

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1201 JEFFERSON STREET
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN 49441

231-726-3254

fccmuskegon.org

REV. BRUCE MULDER + INTERIM MINISTER

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST JULY 19, 2026

WELCOME & COMMUNITY NEWS SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Reinigt mich, geweihte Kolen, ("Purify me, O sacred coals")
from *Die Kinder des Höchsten sing rufende Stimmen*, TWV 1: 349, by Telemann

GATHERING PRAYER

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

**The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon us:
a spirit of wisdom and understanding.**

**Strengthen us with your gifts
of wisdom and understanding, Holy Spirit.**

**The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon us:
a spirit of right judgement and courage.**

**Strengthen us with your gifts
of right judgment and courage, Holy Spirit.**

**The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon us:
a spirit of knowledge and reverence.**

**Strengthen us with your gifts
of knowledge and reverence, Holy Spirit.**

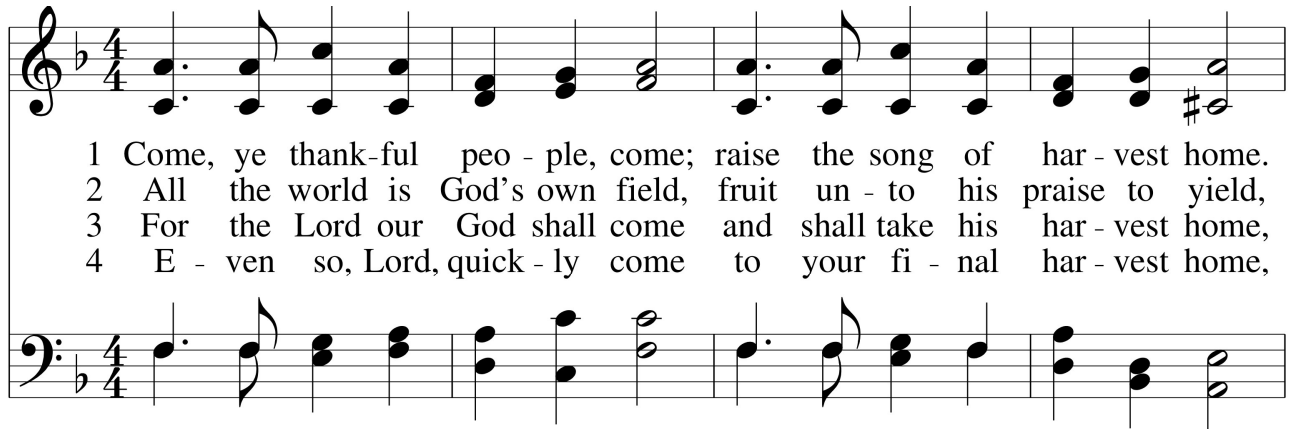
**The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon us:
a spirit of wonder and awe in the presence
of the living God. Strengthen us with your gifts
of wonder and awe, Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Those who wish may stand

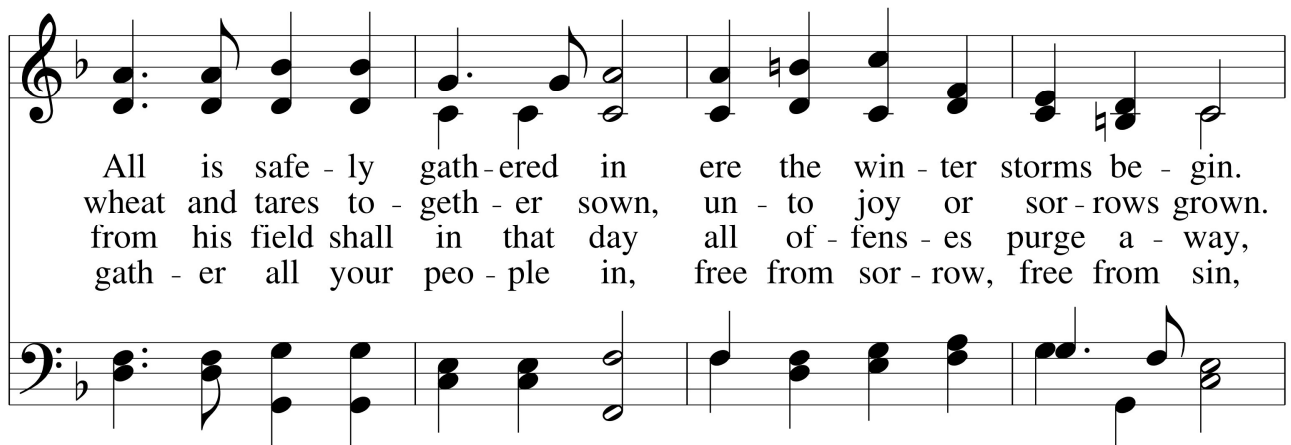
OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

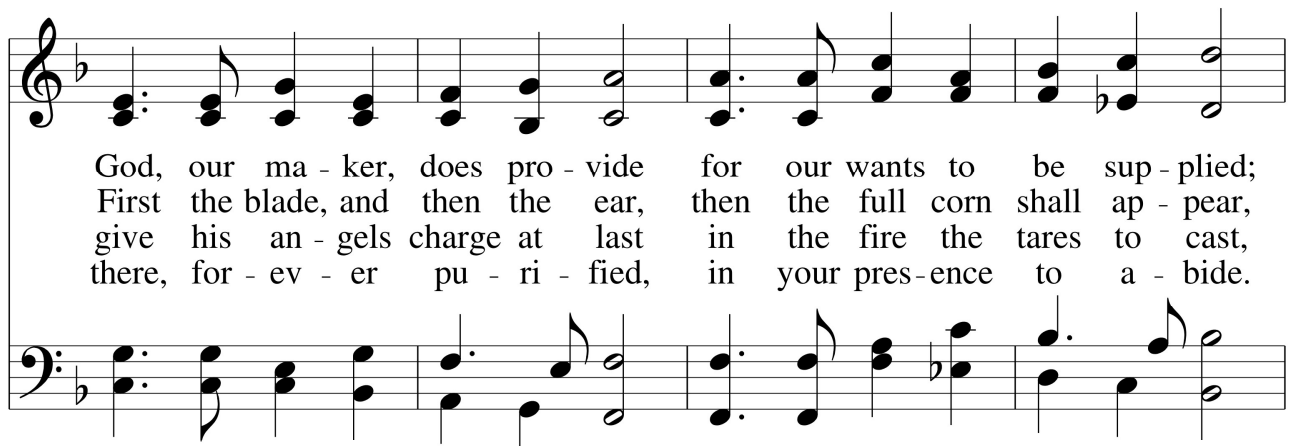
Come, Ye Thankful People, Come



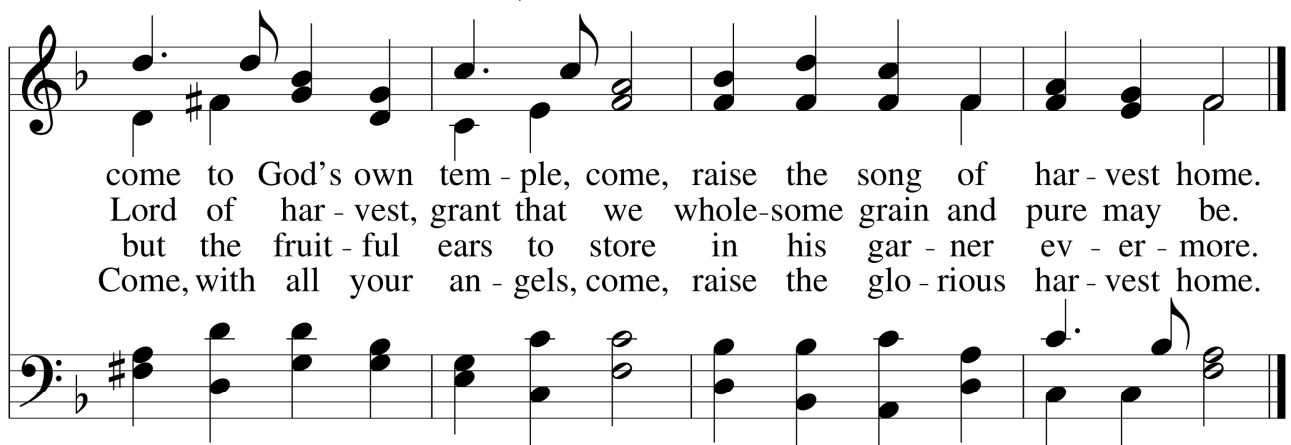
1 Come, ye thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
2 All the world is God's own field, fruit un - to his praise to yield,
3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har - vest home,
4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to your fi - nal har - vest home,



All is safe - ly gath - ered in ere the win - ter storms be - gin.
wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - rows grown.
from his field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way,
gath - er all your peo - ple in, free from sor - row, free from sin,



God, our ma - ker, does pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied;
First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear,
give his an - gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
there, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in your pres - ence to a - bide.



come to God's own tem - ple, come, raise the song of har - vest home.
Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.
but the fruit - ful ears to store in his gar - ner ev - er - more.
Come, with all your an - gels, come, raise the glo - rious har - vest home.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 44:6-8

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let them proclaim it; let them declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be. Do not fear or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one.

Matthew 13: 24-30; 36-43

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he replied, 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'" Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

"By Comparison"

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF REFLECTION

Those who wish may stand

Come to Tend God's Garden



Come to tend God's gar - den, seeds of hope to sow,
As we tend God's gar - den, from its fur - rows rise
May God's gar - den flour - ish, may our toil suc - ceed,



plant-ing fields of jus - tice, watch-ing mer - cy grow!
stems of fresh be - gin - nings, stretch-ing toward the skies!
may God bless our ac - tions, ev - ery word and deed!



In an ar - id waste - land, spread a ver - dant heath!
Gra-cious-ness our mead - ow, joy - ful-ness, our root,
Serv-ing Christ each sea - son, with God's di - a - gram,



In a land of tu - mult, cul - ti - vate God's peace!
u - ni - ty, our fo - liage, righ-teous - ness, our truth!
chart - ed by the Spir - it, for the task at hand!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
(ending with the 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.**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

OFFERTORY MUSIC

His Eye is on the Sparrow, Arr. by Jacqueline B. Hairston

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father (Creator), Son (Christ), and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

We Are All One in Mission

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system. The score ends with a double bar line.

1 We all are one in mis - sion, we all are one in call,
2 We all are called for serv - ice to wit - ness in God's name.
3 We all be - hold one vi - sion, a stark re - al - i - ty:
4 Now let us be u - nit - ed and let our song be heard.

our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.
Our min - is - tries are dif - ferent, our pur - pose is the same:
the au - thor of sal - va - tion was nailed up - on a tree.
Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing Word.

A sin - gle, great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove
to touch the lives of oth - ers by God's sur - pris - ing grace,
Yet res - ur - rect - ed Jus - tice gives rise that we may share
We all are one in mis - sion, we all are one in call,

to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.
so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.
free re - con - cil - i - a - tion and hope a - mid de - spair.
our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

WORDS: Rusty Edwards (1955-)
MUSIC: Samuel S. Wesley (1810-1876)

Words © 1986 Hope Publishing Company

AURELIA
7.6.7.6.D.

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands, Arr. by Margaret Bonds

Today's Service

Rev. Bruce D. Mulder	Interim Pastor
Dr. Michael Match	Music Director
Jennie Judd Reyes	Guest Vocalist
Dr. Eric Reyes	Guest Pianist
Megan Perreault	Liturgist/Prayer
Blake Filius	Audio and Video

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Flowers are sponsored by Beth Carrozza - Happy Birthday, Frank.

Thank you Dr. Eric Reyes and Jennie Judd Reyes for sharing your musical talents with us.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship: Last names A-C are asked to donate during July. Please provide descriptions to safely avoid any allergies. Thank you!

Child Care is available on the second floor for infants & toddlers.

Rounding up all preschool through middle school students for our Wild West Adventure Vacation Bible School July 20 through 24 from 6:30-8:30 PM here at FCC. Come join us Monday!

Governing Board members- your packets are available for pickup today at the Welcome Center. Please note any additional minutes will be available at the meeting, Monday at 6:30 PM.

We invite you to join us Wednesday mornings for outside and inside projects around the church. We meet from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 AM, followed with coffee and donuts.

Saturday Breakfast will be July 25 (last Saturday of each month) from 9-10:30 AM. This is a free community breakfast-buffet style. Volunteers are encouraged to help.

Tom "Cowboy" Hardy offers a Chapel Service following the breakfast. All are welcome.

The Saturday Breakfast Garden invites you to help out Saturdays from 10 AM to noon.

Tools are provided. Bring the family! We are across the street from the church.

Life Long Learning meets after church beginning this morning in the library or, if that is occupied, in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

Genders And Sexualities Alliance (GSA) meet Mondays at 7 PM here.

Muskegon Cooperating Churches Annual Prayer Walk Against Gun Violence will be August 23 from 4-6 PM at Hackley Park.

Questions may be directed to members of that department, contact the church office (231) 726.3254, or check under the calendar event on the website for details at www.fccmuskegon.org.

FCC IS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING COMMUNITY

"We, the people of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Muskegon, care for the welfare of our community and welcome everyone, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. We welcome into our community people of every age, race, nationality, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing, family structure, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation. We also invite you to share in the life, leadership, worship, fellowship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love."

Adopted by congregational vote 10/17/21