

*First Congregational Church*  
*Our Church in Worship*

August 25, 2024 10:00 AM

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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PRELUDE *Berceuse* – Louis Vierne Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Barbara Papagian

\*OPENING HYMN NO. 289 *What Is This Place*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) *Based on Proverbs 1*

Leader: People of God, listen!

**People: Wisdom calls and understanding raises her voice!**

Leader: We gather to grow in wisdom and understanding,

**People: And to hear God's word for us.**

Leader: Wisdom stands at roadside and cries to her people to take instruction.

**All: Let us pay attention; let us hear and understand God!**

OPENING PRAYER (Unison) Rev. Christopher Stevens

**God, we give thanks that you have revealed yourself in the words of Scripture, read and proclaimed among us. We are grateful that you also make yourself known in bread and the fruit of the vine. We thank you for all the people who support and challenge us to be better disciples. Our greatest joy is to experience your presence and to respond to you, and we do this humbly today. Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING *God Is My Shepherd* - Antonín Dvořák Michelle Harrington, soloist

God is my shepherd, I want for nothing. My rest is in the pleasant meadows, He leadeth me where quiet waters flow. My fainting soul doth He restore and guideth me in the ways of peace, to glorify His name. And though in death's dark valley my steps must wander, my spirit shall not fear, for Thou art by me still. Thy rod and staff are with me, and they shall comfort me.

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. 324 *Your Words to Me Are Life and Health*

OUR MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC *How Can I Keep from Singing?* – arr. Brent Yorgason

My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation: I catch the sweet, though far off hymn that hails a new creation. Refrain: No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging. Since God is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul; how can I keep from singing? (Refrain)

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing. All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing? (Refrain)

\*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)

**O Lord of Hosts, we are so happy to offer you these monetary gifts. We recognize that we are able to worship here because of the generous giving of this congregation. Yet, our giving and our prayer extend beyond us. We pray that these offerings will be used to reach out to others in our community who need to find a joyful trust in you. "Happy is everyone who trusts in you." Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING John 6:56-69 Karen Hawver

SERMON *Read It!* Rev. Christopher Stevens

\*CLOSING HYMN NO. 431 *Go, My Children, with My Blessing*

BENEDICTION

May the light always shine in your darkness. May your ears always hear the Word. May grace upon grace be yours and may the glory of the God and of Jesus be known to you now and forever. Amen.

POSTLUDE     *Strong Tower Postlude* (“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”) – Matthias Nagel

\*You are invited to stand if you wish.

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**SCRIPTURE READING**

**John 6:56-69 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>56</sup> Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. <sup>57</sup> I live because of the living Father who sent me; in the same way, anyone who feeds on me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup> I am the true bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will not die as your ancestors did (even though they ate the manna) but will live forever.”  
<sup>59</sup> He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.  
<sup>60</sup> Many of his disciples said, “This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?”  
<sup>61</sup> Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup> Then what will you think if you see the Son of Man ascend to heaven again? <sup>63</sup> The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup> But some of you do not believe me.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning which ones didn’t believe, and he knew who would betray him.) <sup>65</sup> Then he said, “That is why I said that people can’t come to me unless the Father gives them to me.”  
<sup>66</sup> At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. <sup>67</sup> Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?”  
<sup>68</sup> Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. <sup>69</sup> We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”

**Leviticus 24:17, 19-20 (New Living Translation)** <sup>17</sup> “Anyone who takes another person’s life must be put to death.... <sup>19</sup> “Anyone who injures another person must be dealt with according to the injury inflicted— <sup>20</sup> a fracture for a fracture, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Whatever anyone does to injure another person must be paid back in kind.

**Matthew 5:38-39 (New International Version)** <sup>38</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ <sup>39</sup> But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.

# First Congregational Church



**August 25, 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*