



CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROCKTON, MA



March 8, 2026

10:00 am

AN ASTERISK IN THE BULLETIN INDICATES THAT ALL FOR WHOM IT IS COMFORTABLE SHOULD RISE FOR THAT PART OF THE SERVICE

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Matt Howard

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN** 'How Firm a Foundation' (vs. 1, 2, 5) No. 618

***CALL TO GATHERING¹**

Leader: If you need good news,

ALL: settle into this space. We have good news to share.

Leader: If you need a word of hope,

ALL: then trust us when we say, *there is hope enough to go around.*

Leader: If you need a glimmer of joy,

ALL: then you're in luck! We have resilient joy abounding.

Leader: If you need to feel God's presence in your midst,

ALL: then know that this is God's house.

Leader: This is the good news of the gospel.

ALL: God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move. Let us worship our with-us God!

OPENING PRAYER

***HYMN** 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus' No. 585

***PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE¹**

ALL: Holy God, with you the impossible is possible. 5,000 can be fed. The blind can see. The hopeless can find hope. With you the impossible is possible, but we are quick to forget that. We look at our hurting world and tell ourselves that nothing can be done. We forget that you empowered the disciples to feed the crowd. We forget that you are always with us. Forgive our small-minded ways. Forgive us for doubting that change could ever come. But even more so, forgive us when we refuse to be a part of it. With hope for a better tomorrow we pray, Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE¹**

Leader: Family of faith, no matter how many mistakes the disciples made, Jesus still washed their feet. Jesus still fed them. Jesus still called them beloved. The same is true for you and me, so hear and believe this good news,

ALL: today is a new day, and once again, we belong to God. We are forgiven. We are called. We are not alone. What good, *good news*. Amen!

***SUNG RESPONSE**

'Lead On, O Cloud of Presence' (vs. 3)

No. 633

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION¹

LEARNING THE WORD (*Mark 6:32-44 & Ephesians 3:20-21*)

Mark 6:32-44

³² *They departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.*

³³ *Many people saw them leaving and recognized them, so they ran ahead from all the cities and arrived before them. ³⁴ When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things.*

³⁵ *Late in the day, his disciples came to him and said, "This is an isolated place, and it's already late in the day. ³⁶ Send them away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy something to eat for themselves."*

³⁷ *He replied, "You give them something to eat."*

But they said to him, "Should we go off and buy bread worth almost eight months' pay^[a] and give it to them to eat?"

³⁸ *He said to them, "How much bread do you have? Take a look."*

After checking, they said, "Five loaves of bread and two fish."

³⁹ *He directed the disciples to seat all the people in groups as though they were having a banquet on the green grass. ⁴⁰ They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them, broke the loaves into pieces, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² Everyone ate until they were full. ⁴³ They filled twelve baskets with the leftover pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ About five thousand had eaten.*

Ephesians 3:20-21

²⁰ *Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us; ²¹ glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus for all generations, forever and always. Amen.*

A TIME FOR ALL AGES

Dani Kardisco

HYMN

'Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing'

No. 16

SERMON

Rev. Jeffrey Kardisco

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Alex Green

During this time, we invite you to embrace the transition from hearing the word to gathering ourselves in prayer by taking a moment for quiet reflection either in your pew, or by coming forward to light a candle to give light to the prayer(s) on your heart that have no words to be expressed.

Come and Light a Candle...



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH¹

ALL: I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

**It sounds like welcome
and feels like home.**

**It sounds like laughter
and feels like mercy.**

**It sounds like love
and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**I have seen it alive in the world.
And even when my heart aches,
even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach,**

**I remember the one who
welcomed the children
and led with nonviolence.**

**I remember the one who
cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.**

**I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world.**

Thanks be to God! Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE

‘Called as Partners in Christ’s Service’ (vs. 1)

No. 453

PASTORAL PRAYER¹

THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(in unison)*

Our Creator (Father) who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

OFFERTORY

‘Simple Praise’

(Martin/Courtney)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

‘For The Beauty Of The Earth’ (vs. 5)

No. 56

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION**

***HYMN**

'Human Minds Just Can't Imagine'

(Insert)

***BENEDICTION¹**

POSTLUDE

'Go Now And Serve The Lord'

(Wagner)

Participating In Today's Worship Service:

Rev. Jeffrey Kardisco, Senior Pastor

Alex Green, Music Director

Abigail Nordan, Soloist

David Wilcox, ASL Interpreter

Dani Kardisco, Faith Formation Director

¹Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.





