

Jesus said to another, “Follow me.”

He said, “Certainly, but first excuse me for a couple of days, please. I have to make arrangements for my father’s funeral.”

Jesus refused. “First things first. Your business is life, not death. And life is urgent: Announce God’s kingdom!”

Then another said, “I’m ready to follow you, Master, but first excuse me while I get things straightened out at home.”

Jesus said, “No procrastination. No backward looks. You can’t put God’s kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day.”

Message: “Choosing to be Led by the Spirit” Rev. Tom Bentley

Closing Hymn: “I Sing a Song of the Saints of God” #295

Benediction

Postlude



Children of all ages are welcomed to Room 14 this morning during Worship Service for Compassion Camp with Christine Marshall and Cheryl Fisher.

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
5 Summer St. Lynnfield MA 01940
781-334-3050 www.Centre-Church.org
We Welcome Everyone: An Open and Affirming Church

Rev Thomas Bentley, Pastor
Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director
Celeste Joly, Church Administrative Assistant
Leah O’Brien, Director of Tower Day School



“Choosing to be Led by the Spirit”

Rev. Thomas Bentley

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

June 29, 2025 10:00 am

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship** Katherine Decker

Leader: Welcome to worship today. Bring your joys and burdens to the Lord.

People: For God hears the cries of our hearts and heals our wounded souls.

Leader: Remember the wondrous deeds that God continues to perform in your life.

People: Let us be thankful for all the mercies and tenderness that God offers to us.

Leader: Come, praise the Lord with all your heart and soul.

Leader & People: Let our voices raise in a powerful concert of praise and thanksgiving. AMEN.

Opening Prayer *(in unison)* Katherine Decker

Lord, we want to follow you whoever you lead. Reach out to us this day, stirring our souls and spirits with the winds of your power that we may faithfully be your disciples. For we ask this in Jesus’ Name. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer *(in unison)* Katherine Decker

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.

***Opening Hymn:** “I’m Pressing on the Upward Way” #442

New Testament Reading Katherine Decker

Galatians 5:13-18 *The Message*

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don’t use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that’s how freedom grows. For everything we know about God’s Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That’s an act of true freedom. If you bite and ravage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then?

*Stand as you are able

My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God’s Spirit. Then you won’t feed the compulsions of selfishness. For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are contrary to each other, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. Why don’t you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic compulsions of a law dominated existence?

Call to Offering

***Hymn of Praise** *(in unison)*
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Living God, who we adore.

Prayer of Dedication
Joys and Concerns
Pastoral Prayer

Gospel Reading Katherine Decker

Luke 9:51-62 *The Message*

When it came close to the time for his Ascension, he gathered up his courage and steeled himself for the journey to Jerusalem. He sent messengers on ahead. They came to a Samaritan village to make arrangements for his hospitality. But when the Samaritans learned that his destination was Jerusalem, they refused hospitality. When the disciples James and John learned of it, they said, “Master, do you want us to call a bolt of lightning down out of the sky and incinerate them?”

Jesus turned on them: “Of course not!” And they traveled on to another village.

On the road someone asked if he could go along. “I’ll go with you, wherever,” he said.

Jesus was curt: “Are you ready to rough it? We’re not staying in the best inns, you know.”