

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1201 JEFFERSON STREET
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN 49441

231-726-3254

fccmuskegon.org

Rev. Rev. Kristen Orion, Guest Minister

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 23, 2026

WELCOME & COMMUNITY NEWS

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Variations on AZMON, Movements I & II, by Robert Hobby

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:

**Holy One, we say You are the God of the Universe.
You say, "I have counted every hair on your head."**

We say You are a King of Kings.

You say, "I have created your inmost being."

We say You are Mighty to Save.

**You say, "I have anointed your head with oil,
your cup overflows."**

Holy One, this day let us say You are:

**Love Beyond Measure, Heart of Our Hearts, Light of Our Lives,
Nearer than our breath, our heartbeat, our every need.**

This day let us say we are Yours.

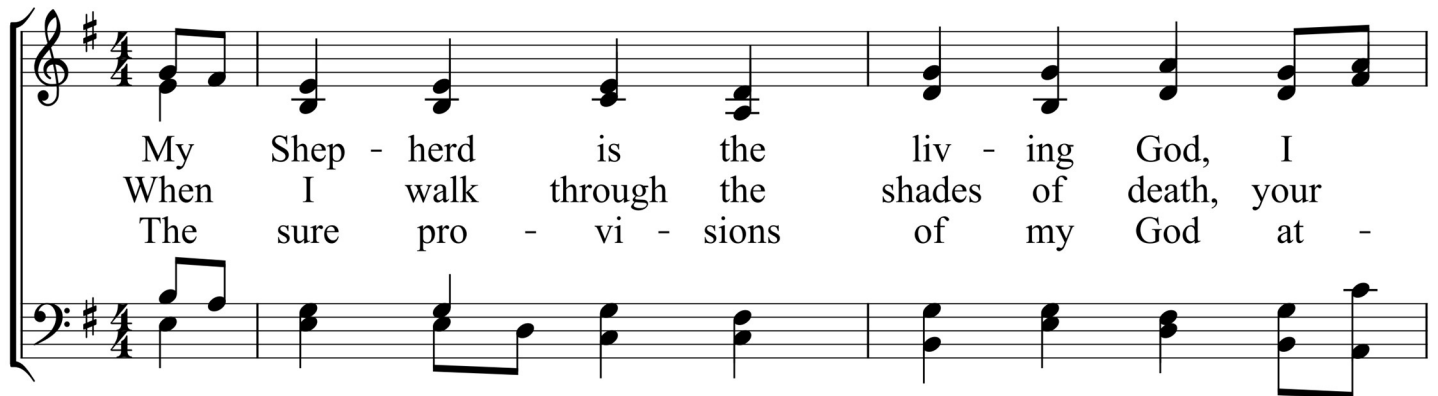
In Jesus' name - Amen.

