



First Congregational Church UCC – Founded 1812

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*Come with hope or despair, expectation, or disappointment,
and seek God even as God seeks you.*

*Hearing devices and large print hymnals are available—
please ask an usher if you require them.*

Thank you for silencing electronic devices before worship begins.

****Please stand as you are able.***

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

September 27, 2026

10 a.m.

PRELUDE

*Allegretto
Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

Handel
arr. Hand

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT *Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary*

Smith

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy tried and true;

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

One: We come today carrying all that this week has given us—our joys and worries, our gratitude and questions.

All: We come as we are, trusting that God meets us here.

One: We come remembering the ways God has carried us before, even through places we did not know how we would cross.

All: God has been faithful. God is faithful still.

One: So, bring your hope and your uncertainty, your faith and even your doubt.

All: There is room for all of it in the presence of God.

One: Come, let us listen for God's voice, remember God's grace, and open ourselves again to God's love.

All: We are here. God is here. Let us worship together.

*HYMN

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

622

*GATHERING PRAYER (unison)

Faithful and loving God, you meet us in wilderness places and remain with us when the way ahead is uncertain. Quiet our fears, hold our questions, and help us remember the grace that has carried us this far. Open our hearts to your presence among us, and shape us into people who trust deeply, love generously, and walk faithfully with one another. Amen.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Autumn Carol

Shulz-Widmar

Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise.

With joyful hearts and voices your alleluias raise.

In God the rolling seasons in steadfast order move.

Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.

The clouds break forth with raining, the deserts bloom and spring,

The hills leap up in gladness, the valleys laugh and sing.

God fills them with abundance and nature's gifts increase.

The year is crowned with goodness with plenty and with peace.

(Choral text continued next page →)

Bring to this sacred altar the gifts God's goodness gave,
The golden sheaves of harvest, the souls Christ died to save.
Your hearts lay down in offering as at his feet you fall.
With holy lives adore him who gave his life for all.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Living God, as we hear the stories of your people and the words of scripture, open our ears to listen and our hearts to understand. Help us remember your faithfulness, recognize your presence among us, and hear what your Spirit is saying to us today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Hebrew Scripture	Exodus 17:1-7	pew Bible p.59 OT
Psalm	Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16	pew Bible p.500 OT
New Testament	Philippians 2:1-13	pew Bible p.174 NT

SERMON	Is God Among Us or Not?	Sarina Brooks
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*HYMN	<i>God, whose giving knows no ending</i>	606
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MORNING PRAYERS

Joys & Concerns

Prayer for those Celebrating Birthdays & Anniversaries:

Tiffany, Martha, Kassidy, John & Donna, Ken & Sue

Silent Prayer & Pastoral Prayer

The 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 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.

Choral Response	<i>Hear our prayer, O Lord</i>	Whelpton
Hear our prayer, O Lord, incline thine ear to us and grant us your peace.		

OFFERING OUR GIFTS & TITHES

OFFERTORY *You Are Worthy* trad.

*DOXOLOGY 46

*DEDICATION (unison)

**Generous God, all that we have and all that we are comes from you.
Receive these gifts and use them, and us, to bring hope, compassion,
and love to your world. Amen.**

*HYMN *Sister, let me be your servant* 490

*BENEDICTION

Beloveds, go from this place remembering that God is with you.
When the way is uncertain, trust in God's presence.
When another is thirsty, let love flow through you.
And wherever the journey leads, go in peace,
knowing you do not walk alone. Amen.

POSTLUDE *A Festal Postlude* Barr

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Hear our prayer, words Psalm 143:1, music George Whelpton 1897 | Public Domain