



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

SUNDAY WORSHIP
May 7, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.

For those worshipping at home: you are invited to text the names of those attending to 413-644-6435 that we might welcome you. Please also include prayers of joys and concerns as we will name them in worship.

****Note – on communion Sundays, we invite our children to begin in Sunday School so that they can return to the Sanctuary for Communion.****

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC Lyric Prelude (Chopin), arr. by Franklin Ritter

FRAMING WORDS Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

INTROIT *St. Cecilia's Prayer* by Peter Frost
Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*; Peter Seidenberg, *cello*

*GATHERING PRAYER

*HYMN *This is a Day of New Beginnings* See page 5

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, people of God!

All: Take refuge in the Lord,

One: who listens when we cry out, who rescues us when we call,

All: and who leads and guides us according to his unfailing love.

One: You are our God; our lives are in your hands.

All: Let's worship God together!

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 7:55-60

But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

SERMON

Breaking Points

Pastor Brent

*HYMN

If You But Trust in God to Guide You

See page 6

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Remember to place your prayer tags in the offering plates if you would like them lifted. They will be read as written.

OFFERTORY Langsam from "Five Pieces in Folk Style" by Robert Schumann
Peter Seidenberg, *cello*; Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

*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 *How Can I Keep From Singing?* by Robert Lowry (1869)

GATHERING AT THE TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Pastor Brent

SHARING THE STORY / BLESSING THE FEAST

SHARING THE MEAL

Today we use the ancient practice of intinction. Ushers will release you. Proceed forward by the center aisle and back by the side aisles. When you receive the bread, please take it, dip it in the grape juice and consume before returning to your seat. The bread is gluten free and the cup has unfermented grape juice that there might not be any barrier between you and this holy meal. If you prefer, there also will be sealed bread/juice packs that you can take back to your seat to consume there. If you cannot come forward, let the usher know so that we might bring the meal to you.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION *Just a Closer Walk*, arr. by Jack Schrader

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *The Lord's Prayer*, from South Africa

anonymous (South Africa)

Voice

The musical score is written for voice in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are: "Our Fa-ther who art in heav'n, Hal-low-ed be thy name. Thy King-dom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heav'n Give us this day our dai - ly bread, and for-give us our tres - pas-ses as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us. And lead us not in-to temp-tation. But de - liv - er us from e - vil. For thine is the king-dom, the po - wer and the glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men A - men." The score includes measure numbers 6, 11, 16, and 22.

Our Fa-ther who art in heav'n, Hal-low-ed be thy name. Thy King-dom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heav'n Give us this day our dai - ly bread, and for-give us our tres - pas-ses as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us. And lead us not in-to temp-tation. But de - liv - er us from e - vil. For thine is the king-dom, the po - wer and the glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men A - men.

ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We invite you to give to your local food pantry. You can also leave canned goods and staples for the People's Pantry and the Pop-Up Pantry in baskets at each exit.

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

*INVITATIONS

Pastor Brent

SENDING CHARGE

One: May you depart knowing the invitation of God, to move

Left: from comfort to insecurity

Right from what we know to what we have yet to discover

Left from where we have been to where we have yet to go

Right from safety to a place of risk.

One: Go in the example of the saints before you,

Left: the Israelites in the wilderness,

Right: Stephen, loyal, peace-filled, and forgiving no matter what.

One: Go in the name of Jesus, our Christ,

Left: who said 'follow me' without saying where he was going,

Right promising transformation and relationship with God and neighbor along the way.

One: Go in peace,

All: We go in peace to love and serve.

Adapted from the Northwest Ohio Association Faith
Formation blog of the United Church of Christ.

*HYMN

Thine is the Glory

See page 7

*BENEDICTION



POSTLUDE

Pavane by Gabriel Faure'

Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*; Peter Seidenberg, *cello*

Unison

1 This is a day of new be - gin - nings, time to re -
 2 For by the life and death of Je - sus, God's might - y
 3 Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing, step from the
 4 Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us to show and
 * In faith we'll gath - er 'round the ta - ble to taste and

mem - ber and move on, time to be - lieve what love is
 Spir - it, now as then, can make for us a world of
 past and leave be - hind our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt, and
 share what love can do. This is a day of new be -
 share what love can do. This is a day of new be -

bring - ing, lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.
 dif - ference, as faith and hope are born a - gain.
 griev - ing, seek - ing new paths, and sure to find.
 gin - nings— our God is mak - ing all things new.
 gin - nings— our God is mak - ing all things new.

