

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Ninth Sunday After Pentecost
July 26, 2026

**** *Some rise to their feet, some rise in their hearts—please rise as you are able.*

OPENING BELL

At the sound of the bell please silence yourselves and prepare for worship.

PRELUDE *Chorale Preludium: If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee*, J.S. Bach Ellen Bradley

ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP **Whoever you are...and wherever you are on
life's journey... you are welcome here!**

OPENING REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Romans 12) Andrea Bartlett

Let your love be real, true, heart-felt and authentic.

**Let us not compromise with cruelty and injustice in our society but abhor the evil done
to our neighbors.**

Hold on to what you know to be good and just. Be welcoming to one another with a caring heart. If
you give any preferences make it for the poor, the sick, the suffering and those who are targets of
evil acts of those with power.

We pray for the inspiration of the Spirit to motivate us and help us follow the will of God.

Rejoice with hope, persevere in times of greed and chaos, find strength in prayer.

**Guide us to lead a life of hospitality and empathy. Let us rejoice in the many gifts of life
and mourn with friends who have suffered loss.**

**** **HYMN NCH 89** *Awake, Awake to Love and Work* All

Awake, awake to love and work! The lark is in the sky;
the fields are wet with diamond dew; the worlds awake to cry
their praises to the Fount of Life; Christ Jesus passes by.

Come, let your voice be one with theirs, shout with their shout of praise;
See how the giant sun soars up, God's gift for all your days!
So let the love of Jesus come and set your soul ablaze.

To give and give, and give again, as God's own grace is free;
To spend yourself nor count the cost; to serve most gloriously
the God who gave all worlds that are, and all that are to be.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Respond to each shared prayer request with "Peace, Shalom, Salaam."

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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
yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Andrea

OFFERTORY

Dream God's Dream, Brian Sirchio

Choir & Congregation

The Congregation will be invited to sing the refrain after the 1st and 2nd verses.

The song is #120 in the *Sing! Prayer and Praise* hymnbook.

Dream God's dream! Holy Spirit help us dream
of a world where there is justice and where ev'ry one is free
to build and grow and love,
and to simply have enough. The world will change,
when we dream God's dream.

****DOXOLOGY** (tune: *Lasst uns erfreuen*)

All

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

*****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Andrea

**God of unfolding mysteries, we linger over questions of why and want clear answers. But
You call us to a journey with faith in what we often fail to comprehend. You call us to love
following the way of Jesus. In all these hints help us to follow Your will this day and each
day of life. Amen**

*****HYMN NCH 448**

Take My Life, God, Let It Be

All

Take my life, God, let it be consecrated faithfully
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my spirit, let it move at the impulse of your love.
Take my intellect and use all its powers as you choose.

Take my will; your will be done! May your will and mine be one.
Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwelling place.

Take my love and help it grow; let my loving overflow.
Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's community.

SCRIPTURE

John 5:30, Romans 12:1-5

Andrea

"I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek to do not
my own will but the will of him who sent me.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies
as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not
be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern
what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than
you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that
God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the
same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one
of another.

MESSAGE

"How Can I Figure Out the Will of God?"

Paul

****HYMN NCH 410

If You But Trust in God to Guide You

All

If you but trust in God to guide you, with hopeful heart through all your ways,
you will find strength, with God beside you, to bear the worst of evil days;
for those who trust God's changeless love build on the rock that will not move.

Only be still, and wait God's pleasure in cheerful hope, with heart content,
trusting that grace which knows no measure will by unbounded Love be sent;
nor doubt our inmost wants are clear to One who holds us always near.

Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving; offer your service faithfully,
and trust God's word, though undeserving, there find the trust to set you free;
God will not fail to guide and bless those who embrace God's faithfulness.

****BENEDICTION

Paul

**** SUNG BENEDICTION

World Peace Prayer

All

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace,
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe!

GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

RECESSIONAL *Chorale: If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee*, Neumark/Schreiner

Ellen

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Andrea Bartlett
Ellen Bradley

Acknowledgements

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