



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

PRIDE SUNDAY & FATHER'S DAY
June 18, 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.

For those in church: Masks are optional, but masking is always welcome. A section of the first floor is designated as masking required.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

The Gift of Love (Trad.) arr. by John Carter

FRAMING WORDS

Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

INTROIT

Softly and Tenderly, tune by Will Thompson,
arr. by Bob Burroughs

***CALL TO WORSHIP** From the UCC Open and Affirming Coalition
written by Mak Kneebone

One: From ancient times to this present day, people have gathered in sacred spaces like this one.

ALL: Moments of time fold together when we immerse ourselves in love and connection.

One: We ask for Divine Love to be revealed to us in this gathering.

ALL: We open our spirits to the depth and breadth of Divine Presence.

One: We listen for sacred whisperings and await holy joy to be written on our hearts.

continued

ALL: Being truly ourselves, we come together in this eternal moment.

One: We bring our prayers to you as one community, one assembled body

ALL: Transgender, Nonbinary, Bisexual, Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Intersex, Gay, Queer, Ally. Beloved people of God. We come, and we pledge our commitment to walk the path of Jesus.

*HYMN *Christ is Made the Sure Foundation* See page 5

*PASSING OF THE PEACE Pastor Brent

WELCOME

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

STORY Genesis 1:26

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Image Bearers*

The 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.

We encourage children to stay in worship, but the nursery is staffed if needed.

SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 43:1-4a, John 15:12-18, Acts 10:15, Galatians 3:23-29, and 1 John 4:7-8

SERMON *The Larger and Expanding Story* Pastor Brent

*HYMN *We Limit Not the Truth of God* See page 6

*OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT (adopted May 31, 2009)

We, the First Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in response to the life and teachings of Jesus that we may all be one, hereby declare our congregation to be open and affirming.

We invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability,

economic circumstances, faith background, and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership, and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.

We acknowledge that discrimination of any kind is incompatible with Christ's gospel of unconditional love, and we affirm the Resolution of General Synod 15, United Church of Christ (July 2, 1985) "Calling on United Church of Christ congregations to covenant as open and affirming."

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING (prayer slips may also be placed in the offering plate)

OFFERTORY SOLO *Home is Where the Heart Is*, by Sally Fingerett (BMI)

The Congregation will be invited to join in the refrain:

Home is where the heart is, no matter how the heart lives

Inside your heart where love is,

That's where you've got to make yourself, at home

***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.

***UNISON BLESSING OF THE GIFTS** by Lavon Baylor

For all the great and wondrous things you have done for us, O God, we are grateful. You give us strength to go on when we are troubled and discouraged. You grant newness of life as we share in Christ's resurrection. We want to pass on the good news through this offering and by the way we live each day. Lead us, and guide us with your steadfast love, that we might channel your gifts to all we meet. Amen.

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

Pastor Brent

PRAYER RESPONSE

Song of Simeon (American Folk)

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

Pastor Brent

*SENDING CHARGE Written by Kimi Floyd Reisch

Continue to serve with faith and love,
Depart from this time today committed to sharing the best of yourself,
Through generosity of time and resources,
Meeting the needs of others, both spoken and unspoken, seen and unseen,
heard and unheard
As the God of healing has healed us,
Let us go now and share that compassion with the world,
Let us go and greet our beloved transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay
siblings,
Our Black, Latinx, Indigenous, siblings,
Sharing the good news that they are seen, they are heard, they are Beloved.
Go now in hope. Amen.

*HYMN *In the Midst of New Dimensions*

See page 7

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Brent



POSTLUDE Two Toccatas by J. Pachelbel

Music notes about the Offertory Solo

Sally Fingerett wrote *Home is Where the Heart Is* in the early 1990s. It is a song I have performed dozens of times over the years. Considering the story and sadness of this song, I do not think it is a coincidence that the songwriter chose to use the opening six notes of the refrain to be so hauntingly familiar. Fingerett imitates exactly the little hurtful tune that young people have used for generations to tease and bully one another. Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah.....

