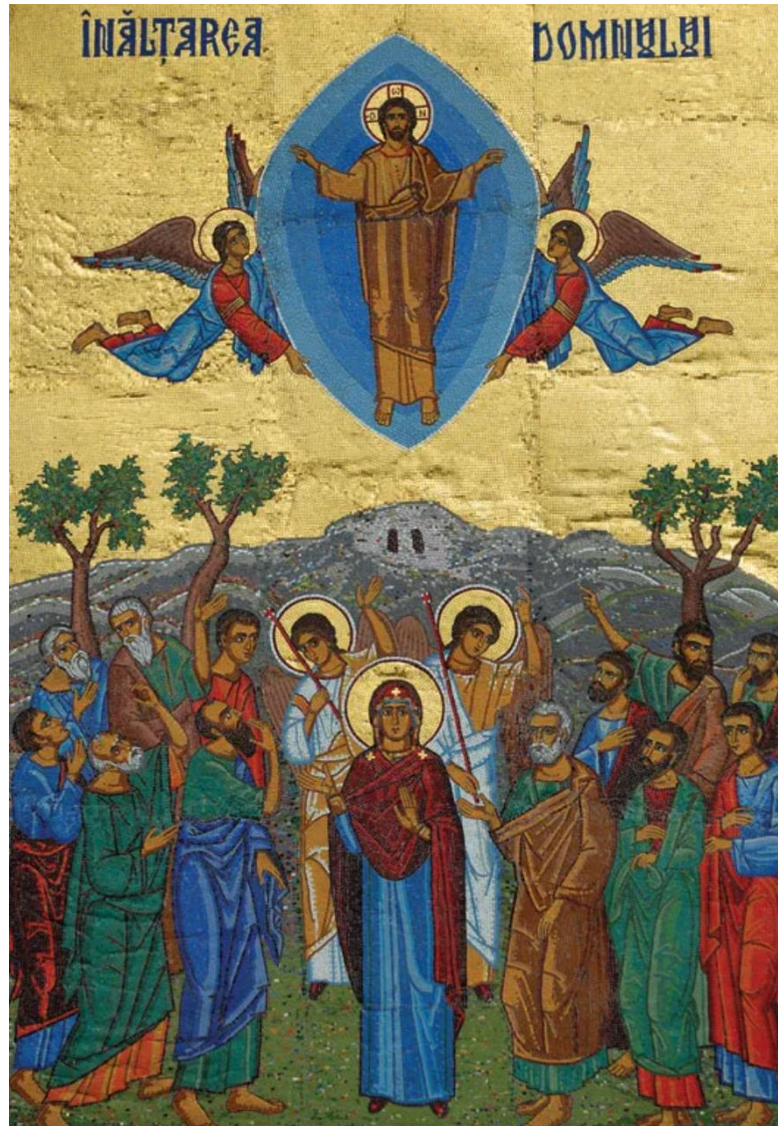




Est. 1639

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



The Ascension

May 17, 2026
Seventh Sunday of Easter
10:15 a.m.

Welcome to our guests! Thank you for being here. It is such a joy to worship with you. Please speak to any member of the Pastoral Team if you would like to explore how our church may become your spiritual home. As an **Open and Affirming** congregation we seek to extend the extravagant welcome of God to all people, all the time. Regardless of your race, class, ancestry, gender identity, marital status, ability, age, immigration status, or sexual orientation, you are always welcome at First Church. We affirm your inherent dignity as a child of God. God created you just as you are and loves you just as you are.
We do, too!

Children's Ministries: Babies are always welcome in the Sanctuary during worship. We also have a nursery (accessible through the "baby breezeway" in the back of the Sanctuary). First Church offers child care (for ages 3 months to 3 years) with professional nursery staff on Sundays @ 9:45am-11:45am. Sunday School classes are known as "Disciple Road" (age 4 through 5th grade) and "Middle Road" (6th grade and up). We also have a children's choir. Reach out to our Minister of Children and Families Kim Feeney (kfeeney@firstchurchfairfield.org) for more information about our children's ministries & faith formation programs.

We have a **hearing assist system** for those with Bluetooth enabled hearing aids available and also have receivers with earpieces available. Please speak to an usher for assistance.

Leading Us in Worship

The Rev. Vanessa Rose, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Kathy Williamson, Liturgist
Kim Feeney, Minister of Children & Families
Dr. Frank Martignetti, Director of Music & Organist
Chancel & Bell Choirs
Jermaine Charles, Audio & Video
Deacons: Rita Skog & Heather Hodgeman

Worship leaders speak the text in regular type.
All the People of God speak the text in boldface.

Italic Text provides explanation or instruction.

*Please stand if you are able.

WE GATHER TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

Prelude

Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

arr. Wilbur Held

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Now the Green Blade Rises

French Carol, arr. Hopson

***Call to Worship**

based on Psalm 66

One: Shout out to God, all the earth!
Break into joyful songs to the one true God!

**All: Sing of the glory due His name,
and offer the most magnificent praises!**

One: All Your works are wonderful!

**All: The entire earth bows down to worship You,
singing songs of praise and glory to Your name.**

One: Come, let's bless God together!

**All: Let's praise the One who gives us life
and keeps us safe;
who watches over us,
and keeps our feet from stumbling.**

***Hymn**

Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

230 *New Century Hymnal*

***Prayer of Invocation and the Lord's Prayer**

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

Children's Sermon

The Blessing Box

Kim Henry

***Passing the Peace**

One: May the peace of God be with you!

All: And also with you!

We greet one another with a sign of peace.

The children may go with their friends and teachers to Disciple Road and Middle Road.

Candle of Witness

Two Houses, One Home

GOD'S WORD IS PROCLAIMED

Scripture Reading

Acts 1:6-14

***Hymn of Praise**

A Joyful Alleluia

The musical score is written in 7/8 time and consists of five staves. The first staff is for the Cantor, starting with a six-measure rest followed by the lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!'. The subsequent four staves are for the Assembly, each with alternating Cantor and Assembly lines. The lyrics for the Assembly parts are 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!' and 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!'. The final staff is for the Assembly, with lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!'.

Gospel

John 17:1-11

Sermon
Rose

The Rev. Vanessa

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S HOLY WORD

*Hymn

I Greet You, Sure Redeemer, With My Heart 251 *New Century Hymnal*

Joys and Concerns

Today's flowers are given by Beth Fitzpatrick in loving memory of her mother, Janet Louise Cooney, who passed away in January and loved the beautiful spring blooms she tended in her garden.

Prayers of the People

Invitation to Offering

Today's loose plate offering will support the local chapter of the National Alliance of Mental Health (NAMI), which holds regular meetings here at First Church and which is dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by mental illness.

Offertory

When all our visions fade away and all
our voices cease,
Will all our children's children live in
Christ's eternal peace?
We cannot wait for better times, but now
must dream and dare
To bring Christ's peace to wounded
earth with Christ's own loving care.

As one by one we poor are fed and one
by one are healed,
So heart by heart is peace begun and
heart by heart revealed,

Christ's Peace

And though the task of peace is great
and daily do we fail,
Yet Christ shall come to every heart the
reign of God prevail.

Then let our visions leap and dance,
Like flames against the night,
And let our voices vanquish fear,
And claim the promised light.
Our God will keep our visions bright
When all our voices cease,
And every child will live in love,
And Christ's eternal peace.

M. D. Ridge

*Doxology

Let trumpets sound and voices sing!
Let all on earth their praises bring!
For Christ has conquered sin and death
And given life eternal breath. Amen.

— John H. Danner

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn**

I'll Fly Away

595 *New Century Hymnal*

***Benediction and Response**

God Be With You



God be with you till we meet a - gain; By good coun-sel guide, up - hold you,



With a shep-herd's care en - fold you; God be with you till we meet a-gain. A - men.

