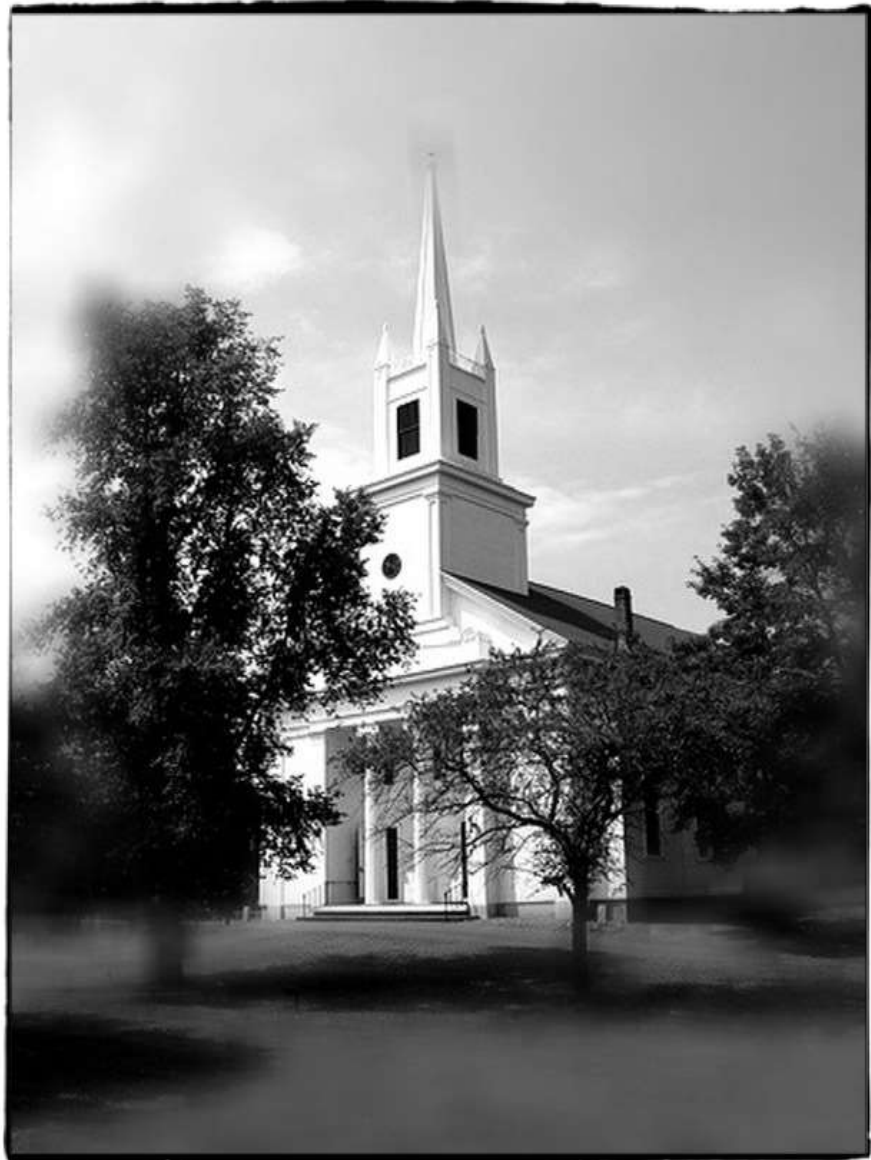


# The Congregational Church *of* Topsfield

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



**ORDER OF WORSHIP**  
**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**NOVEMBER 19, 2023**  
**9:30 am**

PRELUDE	<i>Le Goût Du Malheur</i>	Francis Poulenc
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS		Rev. Martin Riekert
CITIZENS INN		Rachel Leibowitz, Senior Development Officer
PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST		
SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION		
OPENING HYMN Hymn #2 (CH)	“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” View page 5, verses 1, 3, 4	HYMN TO JOY
<b>GATHERING PRAYER (UNISON):</b>		Lay Reader, Jon Palace

**Loving God,  
whose touch can heal the broken places of life,  
touch us today...**

**God of peace,  
whose spirit of peace can quiet our spirits  
of confusion and despair,  
reassure us today...**

**Forgiving God,  
whose call to repentance promises grace upon grace,  
place your mercy in our souls today...**

**You who heal the sick and liberate the imprisoned,  
who bring justice in the midst of oppression  
and strength in the midst of weakness,  
pour out your spirit of power upon us today.**

**Open our hearts to new faithfulness,  
redirect our waywardness,  
and hold us gently in your goodness.**

**We confess our need to you,  
and we turn to you with hearts filled with hope,  
remembering the promises you have made to us.**

**May your kingdom thus come in us and through us  
And may this service be instrumental in our continued transformation.  
Amen**

*— based on materials by Peter K. Perry and adapted by Martin Riekert.*

SHARING OUR GIFTS

THE OFFERTORY "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" Alford/Elvey

†THE DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him\* all creatures here below; praise Him\* above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost\*\* Amen**

\*You may substitute God/Her \*\*You may substitute Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT Duane Melling

SCRIPTURE Acts 4:32-5:11 Lay Reader, Jon Palace  
View Page 4

ANTHEM "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" Virgil Thomson

SERMON "Discretion Is Advised" Rev. Martin Riekert

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Debts)

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

\*You may substitute Creator/Mother/Maker, etc. as you choose in saying the prayer.

CLOSING HYMN "My Life Flows On" HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING  
Hymn #619 (CH) View page 6, verses 1, 2, 4

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Count Your Blessings" Oatman/Excell

## Scripture Reading: (NRSVUE)

### Acts 4:32-5:11

<sup>32</sup> Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. <sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. <sup>34</sup> There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. <sup>35</sup> They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. <sup>36</sup> There was a Levite from Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). <sup>37</sup> He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

**5** But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; <sup>2</sup> with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup> "Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? <sup>4</sup> While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us<sup>[a]</sup> but to God!" <sup>5</sup> Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. <sup>6</sup> The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him.

<sup>7</sup> After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup> Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price." And she said, "Yes, that was the price." <sup>9</sup> Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." <sup>10</sup> Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. <sup>11</sup> And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

VERSES 1, 3, 4

GOD

2 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

*Descant*

4. Mor-tals, join the hap - py cho - rus; stars of morn - ing, take your part;

1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;  
 2. All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re-lect thy rays,  
 3. Thou art giv-ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blest,  
 4. Mor-tals, join the hap - py cho - rus; stars of morn - ing, take your part;

love di - vine is reign - ing o'er us, bind - ing those of ten - der heart. So

hearts un-fold like flowers be - fore thee, open - ing to the sun a - bove.  
 stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!  
 love di - vine is reign - ing o'er us, bind - ing those of ten - der heart.

sing - ing, move we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife;

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive our fear and doubt a - way;  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - ery mead - ow, flash - ing sea,  
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our Broth - er, all who live in love are thine;  
 Ev - er sing - ing, move we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife,

joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun - ward in the tri - umph song of life.

giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 chant - ing bird and flow - ing foun - tain, call us to re - joice in thee.  
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine.  
 joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun - ward in the tri - umph song of life.

# My Life Flows On

619

1. My life flows on in end-less song, a-bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion.  
 2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu - sic ring-ing.  
 3. What though my joys and com-forts die? I know my Sav - ior liv - eth.  
 4. The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing!

I hear the clear, though far off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.  
 It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?  
 What though the dark-ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.  
 All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

*Refrain*

No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.

Since love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

# Congregational Church of Topsfield

## Parish Care Ministry

### **Prayer List Contact:**

Kim Itz at [prayerlisting@topsfieldchurch.org](mailto:prayerlisting@topsfieldchurch.org) or 978-887-6567

### **Healing Scripture:**

"And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick ....." Matthew 14:14

### **Healing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, I ask you to turn this weakness into strength, suffering into compassion, sorrow into joy, and pain into comfort for others. May your servant trust in your goodness and hope in your faithfulness, even in the middle of this suffering. Let him be filled with patience and joy in your presence as he waits for your healing touch.

