



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

GOOD NEWS SUNDAY

November 23, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Children start in worship with an optional activity after Childrens' Time.
Nursery care is available during worship.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

Sean Lewis

FRAMING WORDS

Rev. Brent Damrow

GATHERING IN WORSHIP

SUNG CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT

Great is the Lord

See page 6

WELCOME

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*CALL TO WORSHIP/OPENING HYMN

Liza Catino

Posted on the Presbyterian Mission website,

based on Psalm 46 and *A Mighty Fortress is Our God* (hymn #260)

One: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

**All: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.**

continued

[Sung] *A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.*

One: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

All: God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

[Sung] *Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;
were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is he,
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same, and he must win the battle.*

One: The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; God speaks and the earth melts.

All: The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

One: Come, behold the works of the Lord!

All: God makes wars cease to the end of the earth; God breaks the bow, shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

[Sung] *And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure, one little word shall fell him.*

One: Be still, and know that the Lord is God!

All: God is exalted among the nations; God is exalted in the earth.

One: The Lord of hosts is with us;

All: The God of Jacob is our refuge.

[Sung] *That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth;
let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
the body they may kill, God's truth abideth still, his kingdom is forever.*

THE GIFT OF THE GOOD NEWS

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 16:15 Terry Wise
And Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news
(or Gospel) to all of creation.

CHILDRENS TIME *Evangelist*

SUNG RESPONSE *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jeus Christ is born!**

CONTEMPORARY READING Terry Wise
"Sharing the good news is both a biological instinct and a spiritual imperative."
~ Sharon Brous, *The Amen Effect*

SHARING GOOD NEWS Please lift your prayer in a short phrase (trusting that
God already knows the details). This sharing is designed to lift good news
about your life or the life of your family/friends. We will have a chance to
share good news about our community or the world later in the service.

UNISON PRAYER Terry Wise
**Ever faithful Lord, ever giving Son, ever present Spirit,
For the many gifts you grant us and the opportunity to enjoy these things;
For your daily provision and for the constant signs of your healing love;
For the hope amidst despair and the light which always shines;
For all these things, 'thank you' is just so inadequate but it's all we have:
... to show our gratitude in word, in thought and in action. So thank you,
Lord and may our thanks move beyond words to transform us into
thankful folk, faithful folk, seeing folk, loving folk. Thank you God for
the many blessings of our lives lead us into the joy of your grace. Amen**

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:68-79 Ronnie Cunningham
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his child David,
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors
and has remembered his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness
in his presence all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the
Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.
Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will
break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of
death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

REFLECTION *Tender Mercies Breaking Upon Us* Pastor Brent

SHARING GOOD NEWS (community)

*HYMN *Now Bless the God of Israel* See page 7

SHARING OUR BURDENS AND OUR WORRIES

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.**

SUNG RESPONSE *O Lord Hear My Prayer* The Faith We Sing, #2200

OFFERING 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

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*HYMN

Shine, Jesus, Shine

The Faith We Sing, #2173

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE

Advent Potluck 2025

Please sign up for this year's Advent Potluck, which will take place on December 7 right after church. THREE WAYS to sign up: Sign up online (see your weekly email), call Will at the church office (413) 298-3137 ext.1., or use the paper sign-up sheet in the JE Room. Suggested dish assignments are on the form. There will be crafts activities after lunch.

Youth Group News

The next **youth group event** is Sunday, December 7. Youth will join the adults in celebrating the Advent Fair. Come for the potluck lunch and to make a variety of crafts after lunch. Bring a friend and bring some good cheer!

Overnight Retreat at Silver Lake

We are planning to take the youth to the UCC Retreat Camp at Silver Lake in Sharon, CT for an overnight adventure May 2-3, 2026. See Elisabeth Bellows for more information.

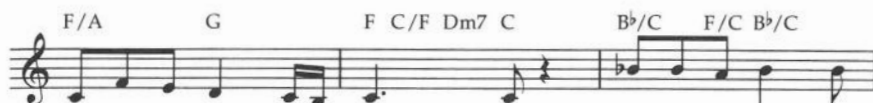
Thank you to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons Gary Cilley, Drea Pecor, and Helen McCormick; readers Liza Catino, Ronnie Cunningham, and Terry Wise; greeter Mary Hoeltzel; fellowship Patty Fadding and Charlotte Rodgers; storytellers Jeremy Ridenour, Megan Kolano, and Sean Lewis. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream. Mari Brennan and Dana Sanchez are in the nursery. Michael Deegan provided transportation for Kimball Farms residents.



1. Great is the Lord; He is ho-ly and just. By His pow-er we trust in His
2. Great are You, Lord; You are ho-ly and just. By Your pow-er we trust in Your



love. Great is the Lord; He is faith-ful and true. By His
love. Great are You, Lord; You are faith-ful and true. By Your



mer-cy He proves He is love. Great is the Lord and
mer-cy You prove You are love. Great are You, Lord, and



wor-thy of glo-ry! Great is the Lord and wor-thy of praise.
wor-thy of glo-ry! Great are You, Lord, and wor-thy of praise.



Great is the Lord; now lift up your voice; now lift up your voice:
Great are You, Lord; I lift up my voice; I lift up my voice:



Great is the Lord!
Great are You, Lord!