*Alternate fourth stanza for Holy Communion

Brian Wren wrote this hymn in 1978 for a New Year's Day service in Oxford, England. The music is by the editor of two hymnals of the United Methodist Church and was composed for the original Wren text.

Tune: BEGINNINGS 9.8.9.8.
 Carlton R. Young, 1987

If You But Trust in God to Guide You

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Georg Neumark, 1641

Ps. 55:22

Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.

1 If you but trust in God to guide you, with hope-ful heart through
2 On - ly be still, and wait God's plea - sure in cheer-ful hope, with
3 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways un - swerv-ing; of - fer your ser - vice

all your ways, you will find strength, with God be - side you,
heart con - tent, trust-ing that grace which knows no mea - sure
faith - ful - ly, and trust God's word, though un - de - serv - ing,

to bear the worst of e - vil days; For those who trust God's
will by un - bound - ed Love be sent; Nor doubt our in - most
there find the truth to set you free; God will not fail to

change-less love build on the rock that will not move.
wants are clear to One who holds us al - ways near.
guide and bless those who em - brace God's faith - ful - ness.

The comforting words of Psalm 55:22 inspired this beautiful hymn by Georg Neumark, who wrote both words and music. Neumark was a German poet who suffered much during the Thirty Years' War.

Tune: NEUMARK 9.8.9.8.8.8.
Georg Neumark, 1657

Thine Is the Glory

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Edmond Louis Budry, 1884

JUDAS MACCABEUS 5.5.6.5.6.5.6.5 with refrain

Trans. R. Birch Hoyle, 1923; alt.

George Frederick Handel, 1748

1. Thine is the glo - ry, Ris - en, con - quering Son; End - less is the
 2. Lo! Je - sus meets us, Ris - en from the tomb; Lov - ing - ly He
 3. No more we doubt Thee, Glo - rious Prince of life! Life is nought with -

vic - tory Thou o'er death hast won. An - gels in bright rai - ment
 greets us, Scat - ters fear and gloom. Let the church with glad - ness
 out Thee; Aid us in our strife. Make us more than con - querors

Rolled the stone a - way, Kept the fold - ed grave - clothes
 Hymns of tri - umph sing, For the Lord now liv - eth;
 Through Thy death - less love; Bring us safe through Jor - dan

Refrain (last time only)

Where Thy bod - y lay.
 Death hath lost its sting.
 To Thy home a - bove. Thine is the glo - ry, Ris - en, con - quering Son;

End - less is the vic - tory Thou o'er death hast won.

Text: From *Cantate Domino*. Copyright World Student Christian Federation. Used by permission.

Music Notes: Who was St. Cecilia?

St. Cecilia (180 AD-230 AD) St. Cecilia is remembered as the patron of musicians and poets. It is believed that "she sang in her heart, to the Lord." She is often illustrated in art playing the organ. Many compositions have been written to her memory.

~ Peter Frost

Connections Class: Saturday, May 13, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Have you been visiting this church for a while and thinking about calling it home? You are invited to join us to talk about the ways that this church and the United Church of Christ fit into Christianity including both our bold and progressive history and our open and hopeful vision for the future. We will close our time together with a light luncheon. Childcare is available. If you are unable to make the time for the class, please let us know and we will provide another way for you to get the information. In the Congregational tradition, joining a church is an event that is part of worship and involves the whole congregation. We will welcome new members into the church on Sunday, May 21. ~ Pastor Brent

Also on May 21 will be the **Annual Meeting** and the **All-Church Birthday Party**. If you would like to bake a cake, contact Holland Eaton or Charlotte Rodgers.

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.

The Rev. Brent Damrow, Pastor

Peter Frost, Minister of Music

Will Garrison, Administrator

Marion Pomeroy, Financial Secretary

Will Curtiss and Will Pohl, Livestream Technicians

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