



MORNING PRAYER AND HOLY COMMUNION AT NINE
SERVICE LEAFLET

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 30, 2018

The Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proper 21

* PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 124

L: If God had not been on our side, let Israel now say;

P: If God had not been on our side, when enemies rose up against us,

L: Then would they have swallowed us up alive in their fierce anger toward us;

P: Then would the waters have overwhelmed us and the torrent gone over us;

L: Then would the raging waters have gone right over us.

P: Blessed be God, who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

L: We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

P: Our help is in the Name of God, the maker of heaven and earth.

THE FIRST READING

Esther 7:1–6, 9–10

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king." Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

THE SECOND READING Mark 9:38–50

John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward. “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

“For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.

HOMILY

“Prayers That Save”

Rev. Ahrens

MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated checks go to **Church World Service - Hurricane Florence Relief**. Your donations will allow Church World Service to respond quickly by providing food, temporary shelter, and clean water to the Carolinas following HURRICANE FLORENCE. Please give generously. Thank you.

OFFERTORY HYMN 556

God, who stretched the spangled heavens

Holy Manna

Want to give online? Please see the Depart to Serve for more information and a QR link.

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine, *celebrant*

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher*

Nancy Livingston, *pianist*

Laurie Maynell, *liturgist*

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7

Liturgist: Scott Jones

Communion Preparation: PLEASE SIGN UP

Refreshments: Kelly Dodd