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First Church of Christ Congregational  
12 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107  
(860) 233-9605  
[www.whfirstchurch.org](http://www.whfirstchurch.org)

**To Give Online:** <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/giving/give>

First Church's worship services are live streamed every Sunday downstairs in our church library,  
the John P. Webster Library. Watch church while your toddler plays in our children's area or if  
you need a separate place to worship for any other reason.



*Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All*

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

September 28, 2025  
10 o'clock

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*Rev. Fredd Ward, Senior Pastor*  
*Jim Boratko, Director of Worship Arts*  
*Amanda Bethune, Director of Faith Formation*

PRELUDE

Chanson

Christopher Tambling

Simple Gifts, Shaker Tune

Arr. by Kevin McChesney

The Whitechapel Handbell Choir, Jessica Berube-Sengupta, director

WELCOME

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Court Lewis

One: God is our refuge and our fortress.

Many: In God, we place our trust.

One: God delivers us from snares and hazards.

Many: God’s faithfulness is a shield.

One: When we call, God will always answer.

Many: God is our hope and our salvation.

†HYMN 587

[Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross](#)

NEAR THE CROSS

†OPENING PRAYER

Inescapable God, we seek the blessed assurance that your presence is in this place. Through the terrors of night, amid the arrows that fly by day, we need to sense your protective power. Show us your saving, healing strength. Grant us such peace and contentment that we may look beyond ourselves to bless the lives of others. Amen.

ANTHEM

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above, MIT FREUDEN ZART

Bohemian Brethren’s Kirchengesänge

Arr. by Kevin McChesney

The Whitechapel Handbell Choir, Jessica Berube-Sengupta, director

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE READING

[Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 \(OT p.674\)](#)

†RESPONSE (HYMN 263)

[Surely the Presence of the Lord](#)

WOLFE

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place; I can feel his mighty power and his grace. I can hear the brush of angels’ wings, I see glory on each face; surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

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† Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

SERMON

This Is Her Story. These Are Her Songs.

Rev. Fredd Ward

HYMN 543

[Blessed Assurance](#)

ASSURANCE

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

We bring our offerings with this in mind: We have been blessed that we might be a blessing to others. Let us give with glad and generous hearts.

OFFERTORY

Pass Me Not

Fanny J. Crosby, arr. David Williamson

The First Church Choir

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

†OFFERTORY PRAYER

Loving God, you protect us from harm and shelter us in your loving arms. Just as you deliver us from danger, may these offerings lead others to find the healing and hope of your salvation. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Alexandra “Alex” Merkent, Matthew “Matt” Merkent, Bethany Lee, River Lee, Prudence “Chickie” Hignett, Lawrence “Larry” Ward

†HYMN 601

[I Am Thine, O Lord](#)

I AM THINE

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

Thuma Mina

The First Church Choir

THUMA MINA

POSTLUDE

The Emperor’s Fanfare

Antonio Soler

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments following the service!