

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

September 22, 2024 10:00 AM
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE *Choral* – Dieterich Buxtehude Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Christopher Stevens

*OPENING HYMN NO. 53 *Morning Has Broken*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) Rev. Barbara Papagian

Leader: Like a tree planted by the river,

People: We have sunk our roots in God's love.

Leader: Like the leaves bouncing with ease,

People: We have danced in the breath of the Spirit.

Leader: Like the small nest in the crook of a branch,

People: We have found rest in the arms of God.

Leader: Like a bird pouring out sweet melodies,

People: We have raised our voices in praise.

Leader: Like the bright apple, like the brilliant orange,

All: We have lived as witnesses of God's grace.

OPENING PRAYER (Unison) Rev. Christopher Stevens

O God of wisdom and understanding, in mystery and silence you are present.

You are always bringing new life out of destruction, hope out of despair, and growth out of difficulty. Help us today to perceive your unseen hand in the unfolding of our lives and to respond to the gentle guidance of your Spirit, that we may experience and feel the joy you give your people. We realize that wisdom is more than gaining knowledge, that wisdom is listening and hearing more than speaking. Grant us the wisdom today to see you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly. In the Savior's name. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *Rain Down* – J. Cortez/arr. J. Carter Chancel Choir & Bridget Thornton-Smith, soloist

Refrain: Rain down your love on your people. Rain down your love God of life.

Faithful and true is the word of our God. All of God's works are so worthy of trust.

God's mercy falls on the just and the right; full of God's love is the earth (Refrain).

We who revere and find hope in our God live in the kindness and joy of God's wing.

God will protect us from darkness and death; God will not leave us to starve (Refrain).
God of creation, we long for your truth; you are the water of life for our thirst. Grant that your love and your peace touch our hearts, all of our hope lies in you (Refrain).

Those involved with Sunday Friends may leave for their activity.

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Barbara Papagian

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT MEDITATION

OUR LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

Our Father 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

*HYMN NO. 573 *Purer in Heart, O God*

OUR MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY (Hymn No. 46)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

Gracious Lord, we join together in prayer. We recognize that daily prayer impacts our spiritual health. Likewise, offering our tithes to you impacts our spiritual health. The acts of praying and giving unify our church community and place our collective attention on you. As we practice these spiritual disciplines, we hope to draw even closer to you today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 1 Janie Shaklee

SERMON *What Is Good About All of U.S.* Rev. Christopher Stevens

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 560 *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*

BENEDICTION

Send us forth, O God, as instruments of your peace, not weapons of our own self-destruction. Direct us in the narrow path of righteousness, not the broad byway of wickedness. Give us the touch of your love to heal the wounded. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Praeludium in D Major – D. Buxtehude

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 1 (New Living Translation)

- ¹ Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.
- ² But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night.
- ³ They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.
- ⁴ But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.
- ⁵ They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly.
- ⁶ For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

First Congregational Church



September 22, 2024

**Manchester, New Hampshire
United Church of Christ**

508 Union Street · Manchester, NH · 603-625-5093

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

You are welcome here! An Open & Affirming Congregation