

September 6, 2026

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

WE GATHER IN CELEBRATION

Prelude

Self Control (from Meditations with the Holy Spirit)
By Stephen DeCesare

Opening Sentences

One: This is the day that God has made!

Many: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Centering Words

Opening Song

I Need You to Survive
Words and music on pages 5-7

Call to Worship:

Jaiden Ferrell

One: When two or three gather, Christ lives in every moment,

Many: **where two or three gather, Christ is present with them.**

One: Where two or three gather to worship God,

Many: **glad songs of praise are lifted, hearts are filled with hope.**

One: When two or three gather to serve God's creation,

Many: **Christ is feeding the hungry, healing the broken,
welcoming the stranger, and building shelters of peace.**

ALL: May our gathering here inspire us to carry the grace of God
beyond these walls to all we encounter. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ is with each of you.

Many: **And also with you!**

Please share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

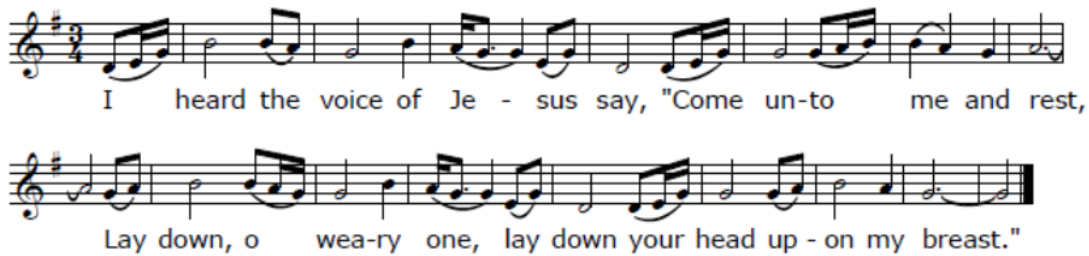
Blessing of Children

*During the summer months we will not have a Children's Moment during worship.
All children are invited to come to the labyrinth for a blessing and then go to their Sunday School
experience.*

Offertory

WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS

Sung Call to Prayer *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*



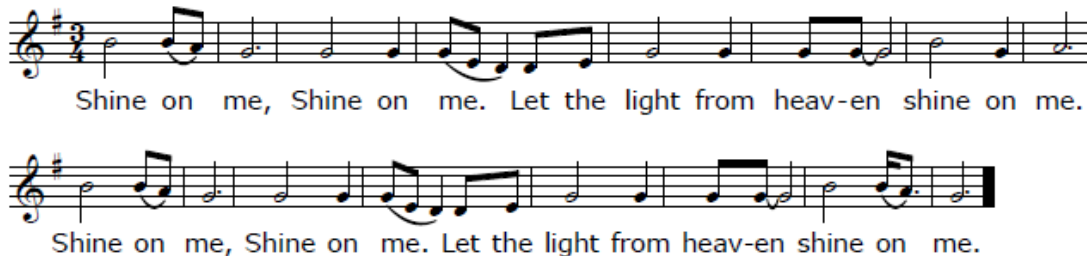
Prayers of the People

Response: One: God in your mercy,
Many: hear our prayers.

Lord's Prayer

ALL: Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kin-dom come.
Your 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 Yours is the kin-dom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sung Response to Prayer *Shine on Me*



WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WISDOM

Scripture Reading **Matthew 18:15-20**

¹⁵"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the

member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

One: May God’s wonder be revealed to us through the mystery of these words.

Many: Thanks be to God!

Sermon “Hard and Holy Conversations” Rev. Ann Ralosky

Anthem *If I Knew You*
Words by Nixon Waterman, Music by Cynthia Gray, adapted

WE CELEBRATE COMMUNION

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

One: God is with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Open your hearts.

Many: Our hearts are open to God and to one another.

One: Let us give thanks to the giver of all gifts.

**Many: It is good and right to give God
our heartfelt thanksgiving and praise.**

Let us pray...

...and with our family in faith let us raise our voices with all the creatures of earth and heaven and say the words from our great hymn of praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy
God of power and light.
The whole universe shines with your light.
Blessed is the one who comes in your name.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Words of Institution

Consecration of the Gifts

Communion Music *Help Us Accept Each Other*
Words by Fred Jaab, Trad. Irish tune *Salley Gardens*

Prayer of Thanksgiving after the Meal

One: Let us pray.

ALL: Holy God,
in gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people,
we give ourselves to you.
Take us out to live as changed people
because we have shared the living bread
and cannot remain the same.
Ask much of us, expect much from us,
enable much by us, encourage many through us.
Let us become heralds of your new kin-dom. AMEN.

WE GO INTO THE WORLD

Announcements

Closing Music *I Need You to Survive (starting on page 6)*

The Closing Commission

One: The spirit of God is upon us.

Many: God has anointed us
to bear good news to the afflicted,
to bind up the broken hearted,
to proclaim freedom to the captives,
to open the prisons of those who are bound.
Let us go forth in the name of Christ to bring
peace into broken relationships, healing to
alienated persons, action to protect our planet,
and justice into oppressive structures. AMEN.

Benediction

Postlude *Toccata Prima*
By Nicolas Wolleb

Curious About Volunteering at FCC?

Please email our Volunteer Coordinator, Barbra Murtha, at
volunteercoordinator@fccmtc.com to explore one-time or ongoing opportunities.

