

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1201 JEFFERSON STREET
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN 49441

231-726-3254

fccmuskegon.org

REV. BRUCE MULDER + INTERIM MINISTER

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST AUGUST 16, 2026

**WELCOME & COMMUNITY NEWS
SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

PRELUDE

"Andante" from *Fifth Symphony*, by P. Tschaikovsky
Melissa Wikman, *Piano*, Diane Goodman, *Cello*

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:

**O God, we joyously come together to worship,
realizing we need not summon you into our midst,
for you are here.**

**We need not call you into the secret places of our hearts,
for you are there.**

**We need our eyes of faith to be opened,
that we may see you;
our ears to be unstopped,
that we may hear you;
our minds to be sensitive,
that we may know you;
our hearts to be tender,
that we may receive you.**

**Grant each one a blessing, O Lord,
as each has need,
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

Praise to the Lord the Almighty

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves, with line numbers 1 through 4 indicating different parts of the hymn. The score is divided into four systems, each with a vocal staff and a bass staff. The lyrics are as follows:

1 Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the King of cre-a-
2 Praise to the Lord, a-bove all things so won-drous-ly reign -
3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros-per your work and de-fend
4 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a-dore

tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal-
ing; shel-tering you un-der his wings, and so gent-ly sus-
you: sure-ly his good-ness and mer-cy shall dai-ly at-
him! All that has life and breath, come now with prais-es be-

va-tain- tion! Come, all who hear; now to his
tain- ing! Have you not seen all that is
tend you. Pon-der a-new what the Al-
fore him. Let the A-men sound from his

tem-ple draw near, join me in glad ad-o-ra- tion!
need-ful has been sent by his gra-cious or-dain- ing?
might-y can do, if with his love he be-friends you.
peo-ple a-gain; glad-ly for-ev-er a-dore him.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-22

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

CHORAL ANTHEM

The Meditations of My Heart, by Elaine Hagenberg

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart
be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord.
O Lord my rock, O Lord my strength,
O Lord my God and Redeemer.

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MESSAGE

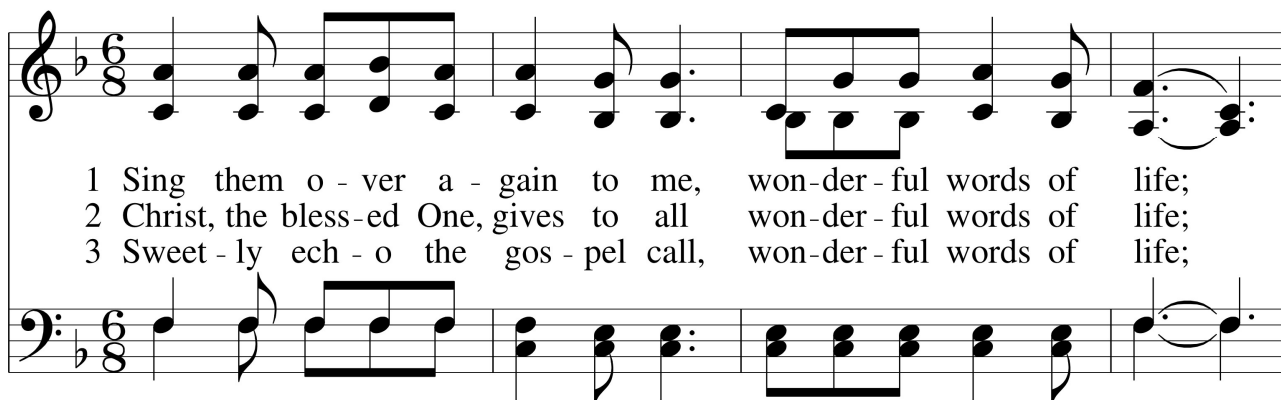
"Good Words"

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF REFLECTION

Those who wish may stand

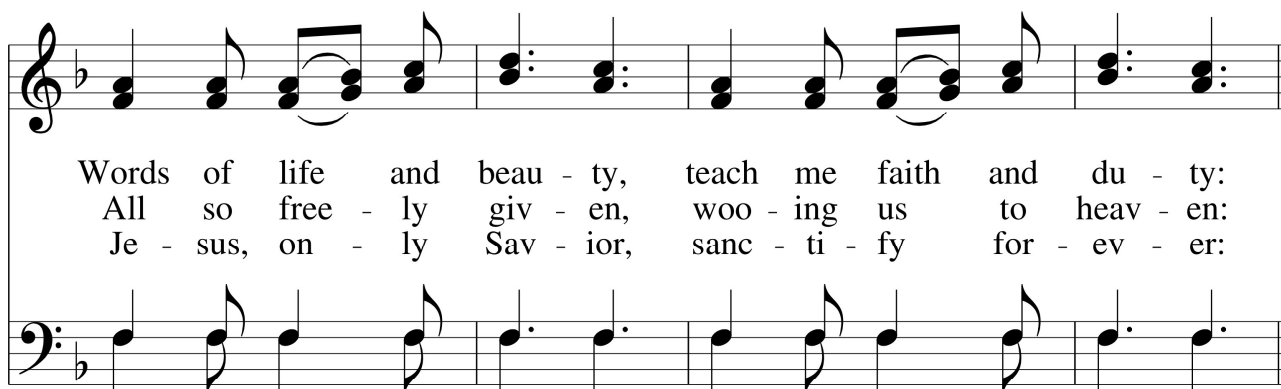
Wonderful Words of Life



1 Sing them o - ver a - gain to me, won - der - ful words of life;
2 Christ, the bless - ed One, gives to all won - der - ful words of life;
3 Sweet - ly ech - o the gos - pel call, won - der - ful words of life;



let me more of their beau - ty see, won - der - ful words of life.
sin - ner, list to the lov - ing call, won - der - ful words of life.
of - fer par - don and peace to all, won - der - ful words of life.



Words of life and beau - ty, teach me faith and du - ty:
All so free - ly giv - en, woo - ing us to heav - en:
Je - sus, on - ly Sav - ior, sanc - ti - fy for - ev - er:



Refrain

Beau - ti - ful words, won - der - ful words, won - der - ful words of life. life.

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

Go Forth into the World in Peace, by John Rutter

*With immense gratitude, the Motet Choir wishes to dedicate this anthem to
Rev. Bruce Mulder as he completes his ministry with us here today.
We will remember your words faithfully.*

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;
hold fast to which is good; render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,
be upon you, and remain with you forever. Amen.

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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.**

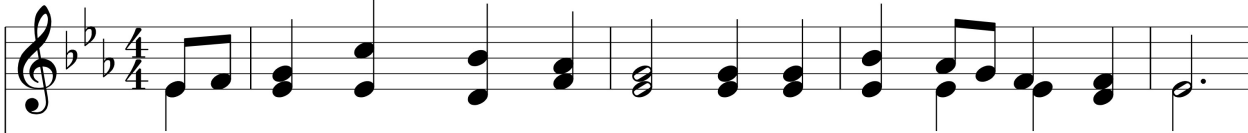
PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

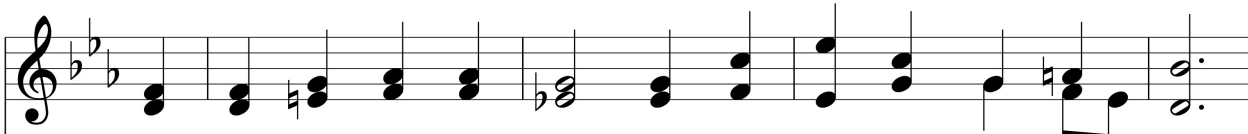
O Word of God Incarnate



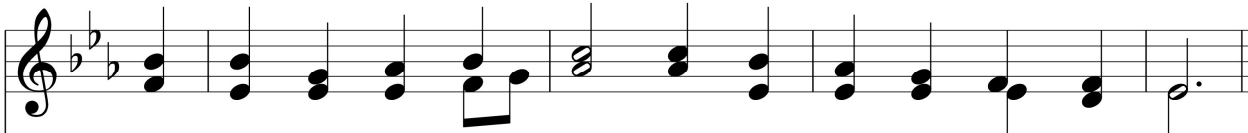
1 O Word of God in - car - nate, O Wis - dom from on high,
2 The Church, from her dear Mas - ter, re - ceived the gift di - vine,
3 O make your Church, dear Sav - ior, a lamp of pur - est gold,



O Truth un - changed, un - chang - ing, O Light of our dark sky:
and still that light is lift - ed on all the earth to shine.
to bear be - fore the na - tions your true light as of old;



we praise you for the ra - diance that from the hal - lowed page,
It is the chart and com - pass that, all life's voy - age through,
teach us, your wan - dering pil - grims, by this our path to trace,



a lan - tern to our foot - steps, shines on from age to age.
'mid mists and rocks and quick - sands, still guides, O Christ, to you.
till, clouds and dark - ness end - ed, we see you face to face!

WORDS: William W. How (1823-1897)

MUSIC: *Neuermehrtes Gesangbuch*, 1693; adapt. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

MUNICH
7.6.7.6.D.

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

"Andante" from *Rondeau*, by Jean Joseph Mouret
Melissa Wikman, *Piano*, Diane Goodman, *Cello*

Today's Service

Rev. Bruce D. Mulder	Interim Pastor
Dr. Michael Match	Music Director
John Mattson	Organist
Diane Goodman	Cellist
Melissa Wikman	Pianist
The Motet Choir	Leaders of Song
Shirley Albers	Liturgist/Prayer
Blake Filius	Audio and Video

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Flowers are sponsored by staff in gratitude and Christian love as we say goodbye to our Interim Minister, Rev. Bruce D. Mulder.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship: Last names beginning with E-J are asked to donate during the Sundays in August. Please provide descriptions to safely avoid any allergies. Thank you!

Immediately after our service, please join us for a special coffee time in Fellowship Hall in honor of Rev. Bruce.

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

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.

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 12th.

Life Long Learning will not meet today. Instead, please join us in Fellowship Hall following our service as we say goodbye to Rev. Bruce.

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

Congregational Life is sponsoring Potluck on Sept. 13 with Trivia following. Please sign up at Welcome Center. Looking Ahead: A new and clean used coat drive will begin in September.

FCC's 3rd Annual Heartfelt Hand Made Craft Fair will be held Saturday, October 24 from 10 AM – 3 PM. We are also looking for vendors. Please help us spread the word! Interested vendors can contact the church office: 231-726-3254.

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