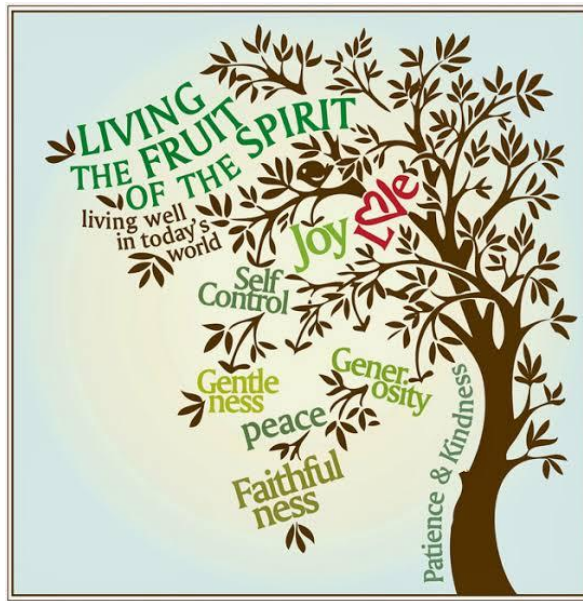


First Congregational Church

Gathered in 1723

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



Church Picnic

September 13th, 2026

Rev. Holly MillerShank

Senior Minister

Deacon's Quote of the Day

“So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”

1 John 4:16

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DEACON'S GREETING**PASTORAL GREETING**

One: On this picnic Sunday, the Spirit draws us together as a church, a community of spirit who shares times of celebration and hope. We are a diverse community, all ages, many personalities, and with a variety of life experience, but Spirit makes us one people.

All: We know that we are welcome here just as we are.

One: We cannot be a healthy community unless we affirm that each person matters, has value, and deserves to be welcomed with dignity and respect. We offer that welcome to one another, through the passing of the peace.

PASSING OF THE PEACE*CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Seeking true community as spirit-gift to us, we welcome all who have no church home, need strength, and are seeking deep meaning. Welcome to those who have doubts or who do not believe. Welcome to those whose faith is sure, and to those who believe, but who are asking large questions.

All: We welcome visitors, familiar friends and friends we have yet to make.

One: This is a place open to everyone, any person who is searching for meaning, who is seeking an understanding of community and what it means to accompany one another.

All: As we come together as church, we turn to one another with gratitude and pray that we will be strong together, faithful together and loving together; as we together give thanks to God.

***HYMN**

For the Fruit of All Creation (see insert)

CALL TO CONFESSION

In silence, we reflect on our lives as sowers of the seeds of kindness and hope.

What seeds do you have to sow, and where might you plant these seeds?

- What seeds of justice and peace do you need to plant in this world of ours?
- What beauty would you like to see growing in your own self?
- What seeds of transformation are you willing to help tend within our congregation?

TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

The Spirit of God meets us here, stirring the strings of our hearts in a song of compassion.
The wind blows, the seas rise, a flower blooms. God's love sets us free.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**SCRIPTURE READING**

Selections from Galatians 5

MESSAGE

Fruit Salad

Rev. Holly MillerShank

***HYMN**

Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak (see insert)

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 *during outdoor services offering can be placed in the boxes located on the welcome table*

In gratitude for the seeds of love planted in us; in the hope that these gifts will grow our community, we make our morning offering. These gifts are a sign of our hope that spirit is at work, coaxing new life out hard shells.

OFFERTORY

I Love You, Lord
Jennifer Shaw, soprano

L. Klein arr. L. Larson

CREATION JUSTICE CHURCH OFFERING THOUGHT

Learn About a Local Plant/Animal

Pick a native species. Observe it and learn how to identify it. Fall in love with it! A heart connection with the life around us is the root of conservation. Tell someone about your findings and connection to this new species.

*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

Bless O Holy One, by your tender spirit the seeds that have been planted this day. Help these gifts to bear good fruit, fruits of the spirit that will not spoil. Use us and use our gifts to nurture the best in others. Amen.

*HYMN

Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers (see insert)

BLESSING OF THE PICNIC

One: Manna from heaven, rivers flowing with milk and honey, fig trees that bear fruit in their season; God provides for all generations.

