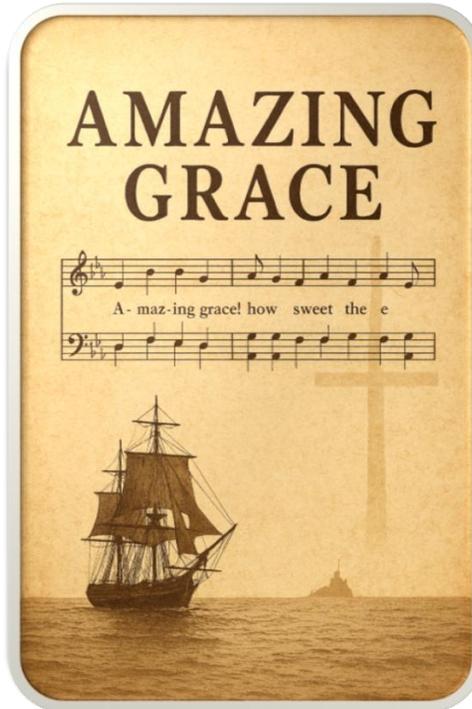




FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

spiritual discovery • inclusive community • compassionate service

*An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ*



**March 1st, 2026**

**Rev. Holly MillerShank**

**Senior Minister**

***Deacon's Quote of the Day***

*Fast from emphasis on differences;*

*Feast on the unity of all life.*

*Fast from apparent darkness;*

*Feast on the reality of light.*

*Fast from thoughts of illness;*

*Feast on the healing power of God.*

Excerpt from: Lenten Litany on Fasting and Feasting

- William Arthur Ward (American author, teacher and pastor, 1921-1994)

## WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DEACON'S GREETING

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

## PASTORAL GREETING

## CALL TO WORSHIP

One: People of God, where do we put our trust? Where do we find wholeness and meaning?

**Many: We lift up our eyes to the hills. Our help comes from the Creator of heaven and earth.**

One: We are the middle generation, offspring of Sarah and Abraham, yet to birth those who will inherit God's creation.

**Many: We trust in God who neither sleeps nor slumbers, we cast aside our fears to make room for grace.**

One: Our lives are a gift from God, who loves us, no matter what. By the grace of God we are born anew.

**Many: God so loved the world that Christ was sent. Through faith in Christ we receive manifold blessings.**

**\*HYMN**

Blessed Assurance (NCH 473)

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Our spiritual ancestors, sensed God's call to leave behind the security of the familiar to venture forward to new places God would show them. God calls to us even now to leave behind our wicked ways and to seek forgiveness of our sins.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**O God, we confess that we have been far more ready to say we believe than to trust you to lead us to new ventures of faithfulness. We are afraid of the evil that surrounds us. We fear rejection, failure and ridicule. We admire Jesus, but it is difficult to follow in footsteps that lead to a cross. Save us, we pray, from our timidity, and use our doubts as an entry to deeper faith. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Our lives are in God's hands. We can only glimpse the mystery of the Source of Grace, who relieves all of our fears. Receive, with humility and joy, the gift God offers this day.

SUNG RESPONSE *Amazing Grace, Verse 2*

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace by fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.**

## ANTHEM

For the Bread Which You Have Broken

D. Schelat

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

## SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

## SERMON

Amazing Grace

Rev. Holly MillerShank

**\*HYMN****Jesus, the Joy of Loving Hearts (NCH 329, vs. 1-3)**

## SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

## Invitation

As we give thanks, we join with all those who sing of your grace, those who have gone before, those who wait ahead, the company of angels and all of creation, voices springing up together like streams in the wilderness.

**Sung Response: Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest!**

### **Blessing of the Meal**

Do this for the remembrance of me. Jesus, we do remember you. In the churning depths of our lives, God still calls out the song of abundant grace, the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

**Sharing of the Meal:** *At FCC we practice an open table, all who wish to share in the gifts of bread and juice are welcome to participate. Gluten free options are in the small sealed containers. Please hold the elements to share together.*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**O Jesus, you have shared a feast more gracious than we could ever ask, the outpouring of your own self with us. Send us out into the world to be conduits for your goodness, channels of your grace, anointing this world with the new life you have given us. 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 faith that sustains us is not a commodity to be hoarded and protected. Rather, faith is an active, dynamic relationship which God calls us to share with one another, not just in the church, but with everyone. Our offerings make possible faith filled ministries both near and far.

### **OFFERTORY**

**Faith of Our Fathers**

H. Hémy arr. J. Mansfield

### **CREATION JUSTICE CHURCH OFFERING THOUGHT**

*Climate Resilience*

What affect is climate change having/going to have in your community? Learn how your church can be a hub for climate resilience by watching our webinars on Creation Justice Ministries' YouTube channel!

### **\*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**

**We are grateful O God, for encounters that lift the horizons of our vision. We rejoice in the teachings and care you provide us. Bless now the gifts we return to you for the outreach of the church. We pray for trust, grace, and mercy to grow from these offerings. Amen.**

### **\*HYMN**

**Faith of Our Fathers (Pilgrim 365)**

### **BENEDICTION**

### **POSTLUDE**

**Christ the Redeemer**

T. Birchwood

*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 James Garvin*  
*The Reader is Dave Smith*  
*Greeters are Kris Couture and Jon Scott*  
*Altar flowers are provided by Diane Smith in honor of her husband Dave's birthday.*

**GIVE HERE:**



*Liturgy adapted from Taught by Love, Year A and Pouring Out Grace: A Lenten Liturgy for Grace Poured Out*  
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## PRAYER REQUESTS

-- Prayers for Christine Yablonski on the passing of her sister, Sally; Carole Fontaine; Susie and Brian Amos; Ruthie, sister-in-law of Dave & Sue; Steve Donigian; the Scott family on the passing of Brian Scott; 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), Chapel  
Every Sunday, 7pm: AA, Adkins Room  
Every Thursday, 7PM OA (Overeaters Anonymous), Rm 214

## THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

### Sunday, 3/1:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary  
11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room  
11:00am: Breakfast Bag Prep, Chapel  
5:30pm: MS Youth Group, Cushing Hall

### Tuesday, 3/3:

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

### Wednesday, 3/4:

12:00pm: Mustard Seed, Kitchen  
6:00pm: Lenten Series, Chapel  
7:00pm: CLT, Adkins  
7:00pm: Shrewsbury Ringers, Sanctuary

### Thursday, 3/5:

10:00am: SNEUCC, Adkins  
11:00am: Staff Meeting, MS Lounge  
7:00pm: CE Ministry, Youth Room  
7:15pm: Senior Choir, Choir Room

### Friday, 3/6:

4:00pm: Chimers, Chapel  
6:30pm: Amazing Grace Rehearsal, Gifford Hall

### Friday, 3/6:

7:00pm: AOTG presents "Amazing Grace", Gifford Hall

### Sunday, 3/8:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary  
11:00am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room  
7:00pm: HS Youth Group, Youth Room

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm