†DOXOLOGY 46 *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

LITANY OF DEDICATION

One: O God, we pray for the wisdom to make stewardship a way of life and generosity an everyday ethic.

All: **We bring these offerings and pledges before you, humbled by the widow in the temple who gave not from her abundance, but from the depth of her soul.**

One: Help us to find the true source of happiness and fulfillment that we seek and that you alone can provide.

All: **Help us to be thoughtful stewards and faithful servants who safeguard our blessings and bless the lives of others.**

One: Help us challenge each other, as followers of Jesus, to put our faith into action and to lead with love.

All: **As we make plans and order our priorities, let us not forget the needs of neighbors near to our hearts and beyond these four walls.**

One: O God, let us sacrifice prayerfully and generously as an expression of our sincere trust in your church and your call upon our lives.

All: **O God, bless these gifts, use them to bring hope and healing, and to shape our hearts in ways that honor you. Amen.**

†HYMN 609 *Take My Life* HENDON

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Thank You, Lord* SPIRITUAL
The First Church Choir

POSTLUDE *Sing Praise to God* EDWARD BROUGHTON

first church
WEST HARTFORD

Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
Stewardship Sunday

November 15, 2026
10 o'clock

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

FIRST CHURCH WEST HARTFORD **NOVEMBER 15, 2026**

PRELUDES *Nun Bitten Wir* DEITRICH BUXTEHUDE
With A Joyful Heart RAYMOND H. HAAN
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir, Jessica Berube-Sengupta, director

WELCOME

†CALL TO WORSHIP NINA LAWRENCE

One: Beware of those who seek the best seats, the finest robes, and applause and acclaim.

Many: ***Strip away our pretense, O God. Strip away the need to impress others.***

One: Look instead to the treasury of grace, where God measures our lives not by the size of our pledges, but by the sincerity of our sacrifice.

Many: ***We come with all that we have — our diverse gifts, our varied experiences, our authentic selves.***

One: Christ is here, watching, welcoming, and calling us to give from the heart.

Many: ***Let us worship God in spirit and in truth, offering ourselves as a living sacrifice. Amen.***

†HYMN 606 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending* NETTLETON

†OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we come to this sacred space laying aside the need for praise, status, or approval. Guard our hearts against pride. Look upon us with mercy. Teach us what it means to give with a pure and honest hearts. When we are tempted to measure our worth or our devotion by what is visible, remind us of the widow who offered her all. Open our eyes to see the quiet acts of faithfulness around us. Help us to walk humbly before you on Stewardship Sunday and always. In Jesus' name, we pray.

ANTHEM *Crown Him With Many Crowns* GEORGE J. ELVEY
Arranged by Douglas E. Wagner
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir, Jessica Berube-Sengupta, director

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

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 12:38-44

†RESPONSE 33 *How Great Thou Art* O STORE GUD

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee;
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee;
How great thou art, how great thou art!

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SERMON *SOS! Pledging from Jesus' POV* rev.fredd

HYMN 453 *Called as Partners in Christ's Service* BEECHER

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

In today's selected verses from Mark's gospel, Jesus warns against religious expression that is loud, status-seeking, and transactional. He then turns our eyes to a quiet moment at the treasury and this takeaway: God does not measure our generosity in terms of dollar amount, but by the depth of our devotion. Let us not give merely to be seen. Let us give with joy.

OFFERTORY *All Good Gifts* STEPHEN SCHWARTZ
(From Godspell)
The First Church Choir, Emma Belanger, soloist, Michael Loveland, oboe

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments following the service!