~ Peter Frost

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

Eph. 2:20–22; 1 Pet. 2:4–7

Latin, 6th–8th century

Transl. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt.

St. 3 adapt. Thomas H. Troeger, 1992

1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ the head and cor - ner - stone,
 2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O God of Hosts, to - day!
 3 Here re - new your ser - vants' vis - ion, that by faith they may at - tain

chos - en of our God and pre - cious, bind - ing all the Church in one;
 With your con - stant, lov - ing kind - ness hear your peo - ple as they pray.
 peace and hope, re - newed com - pas - sion, strength to com - fort those in pain,

Ho - ly Zi - on's help for - ev - er, and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
 Give your full - est ben - e - dic - tion: grace to fol - low Christ the Way.
 Tears and grief trans - formed to glad - ness in your ev - er - last - ing reign.

The hymn has its origins in an early Latin poem, Urbs beata Jerusalem, based on passages from Ephesians, 1 Peter, and Revelation. "Holy Zion" refers to the church transcendent, built of "living stones"—the saints of God.

Tune: REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7.

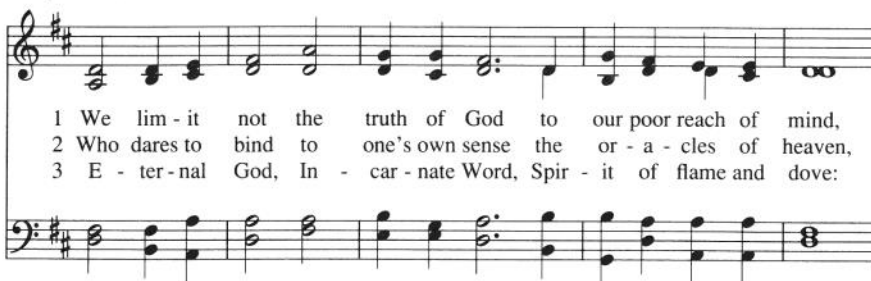
Henry T. Smart, 1867

Alternate tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY

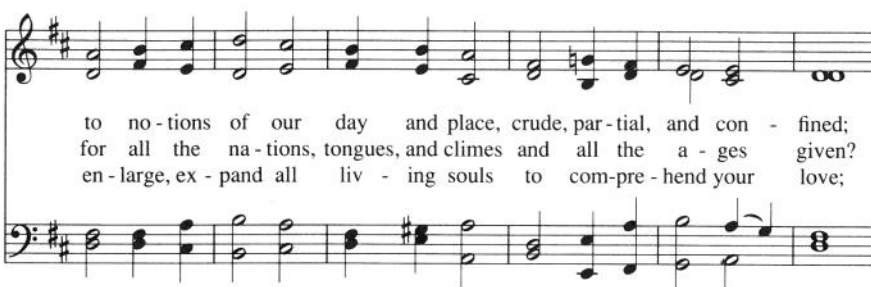
We Limit Not the Truth of God

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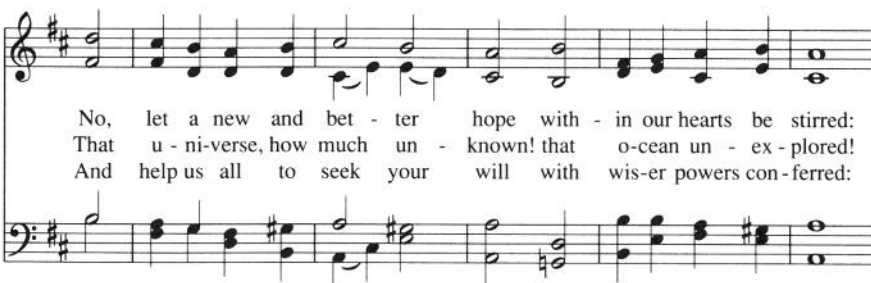
George Rawson, 1853; alt.



