



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS
spiritual discovery • inclusive community • compassionate service

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



March 15th, 2026

Rev. Holly MillerShank

Senior Minister

Deacon's Quote of the Day

*“May peace and plenty be the first to lift the latch to your door
and Happiness be your guest today and evermore”*

~traditional Irish blessing

PRELUDE

Lord, Speak to Me

R. Schumann arr. E. Broughton

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DEACON'S GREETING

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

PASTORAL GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Oh God, complete the work that you have begun in us. Use us as vehicles of your grace so that mercy and gentleness will be as streams of living water in parched places.

Many: Bring healing where there is hurt, peace where there is violence, beauty where there is ugliness, justice where there is brokenness, beginnings where there are dead-ends.

One: Awaken within us gratitude for life and love for creation. Help us to find joy in being human.

Many: Renew our faith that you are God, beyond our grasp and yet within our reach, past our knowing, but within our searching. The disturber of the assured and assurer of the disturbed.

One: Keeper of promises, composer of grace, grant in us, songs for the journey and a vision of your shalom.

***HYMN**

We Have Gathered, Jesus Dear (NCH 74)

TRAINING CHOIR/YOUTH SINGERS

Love Is Patient

B. Echols & R. Powell

CALL TO CONFESSION

There are forces at play within our very souls, wrestling for right and wrong, for the easy way and the way of the Lord, let us confess our sinful ways:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, empty us of angry judgements, and aching disappointments, and anxious trying. Breath into us quietness and confidence, so the lion and lamb in our souls may lie down together. Catch our pride and doubt off guard, that, at least for a moment, we may sense your presence and grace and be surprised by a sudden joy rising within us and will sustain us for what lies ahead.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Jesus comes to restore us to wholeness, to reshape our very lives and inspire us to right living. Feel the grace of God that wipes away our tears and renews our hope.

SUNG RESPONSE Amazing Grace, Verse 4

**My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.**

ANTHEM

I Choose Love

L. Thompson & M. Miller

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

SERMON

Letting Go

Rev. Holly MillerShank

***HYMN**

God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak (NCH 531)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

MINISTRY MOMENT: Rock Harvest Farm

CALL TO OFFERING

Jesus Christ models for us acceptance, affirmation and wholeness. Even those who are furthest from the center are included in God's abundant grace. May we give so that our circle can be expanded and we more fully reflect God's holy kingdom.

OFFERTORY

Blessed Jesu

J. S. Bach

CREATION JUSTICE CHURCH OFFERING THOUGHT

First Day of Spring

This is the season of rebirth. Pay attention as buds appear on the trees, seedlings sprout, and animals are born. When you come across these signs of spring, say a blessing (aloud or silently) for God's new creation.

***DOXOLOGY**

Tune: Old 100th

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ in whom God's grace we know.
Praise Spirit, with us evermore. One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Unfold within us the mysteries of life, lessen the knots of tension in our hearts and in our world. We dedicate these offerings to smoothing the road for others, so that together, all of creation can flourish. Amen.

***HYMN**

Praise to the Living God (NCH 8)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Postlude on "Lancashire"

H. Smart arr. S. Saxton

First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury (FCCS) is a vibrant, inclusive and
compassionate community of worship and mission.

We want our faith to transcend the things that separate us, to be tangible to endure tests of life and time and to be environmentally responsible, protecting God's creation. Led by the Holy Spirit, we look to Jesus Christ to guide us toward companionship, justice, and the inspiration to serve God and our community.

The Senior Minister is Rev. Holly MillerShank
The Acting Associate Minister is Rev. Karen Dorshimer-Chaplin
The Director of Music is Curtis Smith
The Deacon is Matthew Lallier
The Reader is Luke Cressman
Greeters are Robin and Steve Donigian
Altar flowers are provided by the Kafel family in loving memory of Gordon and Marilyn Worthen.
Liturgy adapted from poetry by Ted Loder, Guerrillas of Grace.

GIVE HERE:



PRAYER REQUESTS

— Prayers for Carole Fontaine; Susie and Brian Amos; Ruthie, sister-in-law of Dave & Sue; Aaron; Lt Ethan Connors, deployed in the Middle East; Joshua S.; Bob Podolski; Stan Holden; Timmy; Jay Scott; James Kelly; Bernice Forrister; Kevin; Ronniy Reis; Bob; Deb Wallace; Anne & Jonathan Phyfe; Jeanine's brother, Douglas Szlompek; Stanley; Sharon; David, brother-in-law of Kathleen & Dave Rocheleau; Roberta Jelinch's sister, Sandi.

-For those within our church family and all faith communities who are dealing with illness, caregiving, grief, mental health crisis, unemployment, hunger, and homelessness in their daily lives.

-Prayers for all those dealing with violence & loss in cities in the United States as well as those recovering from natural disasters throughout our country and the world.

-For the people of Ukraine, Haiti and the Middle East whose lives continue to be shattered by war, as well as the many landscapes that are currently embroiled in conflicts.

-The mission & works of the First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury.

-Blessings to government officials, first responders, health care workers, military personnel, and all who protect and care for us.



THIS WEEK AT FCC

Every day, 7am: AA, Cushing Hall

Every Wednesday, 5:30pm: ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholics), Youth Room & 214

Every Sunday, 7pm: AA, Adkins Room

Every Thursday, 7PM OA (Overeaters Anonymous), Rm 214

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Sunday, 3/15:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary

11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room

11:00am: Breakfast Bag Prep, Chapel

11:00am: ESM "Meet the Farmer", Adkins

5:30pm: MS Youth Group, Cushing Hall

Monday, 3/16:

7:00pm: Leah Circle, Youth Room

7:00pm: Jammers, Chapel

Tuesday, 3/17:

8:00am: Guided Meditation, Parlor

9:30am: Grief Group, Chapel

12:00pm: Lectionary @ Lunch, Adkins

7:00pm: Council, Adkins

Wednesday, 3/18:

11:30am: Martha Circle, Adkins

6:00pm: Lenten Series, Chapel

7:00pm: Shrewsbury Ringers, Sanctuary

Thursday, 3/19:

9:30am: CoAM, Adkins

10:30am: Staff Meeting, CE Library

7:15pm: Senior Choir, Choir Room

Friday, 3/20:

NO Chimers

Sunday, 3/22:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary

11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room

11:00am: Deacon's Retreat, Adkins

7:00pm: HS Youth Group, Youth Room

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm