



**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

*1. 2. 3.

1. O Christ, the Healer, we have come To
 2. From ev - 'ry ail - ment flesh en - dures Our
 3. How strong, O Lord, are our de - sires, How
 4. In con - flicts that de - stroy our health We
 5. Grant that we all, made one in faith, In

4.

pray for health, to plead for friends. How
 bod - ies clam - or to be freed; Yet
 weak our knowl - edge of our - selves! Re -
 di - ag - nose the world's dis - ease; Our
 your com - mu - ni - ty may find The

can we fail to be re - stored, When
 in our hearts we would con - fess That
 lease in us those heal - ing truths Un -
 com - mon life de - clares our ills: Is
 whole - ness that, en - rich - ing us, Shall

reached by love that nev - er ends?
 whole - ness is our deep - est need.
 con - scious pride re - sists or shelves.
 there no cure, O Christ, for these?
 reach the whole of hu - man - kind.

**May be sung in canon.*

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

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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.

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

Meditation *The Prayer*

- arr. Jane Holstein

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.

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

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, Lord, send your Spir - it in this place; Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, send us love, send us power, send us grace." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody. Chord symbols are placed above the vocal line: Eb, Eb7, Db/Ab, Ab, Eb, F7, Bb7, Eb, Eb7, Db/Ab, Ab, Adim7, Eb/Bb, Bb7, Ab/Eb, Eb.

WORDS and MUSIC: Ken Medema (1943-)
 Words and Music © 1973 Hope Publishing Company

CHILDREN PRAYING
 Irregular

553

There Is a Balm in Gilead

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

African-American spiritual; alt.

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to make the wound-ed whole,

there is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to heal the sin-sick soul.

Last time, end

1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged, and think my work's in vain,
 2 Don't ev - er feel dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend,
 3 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,

to Refrain

But then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
 who, if you ask for knowl-edge, will nev - er fail to lend.
 you can tell the love of Je - sus, who died to save us all.

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	Jeanne Dill
Chair, Board of Trustees	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

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@monsontgether.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.

To order, **please complete one form for each plant** and return it to the Church Office by Sunday, **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 should be made payable to **First Church of Monson**. Tax is included in the price.

Thank you.

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>.

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