Postlude

Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit

Spiritual, arr. Richard Elliott

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS

Congregants: LaNeil Brown, Sr.; Pertrinea Cash; Cheryl Camarota; Dan Christianson;

Betsy Dalling; Fernando Destruge; Gloria Evans; Charlotte Jefremow; Christy Jefremow; Nancy Jones and family; Cathy Kane, her brother Scott and great niece Amelia; Adelaide Kitchen; Jerry Krenke; Elizabeth Saint; Penny Stevens; Andrea Wakeman; Elinor Wilber. and all those living with memory loss and Alzheimer's disease and we pray for their caregivers.

Family and Friends: Ed Allen (friend of Patty Bilotto); Alison Babycos (friend of Kim Henry); Hal Burdick (Friend of David McKinnis); Bob Buyiteck (friend of Bill Sargent); Tracy Bloom (sister of Michael Traum); Art Christiani (friend of Bill Sargeant); Diane Studwell Crawley; Donna, her husband and daughter (friends of David McKinnis), Brandon Deedon (Pertrinea Cash's son); Lynelle Dupuis (sister of Bethany); Mary Lou Earnshaw, (sister of Nancy Weber); Janet Faller (sister-in-law to Michael Traum); Carter Faustini; Kimberly Fetteri (friend of the Gindek family); Jeff Fischer (friend of Charlotte Dyslin); Marianne and Larry Gaddy (Connie Sargent's cousins); The Grover Family; Greenawalt and Darnall Families (Gindek family); Bill Fry (Penny Stevens' brother-in-law); Nancy Hamlin (sister of Charlotte Dyslin); Walter Haenn (brother of Madeline Lee); Jimi Han (friend of the choir); Yochai Harel; Melanie Rainbow-Harel and family (friends of Michelle Walker); Henry (friend of Laura Gindek); Christina Holms (Connie and Bill Sargent's niece); K.B. (friend of Robin Griskus); William Kennedy (friend of David McKinnis); Michael Kelly; Scott Kimmel; John Mastropietro; Lila (friend of Beth McKinnis); Debra McLeod; Dorothy Michalowski (friend of Connie and Bill Sargent); Mike Palmer; Rosie Perera (friend of David McKinnis); Barbara Peterson (friend of Ted and Judy Andre); Jean Rita Powers, Artie Quinn; Helen Ranholm (cousin of Connie Sargent); Dick Reese (father in law of Melissa Stanhewicz); Nasir Reid (friend of Rita Skog); Patty Roberts (cousin of Connie and Bill Sargent); Rosalie Rutkauskas (Jessie's Grandmother); Darlene Scaia (Pat Bilotto's cousin); David Skog (son of Rita Skog); Sandy Suarez, Cleo Vernon (the Rev. Kathy Williamson's mother); Dr. Abraham Yale; and Marshall (friend of Jon Skog.)

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Fellowship Volunteer Appreciation



Sunday, May 31

Immediately following the 10:15 a.m. service

We invite the many congregation members who have so generously helped us offer Sunday fellowship each week this worship season to join us for some well-deserved appreciation.

Join Us for Shared Worship



Two Houses, One Home Service

10:30 a.m., Sunday May 24

First Baptist Church, Stratford

1301 Stratford Avenue

Lunch fellowship to follow service

Please note: There will be no 8:15 or 10:15 a.m. services in the First Church sanctuary May 24 as we join our brothers and sisters at First Baptist to celebrate Pentecost together.

VACATION

Bible

SCHOOL



**Disciple
ROAD**
FIRST CHURCH OF FAIRFIELD

June 22 - 26

(Mon-Fri @ 9am - 12pm)

Ages 4 - 10

**Counselor-in-Training
positions open
for ages 11 - 14!**

5 days of Bible-themed FUN!

Art | Music | Nature | Prayer | Play | Storytelling | Service | & more!