



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

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



February 1st, 2026

Rev. Holly MillerShank
Senior Minister

Deacon's Quote of the Day

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
Matthew 5:9

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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.

PRELUDE**This Is My Father's World**

F. Sheppard arr. R. Hughes

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DEACON'S GREETING***PASSING OF THE PEACE****PASTORAL GREETING****CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Glory to God in the highest, and God's peace to all the people of the earth.

Many: **Holy One, Heavenly God, Sovereign and Creator, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

One: Lord Jesus Christ, God's only begotten one, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world.

Many: **Have mercy on us, you are seated at the right hand of Majesty: receive our prayers this day.**

HYMN*Softly and Tenderly (NCH 449, verses 1 & 2)****PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

One: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Many: **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

One: Let us confess our sins before God and one another:

Many: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and follow in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life. This is the Good News! Amen.

ANTHEM**There Is a Happy Land**

T. Osiek

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**SCRIPTURE READING**

Micah 6:1-8 and Matthew 5:1-12

SERMON

Holy Requirements

Rev. Holly MillerShank

HYMN*Fairest Lord Jesus (Pilgrim 227 v. 1 & 3)****SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION****Invitation**

One: The Lord is here.

Many: **God's Spirit is with us.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: **We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Many: **It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

One: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

Many: **Here and in all places, now and through all of time**

Litany of Blessings

Blessed are we, though we come with empty hands knowing only our poverty.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are we, though we grieve. Our hearts are heavy, all too aware of what life has taken from us.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are we who choose a way of gentleness in a world of fierce competition.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are we when we face our true need and honor our deep hunger; nothing but you can satisfy.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are we by the infinite mercy of God, who accepts us despite ourselves, and who calls us to be people of compassion.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Lord, give us pure hearts. Show us who you are. Show us your face. Show us your truth. Show us your love.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessing of the Meal

Sharing of the Meal *At FCC we practice an open table, all who hunger for a closer relationship with Jesus and thirst for a better world are invited to share in the bread and juice. Gluten free options are found in the single-serve containers on the bread trays. You can read more about our communion practices in the worship guides found in the pews.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy One, we give you thanks for filling our places of deep longing with this sacred meal. Transform us so that we seek not personal gain but your will in all things. Remind us of your blessings when times are hard. Wipe away our tears and fortify our spirits so that our actions bring honor and blessing to your name. Amen.

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.

CALL TO OFFERING

The Holy One Says; "Why spend money on what does not satisfy? Why spend your wages and still be hungry? Listen to me and do what I say, and you will enjoy the best food of all. Listen now, my people; and come to me; come to me, and you will have life!"

OFFERTORY

Safe in the Arms of Jesus

W. Doane arr. R. Hughes

***DOXOLOGY**

Tune: Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore: One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. May these offerings be blessed so that God's light may shine before all people. Amen.

***HYMN**

O for a World (NCH 575)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Come, Christians, Join to Sing

E. Broughton

*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 Dennis Pike
The Reader is Craig Phyfe
Greeters are Linda and Bruce Wagner*

Altar flowers are provided by DelDotto family in loving memory of Althea Geiger Lychak, mother of Deborah and Aaron, mother-in-law of Dave, nana of Dana, Darren and Darcy and great grandmother of Drea, Dylan and Devin.

Liturgy is adapted from United Church of Christ Book of Worship, and Beatitudes Communion by Silvia Purdie 2018

GIVE HERE:



PRAYER REQUESTS

--Prayers for the Binder family on the passing of their father/grandfather, Ross; Darcy DelDotto Connors' husband, Lt Ethan Connors, who is deployed in Middle East; Tom, Bonnie, & Katelyn; Sue Russell and her brother, Ronnie on the passing of his wife, Cathy; Carol Baker; Diane Smith; the family & friends of Officer Stephen LaPorta of Uxbridge; the family of Tom Stone, husband of Sue Stone; Joshua S., Bob Podolski; Stan Holden; Timmy; Brian Scott; Jay Scott; James Kelly; Bernice Forristier; Kevin; Ronniy Reis; Kathy; Bob; Deb Wallace; Anne & Jonathan Phyfe; Jeanine's brother, Douglas Szlompekk; 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 and 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), Chapel
Every Sunday, 7pm: AA, Adkins Room
Every Thursday, 7PM OA (Overeaters Anonymous), Rm 214

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Sunday, 2/1:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary
11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room
11:00am: Soup "er" Sunday, Gifford Hall
11:00am: Family Zone 2026 planning meeting, Youth Room
11:00am: 21+ Biloxi, MS mission trip info session, Adkins
11:00am: Breakfast Bag Prep, Chapel
5:30pm: MS Youth Group, Cushing Hall

Tuesday, 2/3:

8:00am: Guided Meditation, Parlor
9:30am: Grief Group, Chapel
12:00pm: Lectionary @ Lunch, Adkins

Wednesday, 2/4:

6:30pm: Shrewsbury Ringers, Sanctuary
7:00pm: CLT, Adkins

Thursday, 2/5:

10am: SNEUCC Monthly, Adkins
10:30am: Staff Meeting, CE Library
7:00pm: CE Ministry, Youth Room
7:15pm: Senior Choir, Choir Room

Friday, 2/6:

4:00pm: Chimers, Chapel
7:00pm: Church Road Coffee House, Gifford Hall

Sunday, 2/8: "Scout Sunday"

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary
11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room
11:00am: HS YG Super Bowl Sub Fundraiser, Gifford Hall
5:30pm: MS Youth Group, Cushing Hall

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm