



Est. 1639

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Dove, by Elissualos

September 27, 2026
Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost
10:15 A.M.

Welcome!

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) and are currently in session. New students are welcome. 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 Choir
Jermaine Charles, Audio & Video
Deacon: Tom Croarkin

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

Partita on "Nettleton"

John Eggert

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands on Me

African-American Spiritual

***Call to Worship**

One: God has gathered us to this place,

**All: where we hear those stories which show us
what the kingdom of God is like.**

One: God summons us to this place,

**All: where we can learn how to serve our God
without reservation, or hesitation.**

One: God will send us from this place,

**All: to tell others of God's hopes and dreams,
so they, too, can choose to follow God.**

***Hymn**

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

459 *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

***Passing of 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: a wave, peace sign, elbow bump, are all just as meaningful as a hug or handshake! Please take your cues from your neighbors so all may feel comfortable.

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

Candle of Witness

Two Houses, One Home

Kathy Lea

Reflection on the Annual Meeting of the SNEUCC

Lucas Walker

GOD'S WORD IS PROCLAIMED

Scripture

Exodus 17:1-7

***Hymn of Praise**

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

Sermon

The Rev. Vanessa Rose

***Hymn**

Lord of the Dance

Sydney Carter

Please see the hymn music and lyrics at the end of this bulletin

Joys and Concerns

The flowers this morning are given in loving memory of Edith Verdier, who would have celebrated her 99th birthday on Tuesday September 29, by her daughters, Kathy and Susan.

Prayers of the People

Invitation to Offering

Today's loose plate offering will support Mercy Learning Center. The Bridgeport-based nonprofit provides literacy and life-skills training to low-income women in the Greater Bridgeport area.

Offertory *At the Name of Jesus*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

bore it up triumphant with its human light, through all ranks of creatures, to the central height, to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast; filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.

In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue all that is not holy, all that is not true. Look to him, your Savior, in temptation's hour; let his will enfold you in its light and power.

Christians, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory, o'er the earth to reign;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his
brow, and our hearts confess him King of
glory now.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God, for all that love has done
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

***Hymn**

423 *New Century Hymnal*

God Be With You

Postlude

arr. Pam Gervais

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS

Congregants Currently Receiving Hospice Care: Melissa Booker and Sarah Jewell, along with their families and loved ones.

Congregants: LaNeil Brown, Sr.; Pertrinea Cash; Cheryl Camarota; Dan Christianson; Betsy Dalling; Fernando Destruge; Gloria Evans; Charlotte Jefremow; Christy Jefremow; Nancy Jones and family; Adelaide Kitchen; Jerry Krenke; Elizabeth Saint; The Rev. David Spollett; Penny Stevens; Julie Traum; 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); Ellen Cahill; Art Christiani (friend of Bill Sargeant); Diane Studwell Crawley; Donna, her husband and daughter (friends of David McKinnis), Brandon Deedon (Pertrinea Cash's son); Mary Lou Earnshaw, (sister of Nancy Weber); Janet Faller (sister-in-law to Michael Traum); Carter Faustini; Kimberly Fetteri (friend of the Gindek family); Charles Ferguson (brother of Cathy Kane), Jeff Fischer (friend of Charlotte Dyslin); Larry Gaddy (Connie Sargent's cousin); Nate Gifford (cousin of Connie Sargent); 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 Gnidek); 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); Diane Marble (sister-in-law of Charlotte Dyslin); Peter Maloney; Brian McCarthy; 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; 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).

Serving in the military: James Classy, Sam Classy, Trevor Dawson, David Elmore, Andrew Holms, Kelcy McKenzie, and Christopher Muschett.

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The Call to worship was written by Thom Shuman and shared on his blog, Lectionary Liturgies. It is used with permission.

Lord of the Dance



1. I danced in the morn - ing when the world was be - gun, and I
 2. I danced for the scribe and the Phari - i - see, but they
 3. I danced on the Sab - bath and I cured the lame, the
 4. I danced on a Fri - day when the sky turned black, it's
 5. They cut me down and I leap up high,



1. danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
 2. would not dance and they would - n't fol - low me, I
 3. ho - ly peo - ple, they said it was a shame, they
 4. hard to dance with the dev - il on your back, they
 5. I am the life that - il nev - er, nev - er die, I'll



1. came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth at
 2. danced for the fish - er - men, for James and for John. they
 3. whipped and they stripped and they hung me high, and they
 4. bur - led my bod - y and they thought I'd gone, but
 5. live in you if you'll live in me.



1. Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
 2. came with me and the dance went on.
 3. left me there on a cross to die.
 4. I am the dance and I still go on.
 5. I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.



Dance, then, wher - ev - er you may be. I am the Lord of the



Dance, said he. I'll lead you all wher - ev - er you may be, I will



lead you all in the dance, said he. dance, said he.

Two Houses, One Home



Sunday, Oct. 4
10:15 a.m. worship
Fellowship Lunch to follow



Concert Today
Benita Rose, Piano
4 p.m., Sanctuary
Tickets at the door!



Join us for
Fellowship!
Sundays following the
10:15 a.m. service