

First Congregational Church

Gathered in 1723

An Open and Affirming & Creation Justice Church of the United Church of Christ



September 27th, 2026

Rev. Holly MillerShank

Senior Minister

Deacon's Quote of the Day

“Dear God,

When I feel lost or overwhelmed, remind me of Your constant presence. Surround me with Your love and peace. Help me feel held, seen, and safe. I trust that even in silence, You are with me.”

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DEACON'S GREETING

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Mary Maloney

PASTORAL GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, let us remember God's presence with us. Let us open our ears, and our hearts, to God's message.

Many: We have heard Christ's teachings but they often stay buried in the back of our minds.

One: God is patient with us, providing a multitude of opportunities for self-reflection and growth.

Many: Our doubts can lead to honest searching. God welcomes questions that seek new truth.

One: The Holy One welcomes our curiosity and invites us into deeper relationship.

Many: We want to see God's larger picture. We are here to broaden the scope of our concern.

*HYMN

Come, O Fount of Every Blessing (NCH 459)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Like the chief priests and scribes of Jesus' day, we are tempted to confuse our ways for God's way. We trust our own authority and defend the way we live as if we have earned all that we claim as our own. We see the sins of others more readily than we see our own. Our church sometimes reflects our priorities more than the mind of Christ. We need to pray.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We fear to approach you with our confession, Holy God, for you may require changes in us that are costly. You ask us to have the mind of Christ, a mind free of pretense and self-interest. You challenge us to lay aside our advantages to go where you send us. We fear losing our social standing, our security, our confidence, if we truly confess our wrongs and work towards reconciliation. Help us to lean into honesty, and to bear witness to your truth.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God accepts us in the midst of our struggles. Jesus encourages us to repent from our sins. The Spirit strengthens our resolve to better ourselves and our relationships. Let us live in praise to God.

ANTHEM

Give Me Jesus

J. Schrader

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 21:23-32

MESSAGE

Changing One's Mind

Rev. Holly MillerShank

*HYMN

Won't You let Me Be Your Servant? (NCH 539)

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

As Christ gave up selfish ambition, may we too offer our best for others. May our giving inspire generosity in our hearts and a willingness to live in harmony with one another.

OFFERTORY

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

C. Glaser arr. S.

Scott

CREATION JUSTICE CHURCH OFFERING THOUGHT

Natural Protected Areas

Learn about the state parks, city parks, and/or national parks closest to you. Is there a protected beach? A marine sanctuary? A protected forest?

***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**

We cannot fathom the mind of Christ, and yet we give, so that collectively we can embody the values Christ taught us. We dedicate these offerings to the work of the church in our community and in the world, trusting that these resources will be used in love. Amen.

***HYMN**

O for a World (NCH 575)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

St. Anthony's Chorale

F. J. Haydn

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 Kevin Gabbett

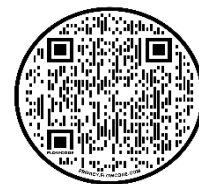
The Reader is Sally Martin

Greeters are Bill Garcia and Elaine Shaw

Altar flowers are provided by the Mullins family in loving memory of Lois Sadler and Rita Mullins.

Liturgy is adapted from Lavon Bayler Taught by Love, Year A

GIVE HERE:



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Prayers for Sean Allen, Nancy Colby; Marion Marston; Joanne Warmen; Martha Sederquest; Bretton; Dan; Cindy and Sarah; Bob Podolski; Jim; Mary; Sherry & Scotty Robertson; Susie and Brian Amos; Ruthie, sister-in-law of Dave & Sue; Lt Ethan Connors and all military personnel deployed in the Middle East; James Kelly; Deb Wallace; Anne & Jonathan Phyfe; Stanley; Sharon; Tracey Carner, 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 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 Sunday, 7pm: AA, Adkins Room

Every Monday, 7pm: AA,

Rm 213 (week 3) & Youth Room (weeks 1, 2, 4)

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

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

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Sunday, 9/27:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary

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

Monday, 9/28:

10:00am: Hands for Hope, Parlor

1:30pm: Memory Cafe, Chapel

7:00pm: Men's Ministry, Adkins

Tuesday, 9/29:

8:00am: Guided Meditation, Parlor

12:00pm: Lectionary @ Lunch, Adkins

6:30pm: Theology on Tap, Chill Kitchen & Bar (Westborough)

Wednesday, 9/30:

6:30pm: Shrewsbury Ringers, Sanctuary

Thursday, 10/1:

9:30am: Personnel Meeting, 214

10:00am: SNEUCC, Adkins

10:00am: Staff Meeting, CE Library

3-6pm: CSA Pick-up, FCC parking lot

7:00pm: CE Ministry, Youth Room

7:15pm: Senior Choir, Choir Room

Friday, 10/2:

4:00pm: Chimers, Chapel

Saturday, 10/3:

12:00pm: Blessing of the Animals, on the Common

Sunday, 10/4:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary

11:00am: Breakfast bag Prep, Chapel

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

12:00pm: SOS Parade Line-up, near old Beal School

5:30pm: MS Youth Group, Cushing

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm