

The First Church of Monson, Congregational United Church of Christ An Open and Affirming Church Third Sunday in Lent Sunday, March 23, 2025

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you belong here!

33 O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come



Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000, © 1969, Hope Publishing Co. Tune: TALLIS' CANON, LM; Thomas Tallis, c.1505-1585

^{*}Those who are able are invited to stand.

First Church of Monson, Congregational United Church of Christ An Open and Affirming Church Third Sunday in Lent March 23, 2025

Praise and Worship (starting at 9:50)

Welcome Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

Passing of the Lord's Peace

A Time for Children Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

Prelude Petit Lied (Song) - Henri Mulet (1878-1967)

Introit

*Call to Worship (responsive)

Rev: Lift up your voice and call out to God.

All: We cry out, believing that God hears us.

Rev: Come together and wait for God.

All: We come together, trusting that God is speaking.

Rev: Surely God's presence is here with us now, wherever we may be in this moment.

All: God's steadfast love lifts our hearts and draws us together.

Rev: Come with me now and worship the Lord.

All: We celebrate the power of God that surrounds us and fills us.

*Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen! Amen!

*Unison Prayer

O God, Hearer of all prayers, aloud and in silence, remind us of Your presence within and among us today. You and You alone hear every murmur of our hearts. Your Word is not a one-way conversation, but a continuous walk with You. We gather together this morning and many prayers become one prayer. A jumble of many words becomes less a tower of Babel, and more a simple, united song of praise. Receive this, and all of the prayers of Your people. Amen.

*Opening Hymn O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come (Page 1)

Epistle Reading

James 5: 13-18

Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6: 1-13

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. but deliver us from the evil one.'

Choral Anthem We Cannot Measure How You Heal- arr. M. Archer

Sermon "Prayer Changes Everything -

but Maybe Not in the Way that We Think it Will"

Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

- arr. Jane Holstein

Meditation The Prayer

Prayers of the People (Joys and Concerns)

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

The Lord's Prayer (you are invited to say these, or whichever words, are meaningful for you)

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 and ever; Amen.

*Hymn

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

(Page 6)

Led first by choir, then all join in (twice)

Call to Offering



Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

*Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

*Closing Hymn

There Is a Balm in Gilead

(Page 7-8)

*Benediction

Dismissal - Fellowship

Lent - Purple

Purple represents royalty and suffering. In the context of Lent, it symbolizes penance, sacrifice, and preparation.

^{*}Those who are able are invited to stand.

Led first by the choir, then all join in Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

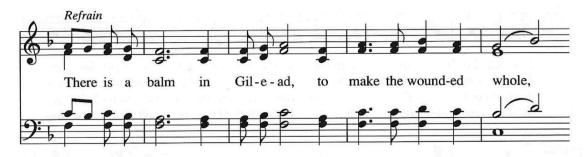


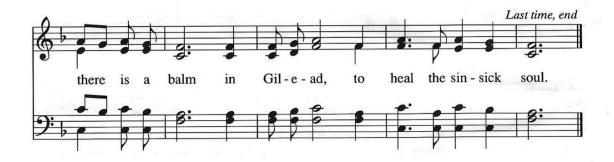
553

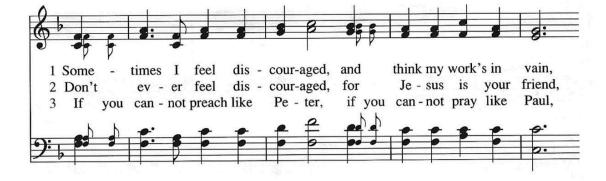
There Is a Balm in Gilead

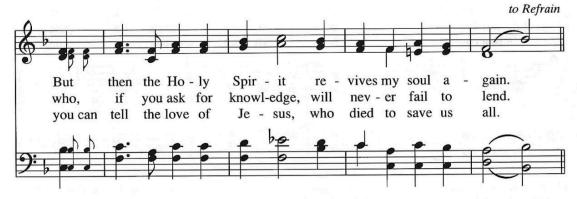
Jer. 8:18-22; 46:11; Acts 10:34-43

African-American spiritual; alt.