Many: Bless the foods brought here today, may they nourish our bodies and may our conversations nourish our souls. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Wonderful Words of Life
Jennifer Shaw, soprano

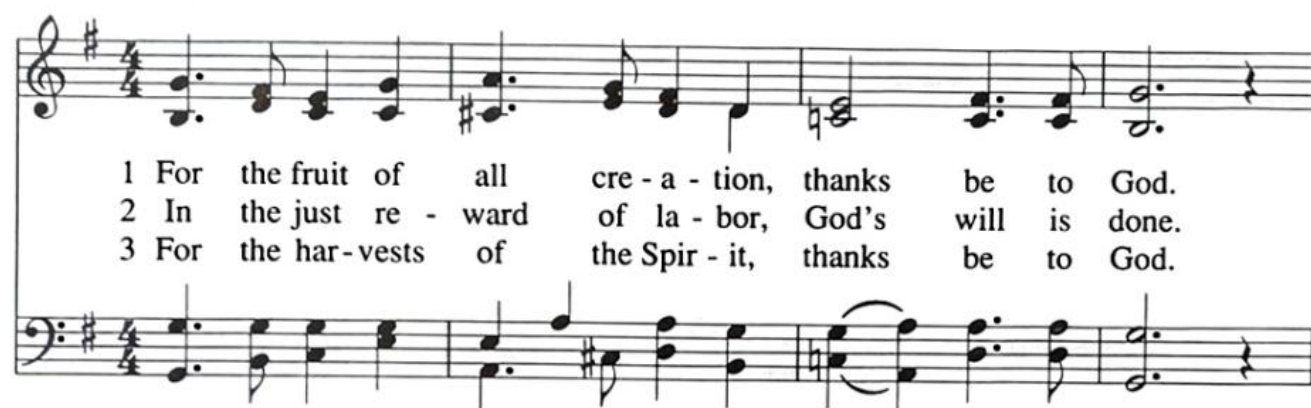
P. Bliss arr. M. Hayes

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.

For the Fruit of All Creation

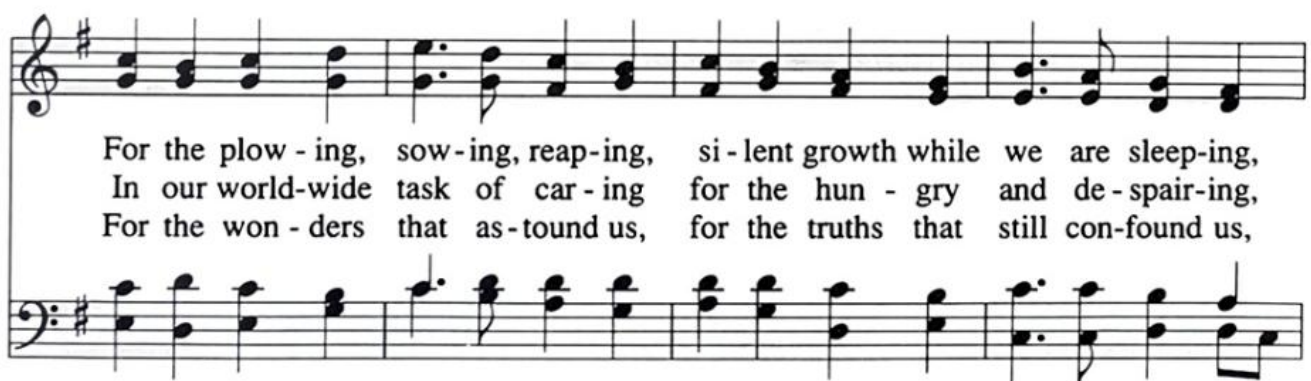
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Fred Pratt Green, 1970

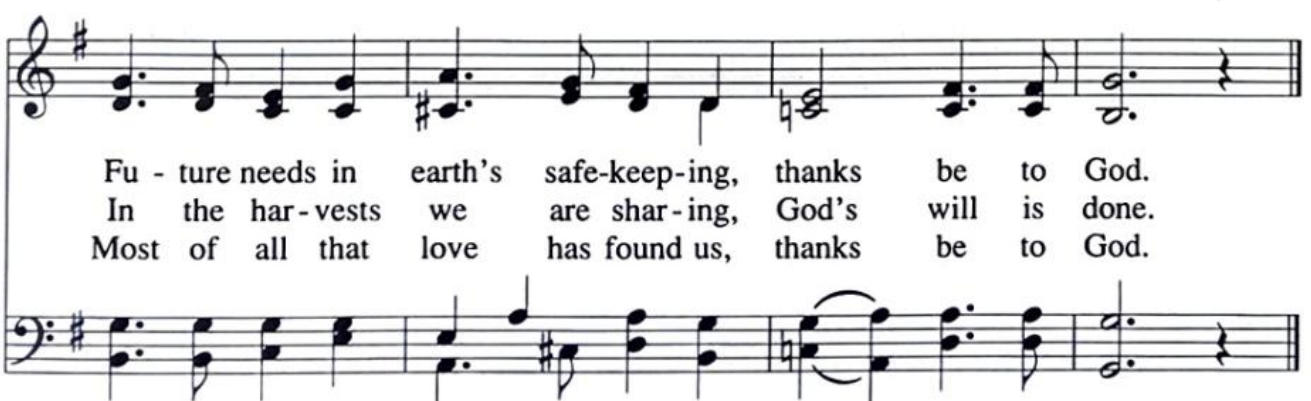
1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For God's gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,



Fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
In the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak

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Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879

CANONBURY L.M.

Arr. from Robert A. Schumann, 1810-1856

1 Lord, speak to me, that I may speak In
 2 O strength - en me, that while I stand Firm
 3 O teach me, Lord, that I may teach The
 4 O fill me with thy full - ness, Lord, Un -

liv - ing ech - oes of thy tone; As thou hast sought, so
 on the rock, and strong in thee, I may stretch out a
 pre - cious things thou dost im - part; And wing my words, that
 til my ver - y heart o'er - flow In kin - dling thought and

let me seek Thy err - ing chil - dren lost and lone.
 lov - ing hand To wres - tlers with the trou - bled sea!
 they may reach The hid - den depths of man - y a heart!
 glow - ing word, Thy love to tell, thy praise to show! A - men.

Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers

Roger Powell, 1948; alt.


1 Thank our God for sis - ters, broth - ers, one by grace, in har - mo - ny,
 2 Praise to God for con - gre - ga - tions, keep - ing faith with Christ as guide;
 3 Ho - ly is your name for - ev - er! Heal di - vi - sions that re - main;




Join - ing heart to heart with oth - ers, mak - ing strong com - mu - ni - ty.
 Man - y tongues of man - y na - tions, song and ser - vice u - ni - fied.
 Bless the church's new en - deav - ors; make our wit - ness one a - gain.




With the cross of Christ our stan - dard, let us sing as with one voice,
 Sweet the psalm and sweet the car - ol, when our song is raised as one.
 One in Christ and in Christ's gos - pel, make us one we now im - plo - re.




Glo - ry, glo - ry, yours the prom - ise: we who are the church re - joice.
 Glo - ry, glo - ry, yours the pow - er, as in heaven your will be done.
 Glo - ry, glo - ry, yours the glo - ry, then and now and ev - er - more.



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 Dave Russell

The Reader is Linda Wagner

Greeters are Laura, James and Annie Kenney

Altar flowers are provided by Ross Clark and Christina Manos in loving memory of our nephew, Axel Bostrom, on the occasion of his heavenly birthday (September 12th).

Liturgy is adapted from Parkminster United Church, Waterloo Ontario, Canada, Church Picnic Liturgy 2015

GIVE HERE:



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Prayers for Joanne Warmen; Martha Sederquest; Bretton; Dan; Cindy and Sarah; Michael; 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 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, 9/13:

9:15am: Training Choir/Youth Singers, Choir Room

10:00am: Outdoor Worship on the Common

Church Potluck Picnic to follow service

Monday, 9/14:

7:00pm: Music Committee, Adkins

Tuesday, 9/15:

8:00am: Guided Meditation, Parlor

12:00pm: Lectionary @ Lunch, Adkins

7:00pm: Council, Adkins

Wednesday, 9/16:

11:30am: Martha Circle, Adkins

6:30pm: Shrewsbury Ringers, Sanctuary

Thursday, 9/17:

9:30am: CoAM, Adkins

10:00am: Staff Meeting, CE Library

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

7:15pm: Senior Choir, Choir Room

Friday, 9/18:

4:00pm: Chimers, Chapel

Saturday, 9/18:

5:00pm: CSA Potluck & Cooking Contest, Gifford Hall

Sunday, 9/19:

9:30am: Worship & Sunday School, Sanctuary

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

11:00am: Breakfast Bag Prep, Chapel

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm

FRUIT

♥ OF THE ♥

SPIRIT

GALATIANS 5:22-23

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

GOODNESS

KINDNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS

SELF-CONTROL