Those who wish may stand

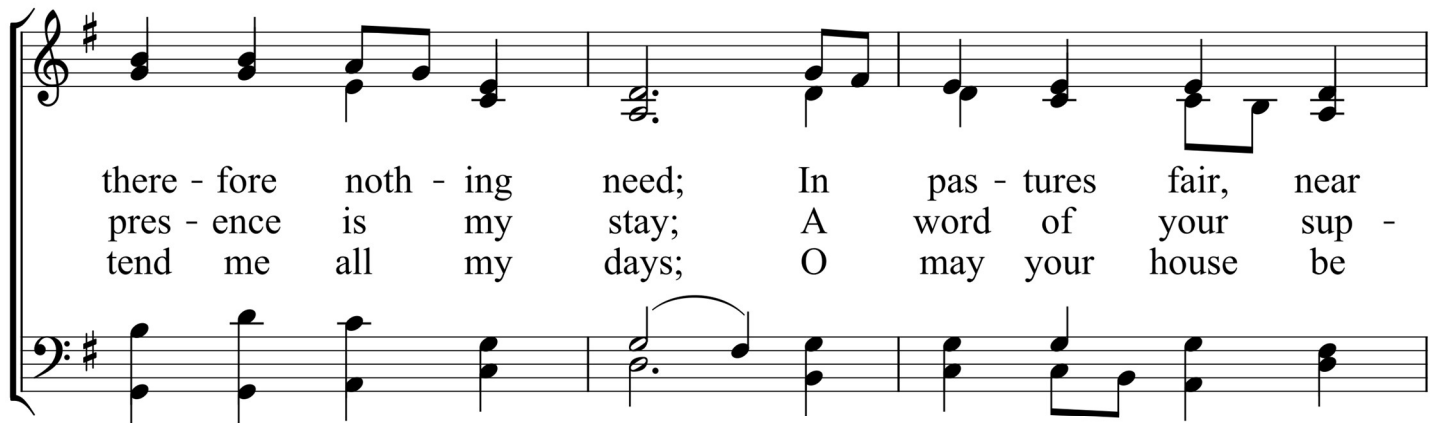
OPENING HYMN

My Shepherd is the Living God

Those who wish may stand



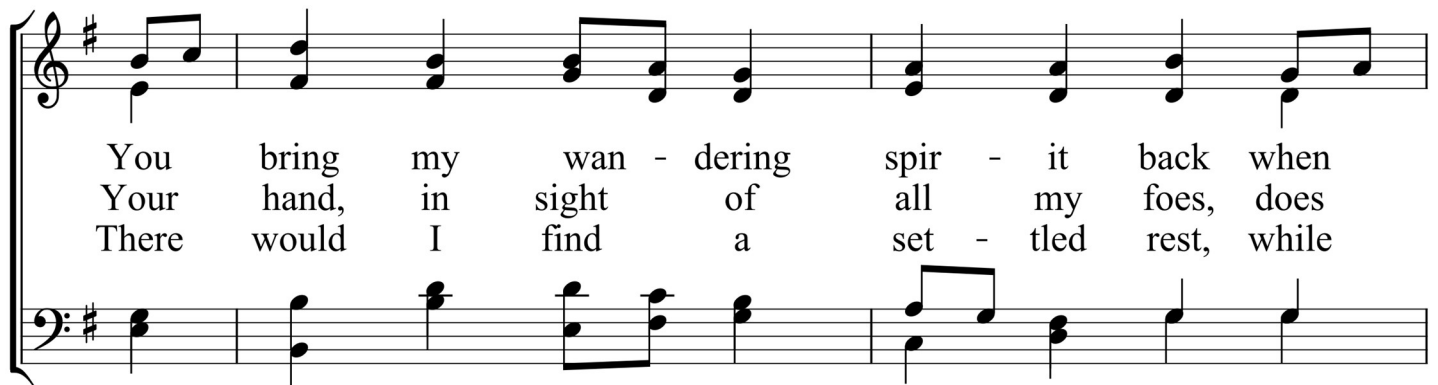
My Shep - herd is the liv - ing God, I
When I walk through the shades of death, your
The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at -



there - fore noth - ing need; In pas - tures fair, near
pres - ence is my stay; A word of your sup -
tend me all my days; O may your house be



pleas - ant streams you set - tle me to feed.
port - ing breath drives all my fears a - way.
my a - bode, and all my work be praise.



You bring my wan - dering spir - it back when
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does
There would I find a set - tled rest, while

I for - sake your ways, And lead me for your
still my ta - ble spread; My cup with bless - ings
oth - ers come and go; No more a strang - ger

mer - cy's sake in paths of truth and grace.
o - ver - flows, your oil a - noints my head.
or a guest, but like a child at home.

Text: Composite from Thomas Sternhold, 1549, and Isaac Watts, 1719, alt. Tune: KINGSFOLD, *Traditional English Melody*, Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, © 1906 Oxford University Press

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 16: 13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

The Strange Man, by Dorothy Love Coates

MESSAGE

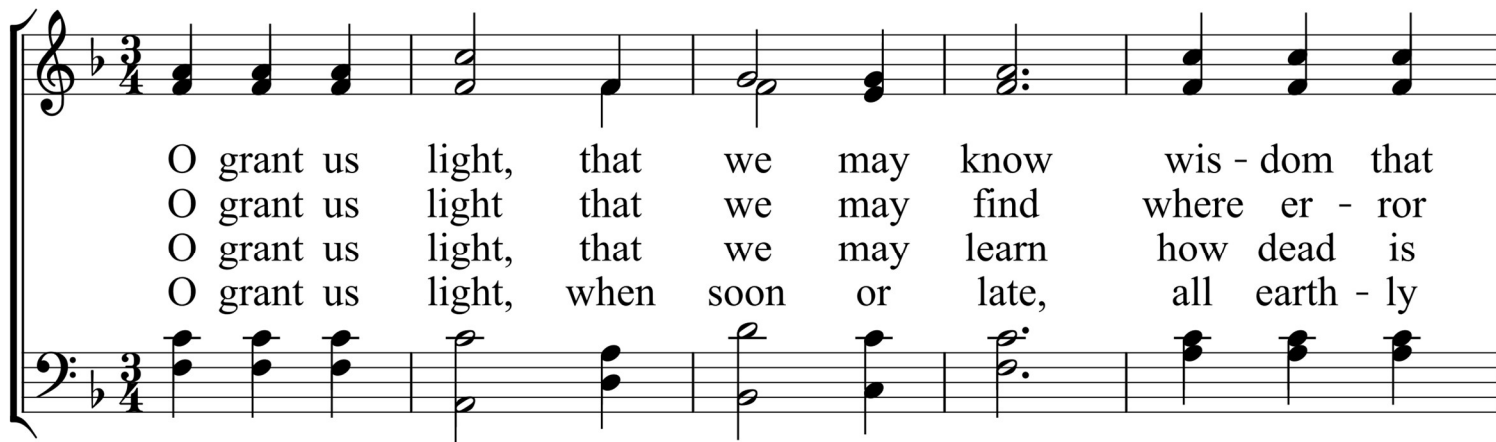
Whose We Are

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF REFLECTION

Those who wish may stand

O Grant Us Light



O grant us light, that we may know wis - dom that
O grant us light that we may find where er - ror
O grant us light, that we may learn how dead is
O grant us light, when soon or late, all earth - ly



you a - lone can give, That truth may guide us as we
lurks in hu - man lore, And turn to you our seek - ing
life from you a - part, How sure is joy for all who
scenes shall pass a - way, In you to find the o - pen



go, and vir - tue bless the lives we know.
minds, and love your ho - ly Word the more.
turn to you an un - di - vid - ed heart.
gate, to death - less home and end - less day.

Text: Lawrence Tuttiel, 1864, alt., Tune: HESPERUS, Henry W. Baker, 1854

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

Let You Go, by Will Reagan, arr. by Santiago Parias

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.**

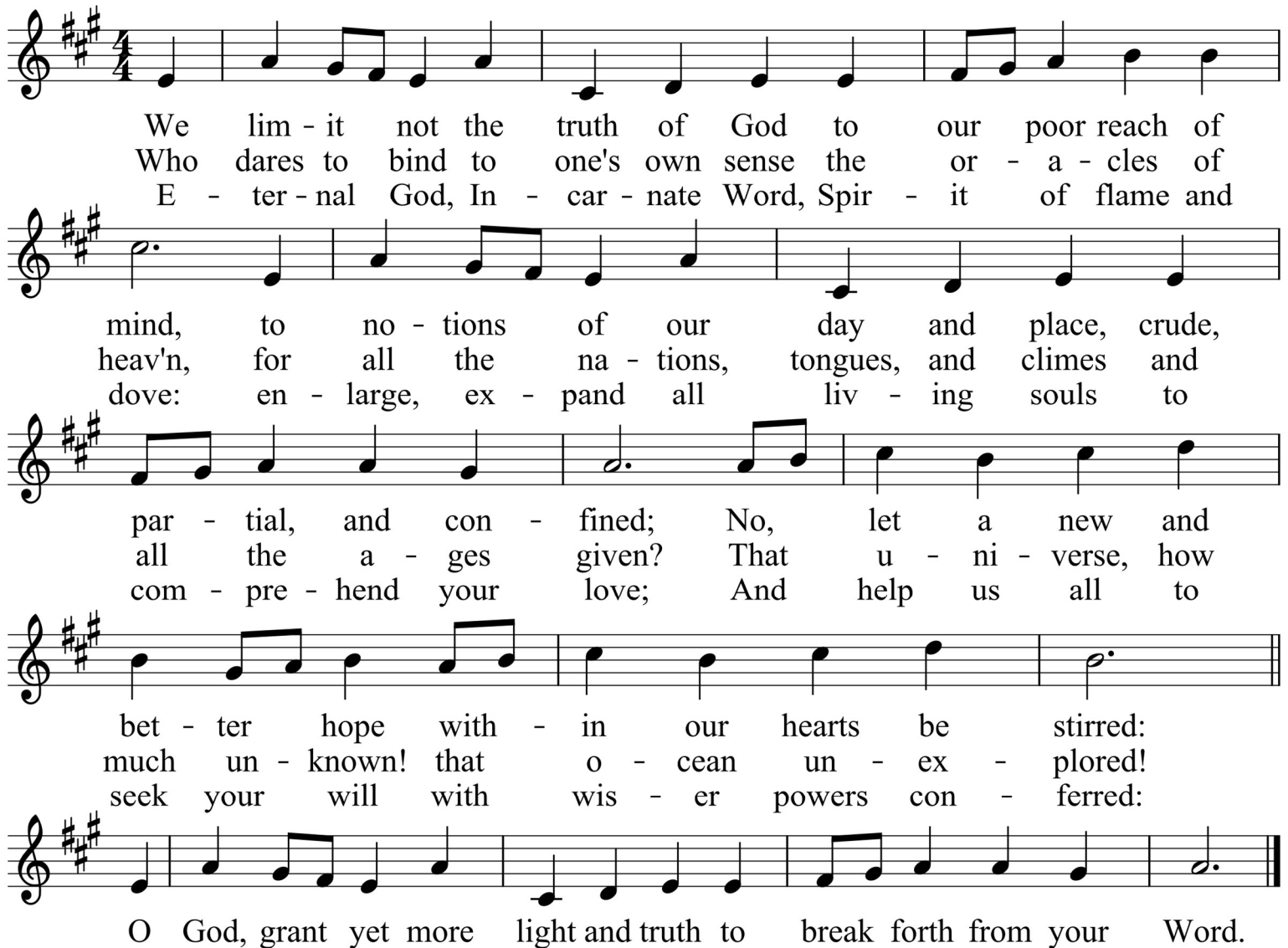
PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