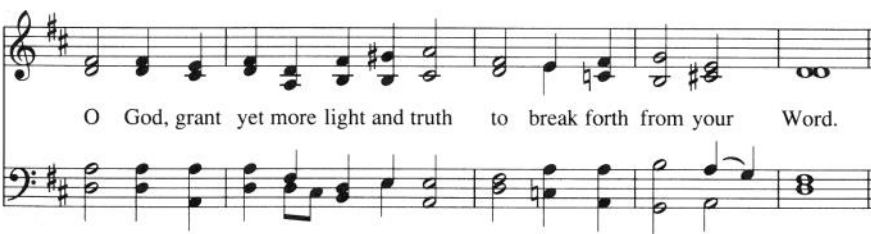
1 We lim - it not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind,
2 Who dares to bind to one's own sense the or - a - cles of heaven,
3 E - ter - nal God, In - car - nate Word, Spir - it of flame and dove:



to no - tions of our day and place, crude, par - tial, and con - fined;
for all the na - tions, tongues, and climes and all the a - ges given?
en - large, ex - pand all liv - ing souls to com - pre - hend your love;



No, let a new and bet - ter hope with - in our hearts be stirred;
That u - ni - verse, how much un - known! that o - cean un - ex - plored!
And help us all to seek your will with wis - er powers con - ferred:



O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

George Rawson based this text on the parting words of Pastor John Robinson to the Pilgrim founders in 1620.

Tune: OLD 22nd C.M.D.
Anglo-Genevan Psalter, 1556

Alternate tunes: FOREST GREEN; ELLACOMBE

In the Midst of New Dimensions

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Julian Rush, 1985; alt.

Gen. 9:12-16; Exod. 13:21-22; Num. 14:14

C C/B F C F Am7 Dm7 G7sus4 G7

1 In the midst of new di-men-sions, in the face of chang-ing ways,
 2 Through the flood of star-ving peo-ple, war-ring fac-tions and de-spair,
 3 As we stand a world di-vid-ed by our own self-seek-ing schemes,
 4 We are man and we are wom-an, all per-sua-sions, old and young,
 5 Should the threats of dire pre-dic-tions cause us to with-draw in pain,

C C/B F C F Am7 Dm7 G C

Who will lead the pil-grim peo-ples wan-dering in their sep-arate ways?
 Who will lift the ol-ive branch-es? Who will light the flame of care?
 Grant that we, your glob-al vil-lage, might en-vi-sion wid-er dreams.
 Each a gift in your cre-a-tion, each a love song to be sung,
 May your blaz-ing phoe-nix spir-it res-ur-rect the church a-gain.

Refrain
 Am Em F C F C G7 C Dsus4 D7 G7sus4 G7 Am

God of rain-bow, fier-y pil-lar, lead-ing where the ea-gles soar, We your

Em F C F C/E F C/E F C/E Dm7 G7 C

peo-ple, ours the jour-ney now and ev-er, now and ev-er, now and ev-er - more.

Julian Rush, an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church, has spent more than a decade as director of the Colorado AIDS Project. He wrote this hymn on the theme of "diversity" for a meeting of the Rocky Mountain Conference (United Methodist).

Tune: NEW DIMENSIONS 8.7.8.7. with refrain
 Julian Rush, 1985
 Arr. The New Century Hymnal, 1994



The entire Berkshire region is in the midst of a high-end housing expansion. Learn about the impact of housing affordability and how housing initiatives in our area are making an impact.

Sunday, June 25th

11:30 - 1:00 PM

First Congregational Church, UCC Stockbridge
4 Main Street, Stockbridge MA. 01262

Panelists:

Carolyn Valli, CEO, Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity

Eileen Peltier, CEO, Berkshire Housing Services, Inc.

Jennifer Meehan, Director of Community Engagement, Berkshire Housing Services, Inc.

Matthew Russett, Legislative Assistant to Congressman Neal

June Wolfe, Housing Director, Construct



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

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