$\text{♩} = 40$

E F# F#m7/B E Eadd9/G#

I need you, you need me,

Aadd9 F#m7/B G#/B#

we're all a part of God's body,

C#m7 Eadd9/G#

stand with me, come be with me,

Aadd9 F#m7/B G#/B#

we're all a part of God's body.

C#m7 G#m7

It is God's will that every need

Aadd9/F# Badd9 E E/A

be supplied, you are im - por -

Dadd9 F#m7/B G#/B# C#m Eadd9/G# E/C#

- tant to me, I need you to sur-vive, you are im-por-

Dadd9 F#m7/B B E F#7 F#7/B

- tant to me, I need you to sur-vive.

Esus² E/G# Asus² A/B G#/B#

I'll pray for you, you pray for me, I love you, I need you to__ sur- vive,

C#m⁷ Eadd9/G#

I won't__ harm you with words__ from my mouth,

F#m⁷ A/B B⁷

I love__ you, I need you to__ sur- vive.

Fadd9 Fadd9/A Bbsus² Gm⁷/C A/C#.

I'll pray for you, you pray for me I love you, I need you to__ sur- vive,

Dm⁷ Fadd9/A

I won't__ harm you with words__ from my mouth,

Gm⁷ Bb/C C/E Gadd9 Gadd9/B

I love you, I need you to__ sur- vive. I'll pray for you, you pray for me,

G/C Am⁷ B⁷

I love__ you, I need you to__ sur- vive.

Em⁷ Em⁷/C

I won't harm you with words from my mouth,

1. I love__ you, I need you to__ sur - vive.

2. I love__ you, I need you to__ sur - vive.

__ It is__ God's will__ that ev - 'ry need__

__ be__ sup - plied, you are__ im - por -

- tant to__ me, I need you to__ sur - vive.__

SERVICE NOTES

Thank you to our volunteer worship leaders this morning.

Worship Leaders: Rev. Ann Ralosky and Rev. John Rogers

Reader: Elaine Wells

Ushers: Dawn Colapietro and Gavin Murtha, Felix Durka, Leah Campos

Coffee Hour Co-Hosts: Gunta Alexander, Barbra Murtha, Jackie Riley

Coffee Hour Setup Team: Steve Cutaia and Michael Harney

Music Leaders: Julie Morgan and David Salyers

FCC Band: Jania Bibighaus, Daniel Belnavis, Hans Ericson and Ray Lenzini

AV Techs: Brandon Jean-Philippe and Aiden Longacre

Many thanks to our youth for their leadership today

Dawn Colapietro has made a gift to the food bank in solidarity with the poor and hungry.

Upcoming Events

Open Mic Night at FCC, September 11, 7-9pm in the Guild Room

Welcoming all performers to share music or poetry (no stand up please :))

Questions? Text Ray Lenzini at 973-985-7574.

Welcome Back Sunday Picnic, September 13 on the front lawn after worship

Please join us for a potluck picnic. We will provide the hamburgers, hot dogs, vegan burgers (*please choose which you'd like*) and drinks. We'd love it if you can bring something to share. We will also need volunteers to help with set up and clean up.

Please RSVP here: tinyurl.com/PicnicRsvp9-13

then sign up your food contribution here: tinyurl.com/FoodSignup-picnic

The Sum of Us book discussion - September 23, 30 & October 7 in the Guild Room

The Sum of Us looks at what racism costs us all and how we can prosper together. Join in the discussion as we look at this book's brilliant but easy to digest analysis of problems in America and their roots in racism. **Register at:** tinyurl.com/TheSumOfUsBook

Ongoing Events

Returning 9/9: Weekly Wednesday Labyrinth Walks 11am—1pm

Each Wednesday our labyrinth is open for spiritual walking. No experience necessary!

Returning 9/17: The Searcher's Bible Study on Zoom each Thursday Eve at 7pm

FCC member, Rev. Victor Peterson, will lead an engaging exploration of our scriptures.

"Women of a Certain Age", FIRST Fridays 11am-1pm in the FCC library

A gathering of friendship and conversation for women roughly over 65. Bring a bag lunch and any handcrafts you are working on. See Rev. Heather Cherrey for details.

Returning 9/20: Underground Church —10:30am in the Sanctuary —

(Usually meets every third Saturday)

An intimate and interactive worship experience that hearkens back to the early church.

Full Spectrum Spirituality (FSS) LGBTQ+ Gathering — after worship in Room 5

We chat about life, spirituality, and whatever else comes up! If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Jordan at fullspectrum@fccmtc.com.

Green Team Ministry (2nd Sundays) after worship in the FCC Library

Learn about FCC's creation care and climate justice initiatives, be part of planning our activities, and live out your faith by taking action for the planet.

For more details check the calendar on our "Upcoming Events" page:

<https://fccmontclair.org/upcoming-events-at-fcc/>

You can make a donation or sustaining gift online at any time!

There are many ways to give to FCC each Sunday. You can easily set up your sustaining gift, your Sunday Offering, or a one-time contribution ...using our new Church Center service.

ONLINE: Scan the QR Code below or go to <http://fccmtc.churchcenter.com/giving>

CHECK: If you give by check it must be made out to "First Congregational Church," (*not "FCC"*) and can be put in the offertory basket, or mailed to:
40 So. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, NJ, 07042. *Thank you.*