Far More Abundantly

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Ephesians 3:20-21

11"x14" Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on paper, with gold leaf detail

I read this Ephesians text alongside the feeding of the five thousand. I placed Jesus at the center of the image,¹² but he did not feed the crowds alone. He asked his disciples to offer what they had. They responded with meager resources, yet those small gifts were enough.

Through the lens of Ephesians, if Jesus were to ask us today what we have to give, our answer would be:

We have the power you have given us to do the impossible. The same power that turned five loaves and two fish into a feast for thousands—with leftovers—empowers us “to accomplish far more abundantly than all we can ask or imagine.”

Do we allow this truth to settle into our bones and animate our actions?

I’ll admit, I tried to avoid this passage because it felt overly optimistic in light of today’s world. People still go hungry. Wars rage. The earth groans under our misuse. Yet if we reimagine the systems we created, studies show it is possible for every human being to have what they need.¹³ That would require massive restructuring, international cooperation, and the reallocation of resources—but not more than we already possess. We don’t need a miracle of multiplication. We simply need to use what we’ve been given.

In a world convinced of scarcity, this is astonishingly good news. We already have enough. And as my mentor used to say, “*Enough is abundance.*” What will we do with this abundance? Is it too lofty to dream of a world that sustains all of life? Perhaps. Yet I believe it is God’s own desire that all may have life, and have it abundantly.¹⁴ This is the work before us, accomplished through the power at work within us, through Jesus Christ. Amen. —Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Look

Consider the archway and what it could symbolize. Do you see a table, a tablet, a boat, a door, a tomb—or all of these things or something else?

¹² In the center of the image, Jesus raises his arms and breaks bread. Above Jesus’ hands is a mustard seed. Surrounding the baskets are thin line carvings of mustard flowers. Like the seed, we may be small, but we hold so much potential inside of us. Surrounding the archway are twelve baskets of seven loaves or fish which take on the shape of flowers. The number twelve represents community, and seven represents wholeness. When everyone has what they need, the community is whole.

¹³ globalcommonsalliance.org/news/new-research-reveals-path-to-prosperity-for-planet-and-people-if-earths-critical-resources-are-better-shared/

¹⁴ John 10:9-11

1. How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
 2. "Fear not, I am with thee, oh, be not dis-mayed,
 3. "When through the deep wa-ters I call thee to go,
 4. "When through fi-ery tri-als thy path-way shall lie,
 5. "The soul that on Je-sus still leans for re- pose,

1. is laid for your faith in God's ex-cel-lent word!
 2. for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid.
 3. the riv-ers of woe shall not thee o-ver-flow;
 4. my grace, all suf-fi-cient, shall be thy sup-ply.
 5. I will not, I will not de-sert to its foes;

1. What more can be said than to you God has said,
 2. I'll strength-en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
 3. for I will be near thee, thy trou-bles to bless,
 4. The flame shall not hurt thee; I on-ly de-sign
 5. that soul, though all hell should en-deav-or to shake,

1. to you who for ref-uge to Je-sus have fled?
 2. up-held by my righ-teous, om-nip-o-terit hand.
 3. and sanc-ti-fy to thee thy deep-est dis-tress.
 4. thy dross to con-sume, and thy gold to re-fine.
 5. I'll nev-er, no nev-er, no nev-er for-sake!"

WORDS: John Rippon's *Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt.
 MUSIC: Traditional American melody

FOUNDATION
 11 11.11 11

585 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

1. What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
 2. Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
 3. Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?

What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged; take it to the Lord in prayer!
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge, take it to the Lord in prayer!

Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit, oh, what need - less pain we bear,
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful, who will all our sor - rows share?
 Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!

all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer,
 Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak - ness; take it to the Lord in prayer!
 In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a sol - ace there.

WORDS: Joseph Scriven, 1855
 MUSIC: Charles C. Converse, 1868

CONVERSE
 87.87D

Lead On, O Cloud of Presence 633

1. Lead on, O cloud of pres - ence; the ex - o - dus is come;
 2. Lead on, O fi - ery pil - lar; we fol - low yet with fears,
 3. Lead on, O God of free - dom, and guide us on our way,

in wil - der - ness and des - ert our tribe shall make its home.
 but we shall come re - joic - ing, though joy be born of tears.
 and help us trust the prom - ise through strug - gle and de - lay.

Our bond - age left be - hind us, new hopes with - in us grow.
 We are not lost, though wan - d'ring, for by your light we come,
 We pray our sons and daugh - ters may jour - ney to that land

We seek the land of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow.
 and we are still God's peo - ple. The jour - ney is our home.
 where jus - tice dwells with mer - cy and love is law's de - mand.

WORDS: Ruth Duck, 1974, rev. 1989
 MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1835

LANCASHIRE
 76.76D

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16 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



1. Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2. Here I raise to thee an al-tar; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
 3. O to grace how great a debt-or dai-ly I'm con-strained to be!



streams of mer-cy, nev-er ceas-ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar-rive at home.
 Let thy good-ness, like a fet-ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.



Teach me some me-lo-dious son-net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove.
 Je-sus sought me when a stran-ger, wan-dering from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan-der, how I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;



Praise the mount! I'm fixed up-on it, mount of thy re-deem-ing love.
 he, to res-cue me from dan-ger, in-ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
 here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a-bove.



WORDS: Robert Robinson, 1758, alt.

MUSIC: Wyell's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, 1813

NETTLETON
 87.87D

453 Called as Partners in Christ's Service



1. Called as part-ners in Christ's ser-vice, called to min-is-tries of grace,
 2. Christ's ex-am-ple, Christ's in-spir-ing, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
 3. Thus new pat-terns for Christ's mis-sion, in a small or glob-al sense,
 4. So God grant us for to-mor-row ways to or-der hu-man life



we re-pond with deep com-mit-ment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
 let us fol-low, nev-er fal-tering, rec-on-cil-ing folk on earth.
 help us bear each oth-er's bur-dens, break-ing down each wall or fence.
 that sur-round each per-son's sor-row with a calm that con-quests strife.



May we learn the art of shar-ing, side by side and friend with friend,
 Men and wom-en, rich-er, poor-er, all God's peo-ple, young and old,
 Words of com-fort, words of vi-sion, words of chal-lenge, said with care,
 Make us part-ners in our liv-ing, our com-pas-sion to in-crease,



e - qual part-ners in our car-ing to ful-fill God's cho-sen end.
 blend-ing hu-man skills to- geth-er gra-cious gifts from God un-fold.
 bring new power and strength for ac-tion, make us col-leagues, free and fair.
 mes-sen-gers of faith, thus giv-ing hope and con-fi-dence and peace.

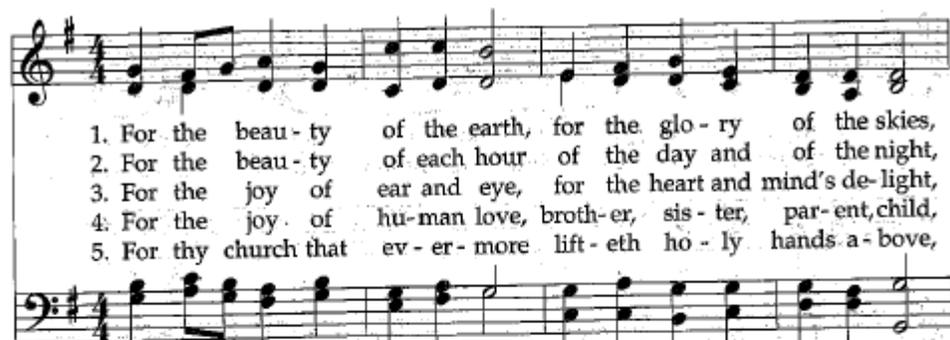
WORDS: Jane Parker Huber, 1981
 MUSIC: John Zundel, 1870