This is one of the most moving of the African-American spirituals because it illustrates the way in which the enslaved tried to encourage those who were feeling especially weighed down by the burden of their captivity.

Tune: BALM IN GILEAD Irr. with refrain African-American spiritual

Serving You Today

Worship Leaders:

Ministers of the Congregation All Members of First Church

Pastor Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

Director of Music Ministries Kiel Krommer

Ushers/Greeters Donna Okscin/Janice Muldrew

Fellowship Music Committee

Lay Reader Deb Shepard

Officers:

Moderator Cindy DeSellier Clerk Carol Mullen

Treasurer Suzanne Kelley

Chair, Board of Deacons
Chair, Board of Trustees
Jeanne Dill
Suzanne Kelley

Members at Large: Lynn Galica

Elaine Harris Mary Newland

Staff:

Church Administrator Lee Brahen

Sunday School Superintendent Erin Greene Wallace

Custodian Linda Whippie

Office Hours, Pastoral Care, and Contact Information

Church Office Hours

The church office is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. You can always leave a message on the church answering machine at 413-267-3312 when the office is not staffed, or contact the office by email at office@firstchurchmonson.org.

Pastor's Hours

Monday 8:30 - 4:30 remotely, and

Tuesday - Thursday from 8:30 - 4:30 in-office.

If you are unable to meet during any of those hours, Pastor Holly is happy to meet outside those times by appointment, and can be reached by email at pastor@firstchurchmonson.org, or by phone at (808) 371-4701.

For urgent matters, please contact her at any time by calling (808) 371-4701.

IN OUR LOVE AND PRAYERS

Please complete a Prayer Request Form and place it in the offering plate if you wish to include a name in next Sunday's bulletin. Your loved one will remain on the prayer list for one month, after which you may resubmit a request if necessary.

For healing and support:

Carol Snyder
Chris
Marlaina
Martha Warren
Mary Linkenhoker
Wilhelmina Brahen

Richard D'Aquila
Marlaina
Josh Cash
Joseph B.
Robert D'Aquila

For comfort in grief:

The Family and Friends of Sharon Allen The Family and Friends of Earl Chaffee The Family of Thelma Illig

The Family of Philip Wallander

The Family and Friends of Barry Muldrew

For strength and comfort during war and disaster:

The people of Ukraine

The people of Israel and Gaza

The people of Palestine and Lebanon

The people of Syria

The people affected by the California wildfires

For all service people, wherever they may be:

Chelsea Carr

Malik Pugh, USMC

Michael Wales, USN

Stephen Dill, USN

Tim Olson, USN

This Week in the Life of the Congregation

March 23, Sunday 10:00 a.m. - Worship (S)

11:00 a.m. - Fellowship

11:45-12:45 p.m. - Community Choir (SA)

March 24, Monday 3:00-4:30 p.m. - Girl Scouts (SA)

6:00-8:00 p.m. - Cub Scouts (SA)

March 25, Tuesday 5:15-6:15 p.m. - PiYo Class (SA)

March 26, Wednesday 6:00-8:00 p.m. - Boy Scouts (SA)

March 27, Thursday 5:15-6:15 p.m. - PiYo Class (SA)

4:00-9:00 p.m. Main Street Tavern Night 6:30-8:00 p.m. - Adult Choir Rehearsal (SA)

March 29, Saturday 7:00-8:30 a.m. - AA (L)

March 30, Sunday 10:00 a.m. - Worship (S)

11:00 a.m. - Fellowship

11:45-12:45 p.m. - Community Choir (SA)

C - Sprague Chapel

F - Fellowship Hall

K - Kitchen

L - Library

P - Parking Lot

S - Sanctuary

SA - Sunday School Auditorium

SS - Sunday School Classroom

Church News

Main Street Tavern Night. Outreach is sponsoring the Main Street Tavern Night this Thursday, March 27, from 4:00-9:00 p.m. First Church receives 10% of all purchases at the Tavern that night. This includes take-out. Join your FCM family for a night out and help your church at the same time! Please participate in the raffle as well.