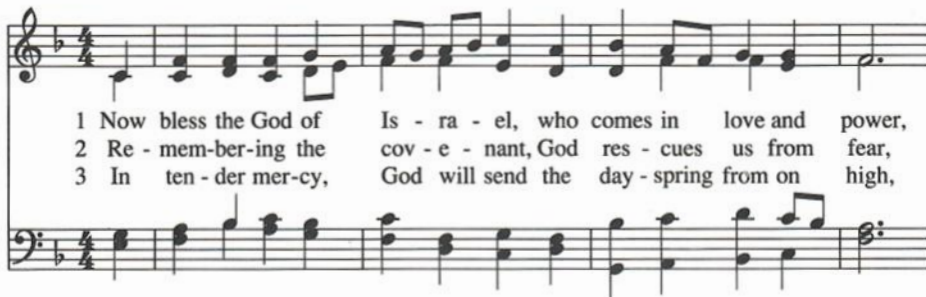


Great is the Lord!
Great are You, Lord!

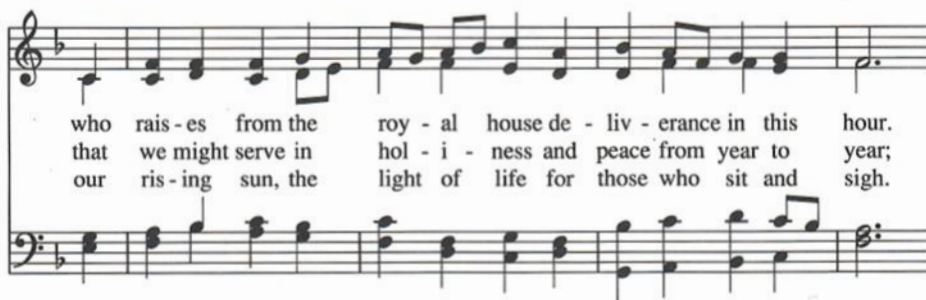
The Chalice Hymnal (1995)

Luke 1:68-79; Ps. 18:1-3; Isa. 9:2-7

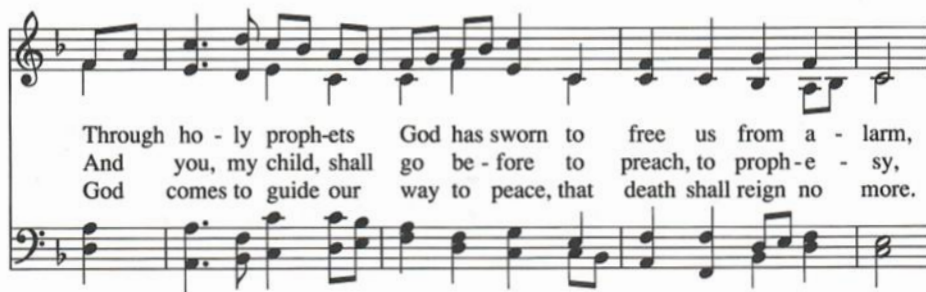
Ruth Duck, 1985



1 Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, who comes in love and power,
 2 Re - mem-ber-ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from fear,
 3 In ten - der mer-cy, God will send the day - spring from on high,



who rais - es from the roy - al house de - liv - erance in this hour.
 that we might serve in hol - i - ness and peace from year to year;
 our ris - ing sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh.



Through ho - ly proph-ets God has sworn to free us from a - larm,
 And you, my child, shall go be - fore to preach, to proph - e - sy,
 God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.



to save us from the heav-y hand of all who wish us harm.
 that all may know the ten - der love, the grace of God most high.
 Sing prais-es to the Ho - ly One! O wor - ship and a - dore!

This text by United Church of Christ clergywoman Ruth Duck is a paraphrase of the "Benedictus," which is often sung at morning prayer. She came to appreciate daily prayer while studying at the University of Notre Dame.

Tune: FOREST GREEN C.M.D.
 Traditional English melody
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Advent Sermon Series

Jeremy Ridenour and Rick Floyd are offering a three-week Advent series on Thursdays from 6-7:15 pm on December 4, 11, and 18. Each week we will read a sermon by a preacher or theologian. On Dec 4, John Azer, a Coptic Christian, will present a sermon by an Orthodox theologian and discuss how Orthodox theology thinks about incarnation and Christmas. On Dec 11, the group will reflect on a sermon by Martin Luther who wrote about the humanity and humility of Jesus in the incarnation. For the final meeting, we will discuss an Advent sermon by Fleming Rutledge, a contemporary Episcopal theologian. Please let Jeremy know if you plan to attend: jeremy.ridenour@gmail.com. Readings will be emailed to the group. There will be no book. In-person only.

From the Service League

Holly Fair, Sat., Dec 6, 10am – 1pm

A call for volunteers, elves, and donors

The Children's Room

We need gently used toys, books, and games. Please bring to the church the week of December 1 – 5, leaving in the Nursery.

Baked Goods

Wrapped home-baked goodies, with NO NUTS. Please bring Friday December 5 or Saturday before 10:00am and leave in the kitchen.

Centerpieces

Come to the church on Wed. Dec 3 from 10:am – 1:pm to make centerpieces to sell at the Holly Fair. Bring lunch, garden clippers, and creativity.

Call Anne Hutchinson with questions, (413) 854-7798

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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