We Limit Not the Truth of God



We lim - it not the truth of God to our poor reach of
Who dares to bind to one's own sense the or - a - cles of
E - ter - nal God, In - car - nate Word, Spir - it of flame and
mind, to no - tions of our day and place, crude,
heav'n, for all the na - tions, tongues, and climes and
dove: en - large, ex - pand all liv - ing souls to
par - tial, and con - fined; No, let a new and
all the a - ges given? That u - ni - verse, how
com - pre - hend your love; And help us all to
bet - ter hope with - in our hearts be stirred:
much un - known! that o - cean un - ex - plored!
seek your will with wis - er powers con - ferred:
O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

Text: George Rawson, 1853, alt, Tune: ELLACOMBE, *Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Württembergischen katholischen Hofkapelle*, 1784

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

Variations on AZMON, Movement V, by Robert Hobby

Today's Service

Rev. Kristen Orion	Guest Minister
Dr. Michael Match	Cantor/Pianist
John Mattson	Organist
Asa Orion	Soloist
Steve Harris	Drummer
Joe Dixon, Kendyl White	Vocalists
Jim Perrreault	Liturgist/Prayer
Blake Filius	Audio and Video

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Flowers are sponsored by Shirley Albers in honor of Women's Equality Day (August 26).

A white carnation is in memory of FCC member Mary Williams. Mary passed away July 31, 2026. She was a longtime volunteer and supporter of Saturday Breakfast, and on various departments and committees at FCC. Our deepest sympathy and prayers are with her family. A private family gathering will be held.

We welcome Rev. Kristen Orion as our guest minister this morning.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and cookies following our church service.

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

Help us welcome Rev. Becky Emerson and her spouse Denise to FCC by recommending a favorite place you enjoy going or eating in Muskegon. Forms are on the Welcome Center. Just complete and leave in the basket this morning.

Saturday Breakfast will be August 29 (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.

The next Bike Clinic is Saturday, September 12 from 10-noon.

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

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

Congregational Life is sponsoring Potluck on Sept. 13 with Trivia following for "Welcome Back" Sunday. Please sign up at Welcome Center. They are also collecting new and clean used coats for adults and children in September, ending in November.

We invite you to join us Wednesdays for outside and inside projects around the church.
We meet from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM followed with coffee and fellowship.

All are welcome to join us on Wednesday mornings from 9-10 AM in Fellowship Hall for a Class emphasizing the 3's (Cardio, conditioning and choreography. \$3 per class)
There is also a Cardio - Drumming exercise class on Thursday from 9-10 AM in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to join either sitting or standing. \$3 per class.

Women's Single Group will meet for lunch at 1 PM on September 1 at the Village Baker in Spring Lake. Sign up sheet is at the Welcome Center.

Meijer Simply Give supports First Congregational Church's Tuesday Food Pantry & Saturday Breakfast at: **Meijer – 1800 Holton Rd., N. Muskegon and Meijer – 5300 Harvey Street, Fruitport** When you purchase a **\$10 Simply Give card** at checkout on Saturday, September 12, Meijer will double match your gift—turning your **\$10 into \$30** to help feed Muskegon County neighbors in need!

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