaylin: I promise with the help of God.

One: Then, may God be with us.

Many: God help us. Amen.

THE PRAYER AND ACT OF BAPTISM

CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME (unison)

Jo Ann Levitt

We rejoice in God's empowering love, freely given to each and all. We welcome you, newly baptized, into the circle of love in Christ's church. We promise to pray for you, to seek the depths of faith with you, to support you, and to love you. We covenant with you to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

Younger children dismissed to Sunday School

ANTHEM

The King of Love My Shepherd Is (Meux)

Bell Choir

RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS

STATEMENT OF OUR PURPOSE AS A CHURCH

Pastor Brent

Our purpose as a Church is to carry on the mission and ministry that God initiated in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, whom we recognize as the Christ. Our purpose is to represent Christ, God's saving and healing love, both locally and in the wider world.

LITANY OF INTENT

One: Friends in Christ, we are all received into the church through the sacrament of Baptism. These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ.

Many: They have been led by the Spirit to affirm his Baptism and to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the Christian church.

One: They are here as we are here, to endeavor to love God with all our hearts, and all our souls and all our minds. God help us.

Many: They are here, as we are here to endeavor to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. God help us.

One: You who are joining, we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place.

Many: We give thanks for every community of faith which has been your spiritual home and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith.

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES AND CONGREGATION

*CONGREGATIONAL STATEMENT OF COVENANT

As we strive to fulfill our purpose, we covenant:

To worship together on a regular basis;

To strive to grow spiritually;

To open ourselves to follow God's leading in our lives both individually and as a community of faith;

To give support to and receive support from one another through life's trials and transitions;

To support and participate in the wider Christian community; and to support the institution of this church with our time, resources, and skills.

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

Helen McCormick

On behalf of this church family we welcome you. We look forward to our journey of faith together. We give thanks for the chance to learn with you and grow with you – to deepen our faith, to broaden our minds and open our hearts. May God bless and enrich our time together.

Older children dismissed to Sunday School

*HYMN *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* vss. 3 & 4 see page 8

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

Jon Geldert

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

SERMON

Making our Home in Exile

Pastor Brent

CONTEMPORARY READING *Exile*, by Adnan al-Sayegh* from Uruk's
Anthem (translated by Ruda Abughaida)

Why did you leave your country?

The dates were yours – the wine
and the Babylonian heaven?

It wasn't that I was ungrateful, oh you that lay blame while lounging in
cafés in exile –
but embers burn
only those who touch them.

I shall accept whatever God chooses for me in exile
except humiliation.

I cross the streets, empty inside,
bewildered

like

I just

left

prison

I bite on life with the teeth of my being
and rise up proud
with my anthem

I scratch the sky to make it rain on me.

Wherever songs flourish will be my home.

*HYMN

Come and Find the Quiet Center

see page 9

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Coronation (Elder)

Bell Choir

*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

O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines

see pages 10-11

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE

Sean Lewis

Tomorrow morning at 10:30 there will be a memorial service for Wyeth Curtis. Please help prepare the sanctuary by removing bulletins and personal belongings. Thank you.

If you have the time to help with the memorial service, please contact Brent at 617-513-0185.



*Adnan al-Sayegh was born in Iraq in 1955. In 1993, his uncompromising criticism of oppression and injustice led to his exile in Jordan and Lebanon. After being sentenced to death in Iraq in 1996, because of the publication of Uruk's Anthem – a long poem in which he gives voice to the profound despair of the Iraqi experience – he took refuge in Sweden. Since 2004 he has been living in exile in London.

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)

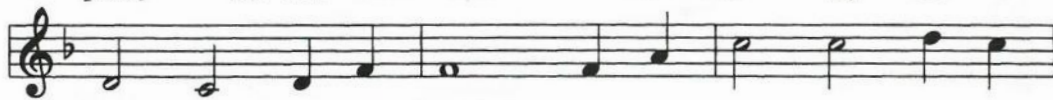
2128 Come and Find the Quiet Center



1. Come and find the qui - et cen - ter in the crowd-ed life we
2. Si - lence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the
3. In the Spir - it let us trav - el, o - pen to each oth - er's



lead, find the room for hope to en - ter, find the
pace, God it is who speaks and names us, knows our
pain, let our loves and fears un - rav - el, cel - e -



frame where we are freed: Clear the cha - os and the
be - ing, touch-es base, mak - ing space with - in our
brate the space we gain: There's a place for deep-est



clut - ter, clear our eyes that we can see all the
think - ing, lift - ing shades to show the sun, rais - ing
dream - ing, there's a time for heart to care, in the



things that real - ly mat - ter, be at peace, and sim - ply be.
cour - age when we're shrink - ing, find - ing scope for faith be - gun.
Spir - it's live - ly schem - ing there is al - ways room to spare.

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray

MUSIC: Attr. to B. F. White

Words © 1992 Hope Publishing Co.

BEACH SPRING

87.87 D

The Faith We Sing (2000)

711 O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines

Unison

1. O day of peace that dim - ly shines
2. Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,

through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
nor shall the fierce de - vour the small;

guide us to jus - tice, truth, and love,
as beasts and cat - tle, calm - ly graze,

de - liv - ered from our self - ish schemes.
a lit - tle child shall lead them all.

WORDS: Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1982

MUSIC: Traditional Scottish melody; harm. Carlton R. Young, 1963

Words © 1982 Hope Publishing Co.; harm. © 1964 The United Methodist Publishing House

CANDLER
LMD

♩=104-112

May swords of hate fall from our hands,
Then en - e - mies shall learn to love,

our hearts from en - vy find re - lease,
all crea - tures find their true ac - cord;

till by God's grace our war - ring world
the hope of peace shall be ful - filled,

shall see Christ's prom - ised reign of peace.
for all the earth shall know of the Lord.

The Chalice Hymnal (1995)

Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Jo Ann Levitt, Elizabeth Young, and Helen McCormick; reader Jon Geldert; outside greeter Joanne Conroy; ushers Janet and John Canning; fellowship Jake and Brent Damrow; Storytellers and Teachers Jeremy Ridenour, Megan Kolano, Terry Wise, and Ray Bergmann. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream. Mari Brennan and Dana Sanchez are in the nursery.

The flowers are in memory of Marie Kulp, founder of Welcome to Pennridge FISH, Fellowship in Serving Humanity, where volunteers and staff are committed to serving our neighbors with dignity and care to meet the needs of economically challenged households in the Pennridge community with food, clothing and other resources.

From your appreciative niece, Patti "Niti" Martin

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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