BEECHER
 87.87D

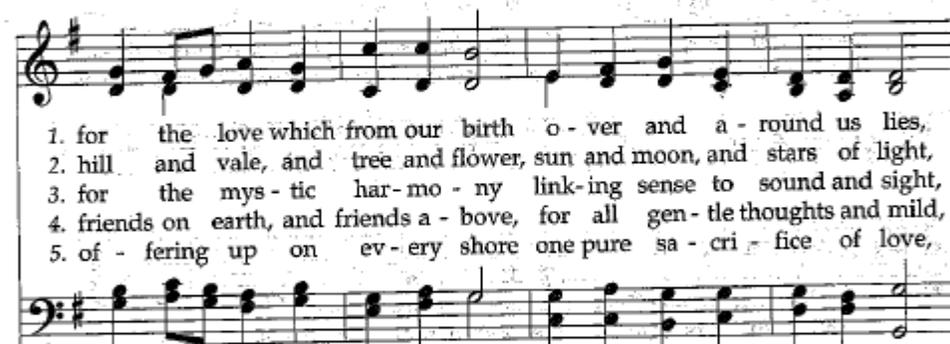
Words © 1981 Jane Parker Huber

For the Beauty of the Earth

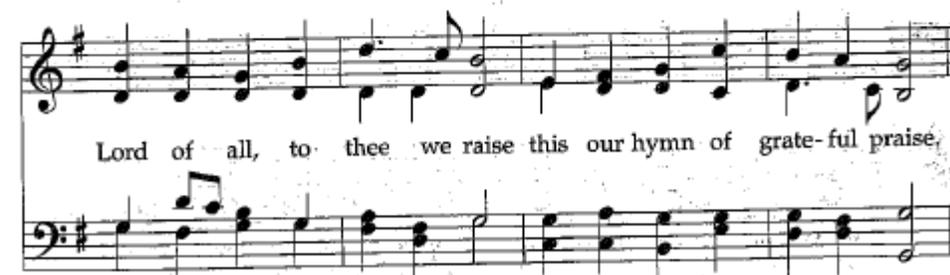
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1. For the beau-ty of the earth, for the glo-ry of the skies,
 2. For the beau-ty of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de-light,
 4. For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
 5. For thy church that ev-er-more lift-eth ho-ly hands a-bove,



1. for the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies,
 2. hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
 3. for the mys-tic har-mo-ny link-ing sense to sound and sight,
 4. friends on earth, and friends a-bove, for all gen-tle thoughts and mild,
 5. of-fering up on ev-ery shore one pure sa-cri-fice of love,



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise,

WORDS: Folliot S. Pierpoint, 1864
 MUSIC: Conrad Kocher, 1838; arr. William Henry Monk, 1861

DIX
 77.77.77

Human Minds Just Can't Imagine

AUSTRIAN HYMN 8.7.8.7 D

Words: Anna Strickland (2025)

Music: Joseph Haydn (1797)

Hu - man minds just can't i - ma - gine all that God can bring to bear
God, ex - pand our dreams and vi - sion when we think our gifts too small
Like the grains of wheat are ga - thered from the vast and roll - ing fields

5

Through our small and sep - arate be - ings, e - ven when we join to share
Help us trust your great pro - vis - ion and to an - swer when you call
Like the grapes from vi - ny bran - ches whose small fruit the wine will yield

9

Still we fol - low where Christ leads us, ma - ny pie - ces of one whole
You who gave us time and ta - lents will up - hold and see us through
We re - mem - ber as one bo - dy, each of us a cru - cial part

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13

That we might al - low our dream - ing to trans - form our bro - ken world
As we join to - geth - er in the work you've gi - ven us to do
In the glo - bal church pro - fess - ing; we be - long to God's own heart