United Church of Christ,
Congregational Boxborough

723 Massachusetts Ave., Boxborough, MA 01719
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No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you BELONG here.

September 6, 2026 9:30 a.m.

Prelude *Trumpet Voluntary*
Young

Welcome & Announcements Pastor Fran Graveson

* Hymn #576 vs 1 & 2 (NCH Black hymnal) *For the Healing of the Nations* Kaan

For the healing of the nations, God we pray with one accord;
For a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
To a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom; from despairing your world release,
That, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.

Call to Worship Lay Leader

One: Come, all who carry the weight of fear and uncertainty,
All: for the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.
One: Come, you who have felt forgotten, rejected, or outside the fold,
All: for God's mercy is wide, welcoming, and endlessly deep.
One: May our hearts be opened to the mystery of God's grace,
All: and may our lives trust in the possibilities beyond our knowing.[1]

Prayer of Transformation Lay Reader

God of all ages, we do not always understand the stories and language of our ancestors. We can dismiss their wisdom and their experience in your presence because their stories seem unclear. Help us to see beyond the confusion and hold respect for your presence in the stories of the past as we examine our own ability to see beyond our understanding and open our hearts to the impossible.

<moment of silence>

Prayer of Assurance

[1] George Helton, https://thepastorsworkshop.com/liturgy/come-all-who-carry-the-weight-of-fear

We are loved. God wants to write new stories on our hearts; help us to see the light in dark times; and lead us to reconciliation and hope. We are loved. Let us hear the love in the many stories around us. Amen.

* Passing of the Peace

One: We take this time in community to share God's peace from one heart to another. The peace of God be with you.

All: And also, with you.

* Song of Celebration *Spirit of the Living God*

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Lectionary Introduction Pastor Fran Graveson

Scripture Reading Lay Leader

Genesis 6:5-8, 13-22; 8:1-4; 9:12-17

The LORD saw that humanity had become thoroughly evil on the earth and that every idea their minds thought up was always completely evil. The LORD regretted making human beings on the earth, and he was heartbroken.

So, the LORD said, "I will wipe off of the land the human race that I've created: from human beings to livestock to the crawling things to the birds in the skies, because I regret I ever made them." But as for Noah, the LORD approved of him.

God said to Noah, "The end has come for all creatures, since they have filled the earth with violence. I am now about to destroy them along with the earth, so make a wooden ark. Make the ark with nesting places and cover it inside and out with tar. This is how you should make it: four hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. Make a roof for the ark and complete it one foot from the top. Put a door in its side. In the hold below, make the second and third decks.

"I am now bringing the floodwaters over the earth to destroy everything under the sky that breathes. Everything on earth is about to take its last breath. But I will set up my covenant with you. You will go into the ark together with your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives. From all living things—from all creatures—you are to bring a pair, male and female, into the ark with you to keep them alive. From each kind of bird, from each kind of livestock, and from each kind of everything that crawls on the ground—a pair from each will go in with you to stay alive. Take some from every kind of food and stow it as food for you and for the animals." Noah did everything exactly as God commanded him.

* Hymn #576 vs 3 & 4 (NCH Black hymnal) *For the Healing of the Nations* Kaan

All that kills abundant life, let it from the earth be banned;

Pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
For our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind.
That by our response and service earth its destiny may find.

God remembered Noah, all those alive, and all the animals with him in the ark. God sent a wind over the earth so that the waters receded. The springs of the deep sea and the skies closed up. The skies held back the rain. The waters receded gradually from the earth. After one hundred fifty days, the waters decreased; and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day, the ark came to rest on the Ararat mountains.
God said, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I am drawing up between me and you and every living thing with you, on behalf of every future generation. I have placed my bow in the clouds; it will be the symbol of the covenant between me and the earth. **14** When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will remember the covenant between me and you and every living being among all the creatures. Floodwaters will never again destroy all creatures. The bow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth's creatures." God said to Noah, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I have set up between me and all creatures on earth."

Sermon Pastor Fran Graveson

Prayers of the People, Pastoral Prayer, and Jesus' Prayer

Creator God, 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.

Offering
Invitation to Generosity

Offertory *Olivet* Young

*Sung Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

*Dedication of the Offering

Loving God, you do not demand sacrifice or give us extra credit for our offerings. We present these gifts as a grateful response to your grace and a commitment to lives that reflect and spread your transforming love. Bless them, to make the impossible possible in our eyes. Amen.

* Hymn #347 (NCH Black hymnal) *Let us Talents and Tongues Employ* Kaan

Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy;
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ has spoken and seen and heard.
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound

Christ is able to make us one, at his table he set the tone,
Teaching people to live to bless, love in word and indeed express.
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound

Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share; God (Immanuel) everywhere!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around; loaves abound

Communion

Pastor Fran

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: We thank you, generous God, for the nourishment of this table and our time sharing in community. May they sustain us in our work together, living in the light and walking the path of love's truth. Amen.

Benediction

Postlude *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* Fey

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***Denotes times in the service when the congregation will stand in body or spirit.**