

First United Methodist Church
of Shelton, Connecticut
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



October 18, 2026 | 21st Sunday after Pentecost | Laity Sunday

Revised Common Lectionary Texts

Exodus 33:12-23 | Psalm 99

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 | Matthew 22:15-22

Prelude: "Be Exalted, O God"

Brent Chambers

Please come to silence as we honor the work of our musician to prepare us for worship.

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Prayer

***Call to Worship:**

Leader: We are chosen children of God, bound together by the Holy Spirit.

People: We belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another.

Leader: The Spirit empowers us to live as imitators of Christ in love of God, neighbor, self, and all creation.

People: We belong to God, and through God, we learn to love one another.

Leader: The Spirit inspires us to receive God's Word with joy in a world that rejects the good news.

People: We belong to God, and through God, we live in joy with one another.

Leader: Come, let us worship in the assurance of God's love that chooses us, empowers us, and inspires us to live as the family of Christ.

People: We come to worship God in the assurance that we belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another. Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2026.

***Opening Hymn:** "We Gather Together"

UMH 131

Opening Prayer:

Gracious God,

Thank you for bringing us together today. Thank you for this community of faith and for the many years we have witnessed and embodied Your love.

Lord, we know that we come into this space with all that we are and all that we carry. Wherever we find ourselves today, remind us that we are not alone and that your love meets us right where we are.

As we worship today, open our hearts to your Word and help us recognize your presence, so that we may leave this place encouraged in our faith, strengthened in our hope, and reminded that we are called to share your love beyond these walls.

We give you thanks for who you are and for all that you continue to do among us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

First Scripture Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Anthem: "I Give it All"

Allen

***Gospel Lesson:** Matthew 22:15-22

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: "Not Just Here for the Potluck"

Rev. Ximena A. Diaz-Varas

***Hymn of Response:** "Lord, Be Glorified"

TFWS 2150

Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer

Lord in your mercy/Hear our prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Passing of the Peace

Invitation To Offer Our Gifts

Offertory: "You Are My God"

Macon Delavan

***Presenting Our Gifts:** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow." UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Gracious God, you choose ordinary people and weave them into a community that shines with your love. We thank you for the gift of belonging, for the call to live our faith in ways that ripple outward into the lives of others. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and our willingness to be witnesses to your grace. Use what we offer to encourage the weary, welcome the searching, and strengthen your church as a living example of hope. May our shared life together always point to Christ, whose love calls and sends us. Amen.

From Disciple Ministries

***Sending Hymn:** "He Has Made Me Glad"

TFWS 2270

Benediction

Postlude: "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

Wesley/Glazer/Mason

*Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

Blessing of the Animals



ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Blessing of the Animals – Volunteers Needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help with setup and cleanup for our **Blessing of the Animals** event on Sunday, October 18.

Setup will begin around noon, after worship and fellowship, and **cleanup** will take place after 4:00 PM.

If you are available to help with setting up or taking down tables, we would greatly appreciate your help. Thank you!

2. All Saints Sunday – November 1

On Sunday, November 1, we will observe **All Saints Sunday**. During Holy Communion, we will remember and honor those who have passed away since last All Saints Sunday.

If you would like us to remember a family member or friend during this special time of worship, please send their name to **Rosemarie** at the church office by **Sunday, October 25**.

Email: office@umcshelton.org

Together, we will give thanks for their lives and celebrate the love of God that holds us together, both in life and in death.

Counters Needed

We need to add a few more counters to ensure that we are using safe financial practices. If you are a member of this church and would like to be trained to work as part of a counting team, please see Chris Craft to serve. This is important, so your help will make a big difference.

All Creatures - Great and Small

Send us your favorite pet pictures!! In honor of our Blessing of the Animals on 10/18/26, let's keep the celebration of God's creation going with a bulletin board in the hall filled with our beloved animal friends! You can print them or email them to Rosemarie office@umcshelton.org

Save the Dates

Blessing of the Animals
Sunday, October 18 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm
(changed from October 4)

Eastern Fairfield Cooperative Parish Charge Conference
Saturday, Nov 14, at 10:00 AM
at Huntington UMC

Suggestion Box in Narthex

Do you have a question or comment to share? One more way to do that is through the suggestion box in the narthex. Of course, you can always feel welcome to speak with Pastor Juhye about questions or concerns. **We are *all* in ministry together.**

Happy Birthday

We would like to wish our members Happy Birthday during service. Please email Rosemarie at office@umcshlton.org your birthdate (don't need to include year). Thank you!

TO REACH PASTOR JUHYE

Please call or text 860-899-6755. She may also be reached via email: pastor@umcshelton.org. Her typical hours at the church office are Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm (but may vary).

WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

An email newsletter is sent out each Wednesday. Please have any items for submission to the church office by Wednesday at 9 am.

SERVING TODAY:

Rev. Ximena Varas
Lynn Scully, Music Director
Joe McWilliams, Pianist Organist
Pastor Juhye, Liturgist
Sal Iorfino, Video & Sound Tech
Fellowship: Ann Jackson & Patty Howley

CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

Juhye Hahn, Pastor
Lynn Scully, Music Director
Leadership Board: Chris Craft, Kim Dumschott, Suzena James, Linda Loglisci,
Ken Miller, Jorge Varas, Raechel Vargas, Elaine Wood, Bob Yamnicky

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship and our church community. We are so glad you are here. We invite you to participate in the service as much as you feel comfortable and to sit out parts of the service you might not yet feel comfortable with. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, you are welcome here. As our "Welcoming Statement" says, "We welcome **all** to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church."

(see below for complete "Welcome" and "Mission" statements)

**SUNDAY WORSHIP // 10:00 also live-streamed & recorded
Fellowship 11:00 am**

Welcoming Church Statement

A welcoming family of God committed to becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

We affirm and respect each individual as a child of God. We celebrate the uniqueness of each person and welcome people of every age, ethnicity, and race, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, socio-economic situation, and physical/mental ability.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to create a community of faith that reflects Christ's message of love and justice. We invite all to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church in Christ.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SHELTON

188 ROCKY REST RD. // SHELTON, CT 06484

PHONE: (203)929-3537 **WEB:** UMCSHELTON.ORG

We Gather Together UMH 131

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
he chastens and hastens his will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.
Sing praises to his name, he forgets not his own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine;
so from the beginning the fight we were winning;
thou, Lord was at our side, all glory be thine!

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant,
and pray that thou still our defender wilt be.
Let thy congregation escape tribulation;
thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

Lord, Be Glorified TFWS 2150

In our lives, Lord,
be glorified,
be glorified.
In our lives, Lord,
be glorified today.

In our homes, Lord,
be glorified,
be glorified.
In our homes, Lord,
be glorified today.

In your church, Lord,
be glorified,
be glorified.
In your church, Lord,
be glorified today.

In your world, Lord,
be glorified,
be glorified.

In your world, Lord,
be glorified today.

He Has Made Me Glad TFWS 2270

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart,
I will enter his courts with praise.
I will say, "This is the day that the Lord has made."
I will rejoice, for he has made me glad.

Refrain

He has made me glad,
he has made me glad.
I will rejoice, for he has made me glad.
He has made me glad,
he has made me glad.
I will rejoice, for he has made me glad.