### **Please Pray For:**

Maria Cecilia Guerra - Sister of José Guerra  
Eva - Friend of Irina Günzel-Guerra from Norway  
Alexander - Brother of friend of Irina Günzel-Guerra  
Doug McIlvaine - Member of CCOT  
Doug Gruber - Brother of Susan Gruber  
Paul Rogers - Father of Tony Rogers  
Jane Moyer - Member of CCOT  
Ralph & Diana Titus - Members of CCOT  
Sean Enos - Son of neighbor of Jane & Bruce Jones  
Cheryl Hopkins - Members of CCOT  
Brett Hoover - Grandson of Fred & Carole Hoover  
Jennifer Smith - Friend of Martin & Christa in Vermont  
Trish Hudson - Former member of CCOT  
Kurt Nakanishi - Son of friend of Judi Gosbee

Dan Knowles - Son of Phillip & Marilyn Knowles  
David Muise - Nephew of Kim Itz  
Eileen Doane - Cousin of Katy Fleming  
Jacob Itz - Son of Kim & Charlie Itz  
Andrea Sommer & Family - Relatives of Irina Günzel Guerra  
Mary Vernon Saunders - Cousin of Mary Jelinek  
Evelyn Grant - Sister of Sandy Whelan  
Mike Kinhan - Brother of John Kinhan

We offer our prayers of love and sympathy to Jeff Nulsen and family as they mourn the loss of Jeff's uncle Edwin Nelson from Ohio who passed away on Wednesday 11/15/23. We hold Jeff's mom Peggy Nelson and extended family from Ohio in our prayers.

## Announcements:



*Thank you to our Coffee Hour volunteers, Charlotte Melling and Cathy Szymanski, for providing Coffee Hour after service today in the Emerson Center Fellowship Hall. Hope to have you join us!*



### The Congregational Church of Topsfield November Birthdays

<b>Jake Spaulding:</b>	<b>11/19</b>	<b>Catharine Nenart:</b>	<b>11/20</b>	<b>Sarah Lindholm:</b>	<b>11/21</b>
<b>Madelyn Warner:</b>	<b>11/19</b>	<b>Mary Brown:</b>	<b>11/21</b>	<b>Ruth Bortzfield:</b>	<b>11/22</b>
<b>Duane Melling:</b>	<b>11/20</b>	<b>Charlie Townes:</b>	<b>11/21</b>	<b>Rasheed Townes:</b>	<b>11/24</b>



If you would like to have something posted in our InSpire newsletter, pertaining to a specific board, please email the designated Board Chairs:

**Trustees/Bruce Jones:** [bruce.jones45@verizon.net](mailto:bruce.jones45@verizon.net)  
**Deacons/Jim Barnes:** [jhbarnes1@mac.com](mailto:jhbarnes1@mac.com)  
**Community & Communications/Nancy Nelson:**  
[nbnelson21@gmail.com](mailto:nbnelson21@gmail.com)

**Children & Youth/Christy Redding:**  
[christyredding76@gmail.com](mailto:christyredding76@gmail.com)  
**Mission & Outreach/Joe Gibbons:**  
[joe.gibbons@verizon.net](mailto:joe.gibbons@verizon.net)

### SERVING THIS MORNING

Polly Croteau, Carolyn Detato  
Jon Palace  
Sandy Whelan  
Barbara Merriman

*Altar Guild  
Lay Reader  
Head Usher  
Usher*

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**Senior Minister**  
Martin Riekert, 978-887-2101  
[martin@topsfieldchurch.org](mailto:martin@topsfieldchurch.org)

**Communications & Office Manager**  
Kim Love, 978-887-2101  
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**Music Director and Organist**  
Jackson Carruthers, 978-887-2101  
[jackson@topsfieldchurch.org](mailto:jackson@topsfieldchurch.org)

**Director of Children and Youth Ministries**  
Kim Love, 978-887-2101  
[kimlove@topsfieldchurch.org](mailto:kimlove@topsfieldchurch.org)

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