FCM Safety Team. Here at First Church, safety is a top priority. It is even part of our statement of faith: "We will provide a safe haven physically, emotionally, and spiritually - for all those whom God sends us." As such, the Church Council is developing a safety team, and we are seeking folks interested in serving on this team. The safety team hopes to connect with local safety organizations such as the police and fire department, take advantage of safety training that responds to changing times and new situations, and help develop best practices here at church. If you have a passion for the safety of others, please consider joining this new team, by contacting Cindy DeSellier, or another Church Council member, by the end of March. All are welcome to serve.

Outreach Lenten Mission. From March 1 to March 31, Outreach will be collecting hygiene items to be distributed by the Springfield Rescue Mission. Your donations will be distributed to residents in their Men's New Life Program, to guests at their Emergency Shelter and Giveaway Center, and to those they may meet through their mobile feeding program. New items to fill totes: toothbrush and toothpaste; alcohol-free mouthwash; shampoo; conditioner; soap/body wash; deodorant; hand/body lotion; lip balm; body powder; nail clippers/file; disposable razor; shaving cream; feminine products; brush/comb; and rain poncho. There will be a box in Fellowship Hall and the Narthex to drop off your donations. Thank you for your help with this mission.

One Great Hour of Sharing. Our One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be on Sunday, March 30. When we participate in One Great Hour of Sharing, we shed light in places where circumstances make it difficult to imagine a future with hope. We will be taking donations over the next 3 weeks. Checks can be made payable to the First Church of Monson with OGHS 2025 in the memo line.

Easter Egg Hunt and Pancake Breakfast. On Saturday, April 5, First Church will be hosting an Easter egg hunt and pancake breakfast. The day will begin with a pancake breakfast at 9:00 a.m. The breakfast is \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids 5-17, and under 5 free. Please be sure to register for breakfast at admin@monsontogether.com. At 9:30 a.m. we will have story time, egg coloring, and arts & crafts. The Easter egg hunt will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will feature pictures with the Easter Bunny. Please help the homeless and families in need served by the Springfield Rescue Mission by bringing packages of NEW underwear, socks and t-shirts for men, women, and children.

Hearts Willing. Hearts Willing members and friends are invited to a program presented by Joel Jett on Wednesday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Joel will speak about his missionary work in India where he uses his carpentry skills to build homes for the needy. Refreshments will be served. Guests are most welcome to attend.

Easter Flowers

If you wish, you may order Easter plants through the Church Office. Plants will be delivered for the Easter worship service on March 31, 2024.

/ =	ease complete one form for each plant and return it to the Church inday, March 25. Quantities are limited—order early!
Given by: _	
Telephone:	
	Easter Lily (\$12.00 each)
	Hyacinths (\$8.00 each)
	Tulips (\$8.00 each)
Messages to	be included in the bulletin (select one):
	Given in Memory of
	OR
	Given in Celebration of
Checks sho the price.	uld be made payable to First Church of Monson . Tax is included in
Thank vou.	

Welcome to First Church



Welcome! If this is your first or second Sunday with us, we are grateful that you've

come to be with us this morning. It is our hope that you experience the love of Christ and God's presence during our worship. If you have any questions at all about where to go or what to do, our deacons, ushers, and church members are here to assist in making you feel right at home, so please do not hesitate to ask.

All members and guests are encouraged to wear name tags. Guests may obtain a temporary adhesive name tag from an usher.

The Sacrament of Communion is offered the first Sunday of the month. All are welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is up to parents to decide whether their children are ready to receive this Sacrament.

Handicapped parking and a wheelchair ramp to the church and Fellowship Hall are on the High Street side of the building. Hearing assistive devices are available from the ushers.

Fellowship Hour begins after worship in Fellowship Hall (just follow the crowd). Please join us for refreshments and conversation.

Our Let's Eat breakfast is on the third Sunday of each month. Come enjoy a hearty breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. before worship. Donations are gratefully accepted but not required.

Learn more. If you would like to learn more about First Church, please call us at (413) 267-3312, email to *office@firstchurchmonson.org*, or visit our website at http://www.firstchurchmonson.org.

"Whoever you are, or wherever you are on life's journey, **you** belong here!



First Church of Monson, Congregational, United Church of Christ An Open and Affirming Church 5 High Street, Monson, Massachusetts, 01057 413-267-3312 FirstChurchMonson.org