Congregational Church
of Westminster West
A United Church of Christ
September 6, 2026
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

There is much good work to be done by every one of us and we must begin to do it.

Wendell Berry

I never know what I'm going to do or why I'm gonna do it. I just see a need and if I can fill it, then I will.

Dolly Parton

Welcome and Announcements
Prelude:
Just Like You and Me (Adam's Song) - Pat Belringer

Call to Worship
Leader: Come, let us worship the One who gathers all people before God's presence.

People: We come to worship Jesus Christ,
who calls us to love our neighbors and care for one another.

Leader: Christ invites us to see those who are hungry and offer nourishment,
those who are thirsty and offer refreshment,
those who are strangers and offer welcome,
those who are sick and offer care,
and those who are imprisoned and offer compassion.

People: Open our eyes, O God,
that we may recognize Christ in every person we encounter.

Leader: Jesus reminds us that whenever we care for those who are vulnerable,
whenever we welcome those who are excluded,
whenever we respond to another's need with love,
we are serving Christ.

People: Teach us to love with generous hearts,
to welcome with open arms,
and to serve with compassion.

Leader: Come, let us worship the One who calls us to lives of mercy and justice.
Come with open hearts, ready to receive God's grace and ready to share that grace with others.

All: May our worship become love in action,
and may our lives reflect God's compassion to all.
Amen.

Opening Hymn: #495 Called as Partners in Christ's Service

Called as partners in Christ's service,
Called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment
Fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing,
Side by side and friend by friend,
Equal partners in our caring
To fulfill God's chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring,
Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering,
Reconciling folk on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer,
All God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together
Gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission,
In a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens,
Breaking down each wall or fence,
Words of comfort, words of vision,
Words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action,
Make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow
Ways to order human life

That surround each person's sorrow
With a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living,
Our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving
Hope and confidence and peace.

Prayer of Confession:
Merciful and loving God,
we confess that we have not always recognized Christ in the people around us.
Open our eyes to those who are vulnerable, forgotten, or excluded.
Open our hearts to the needs of our neighbors.
Open our hands to share what we have been given.
Teach us to love not only in words, but in action.
Through Christ, who calls us to see and serve one another,
transform our hearts and renew our lives.

Assurance of Pardon:
What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be

able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (from Romans 8)

***Gloria: #756 (see inside back of hymnal)**

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46
Reflection

Prayers of the People
L: May the Lord be with you.
P: And also with you.
L: Let us pray.
Joys and Concerns
Silence
Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer
Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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 let us not fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Communion

***Hymn # 533 Children of God**
Children of God, lift hearts to one another;
where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
to worship rightly is to love each other,
each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

For God whom Jesus loved has truly spoken:
the holier worship which Christ deigns to bless
Restores the lost, and binds the spirit broken,
and feeds the widow and the parentless.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
of Christ whose holy work was doing good;
so shall the wide earth seem a holy temple,
each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor
of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;
love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
and in its ashes plant the tree of peace.

Offertory: They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love - Peter Scholtes, arr. Mark Hayes

***Closing Hymn # 538 Standing at the Future's Threshold**
Standing at the future's threshold,
grateful for God's guiding hand,
asking no protected stronghold,
called to be a Pilgrim band,

seeking ever for new vision
of the gospel for our day,
We move forward in God's mission
with our faith to show the way.

Midst the teeming city's millions,
witness to God's boundless love,
reaching for each system's lost ones,
seeking justice with each move;
grant us courage, strength, and patience
to contend with vicious power,
lead us forward in the faith that
gives us hope in testing's hour.

Open-hearted in exchanges
with the faithful not our own,
trusting God's way with these strangers
not to leave the truth unknown.
Joining them in shared endeavor
where we have Christ's clear command,
we have faith that calls us ever
toward this good earth's promised land.

Building justice as the bulwark
of the peace that God would give
making sacrifice the hallmark
of the life we're called to live:
grant us, God, to bear our witness

to this peace in Christ, and move
forward with our faith's own access
to the life of hope and love.

Jesus Christ, eternal savior,
source of life and truth and grace,
we would ask no special favor,
with the lowliest seek our place,
know the inasmuch of serving,
have your cross as our command:
lead us in this faith unswerving
forward as your pilgrim band.

Benediction

Postlude: Let's Get Together - Chet Powers

Church and Community Notes

As we seek a settled pastor through our search and call process, we will not be able to offer office hours as usual, but the Deacons (Karen Blanchard, Lee Crocker, Charlotte Gifford (Chair), Ray Huessy, Adrienne Major, and Sue Venman) are available to support the congregation. You can leave a message on the church number (802-387-1175) or you can contact a deacon directly. In case of pastoral emergency, a deacon will call on the Rev. Shawn Bracebridge (pastor of the Dummerston UCC) and help a person in need get in contact with him. For all questions of church building use, please contact Tom Griffith.

Worship Participants:
Service Leader: Sharon Easterling
Musician: Eric Robinson
Deacon: Sue Venman
Technician: Ray Huessy
Trustees: Guy Payne, chair
Ministers to the World: The Congregation

Upcoming Worship Leaders:
Sept. 13 – Charlotte Gifford, Post-Fair Hymn Sing!
Sept. 20 – Adrienne Major
Sept. 27 – Karen Blanchard
Oct. 4 – David Mulholland, Holy Communion,
Blessing of the Animals following the service

Annual Community Fair!
Saturday, Sept. 12, 8:30-3:00

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