



*Rejoicing in God
Growing in the Gospel
Pointing people to Jesus*

September 6, 2026

Welcome to First Congregational Church of Hamilton. For many years, people have gathered here to rejoice in the gift of life, hope, and comfort we have through Jesus Christ. We hope as you gather with us today, you will encounter his beauty, mercy, and wisdom for your life, no matter who you are or what you're going through.

New To Our Church?

Welcome! We're glad you chose to join us this morning! If you have questions, please ask an usher.

For families, there is a breakout space for toddlers, preschool children, and their parents in Room 11, across from the café.

- **Please note:** There is no Nursery or Little People's Church during the worship service today, September 6, to give our volunteers a brief pause to rest and recharge. Regular Nursery and Little People's Church will resume on Sunday, Sept. 13.
- **Moms' Alcove** in Room 11 is available for nursing moms.
- **Sermon Notes** for children are available at the Welcome Desk.

First time here? Use the QR code on the back to let us know you visited.

For large-print Bibles, please see an usher.

If you need of prayer after the service, meet with an Elder and Deacon at the platform in the front.

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor Oli van Ruth

Preparing Our Hearts

"This is why it is said: 'Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.' Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." - Ephesians 5:14-16

* Call to Worship: Psalm 57:7, 9-11

Dr. Sean McDonough

Leader: My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music.

People: I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples.

Leader: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

People: For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

Unison: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

COMING WITH PRAISE

* **Hymn:** His Mercy Is More

* **Invocation**

Dr. David Horn

* **Song of Response:** Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Children's Message

Mary Bigus

Please accompany children forward for the message; they can return to their seats with their caregivers to remain in the worship service. A breakout space for toddlers and preschool children and their parents is available in Room 11, across from the café.

Scripture Reading: Colossians 4:2-18

Dr. Sean McDonough

DRAWING NEAR FOR PRAYER

Prayer for Our Church Family

Dr. Sean McDonough

Musical Offering: *Believe for It*

Worship Band

Doxology

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Amen

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Sermon: *"The Shape of Ministry"*
Colossians 4:2-18

Pastor Oli van Ruth

* **Song of Praise:** Take My Life

CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER

* **Apostles Creed**

Dr. David Horn

Prayer of Renewal

Celebrating the Lord's Supper

Pastor Oli van Ruth

The Unveiling

* **Song of Worship:** Revelation Song

* **Call to Prayer and Benediction**

Pastor Oli van Ruth

Postlude

Our Ministry Leaders will be available at the front for prayer after the service:
Dr. Sean McDonough, Elder; John Clark, Deacon

His Mercy Is More

by Matt Boswell, Matt Papa

What love could remember no wrongs we have done
Omniscient, all knowing, He counts not their sum
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

What patience would wait as we constantly roam
What Father, so tender, is calling us home
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

Chorus

*Praise the Lord, His mercy is more
Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more*

What riches of kindness He lavished on us
His blood was the payment, His life was the cost
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

Chorus (2x)

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

by Helen Howarth Lemmel

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of Earth
Will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of Earth
Will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory
Light of his beauty
Light of His glory and grace

Take My Life

Arranged by Tommy Walker

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated Lord to Thee
Take my hands and let them rule
At the impulse of Thy love
At the impulse of Thy love

Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee
Take my voice and let me sing
Always only for my King
Always only for my King

Take my life take my life
Take my life I give it once again

Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee
Take my silver and my gold
Not a mite would I withhold
Not a mite would I withhold

Take my heart take my heart
Take my heart I give it once again

Take my love my God I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store
Take myself and I will be
Ever only all for Thee
Ever only all for Thee

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and in
Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried:
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead:
he ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty:
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy catholic* Church;
the communion of saints: the forgiveness of sins:
the resurrection of the body: and the life everlasting. Amen

**Here the word means universal, such as the universal bond of genuine believers across the world.*

The Unveiling

by Ashley Schonewald

Open my eyes
To see your heart
Unlock my mind to who you are
Reveal Your love
Within my life
Show me where grace kept me alive

Chorus

This is the unveiling

This is where my soul discovers You

This is the unfolding

Of how you're writing every story with something good

With every breath I'm in Your hands
Order the steps I'm walking in
Each passing day
Starts to reveal
Your miracles becoming real
Day after day Night after night
Upon my heart Your goodness is what You write

Revelation Song

by Gateway Worship and Kari Jobe

Worthy is the
Lamb who was slain
Holy, holy is He
Sing a new song
To Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat
Worthy is the
Lamb who was slain
Holy, holy is He
We sing a new song
To Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat

Chorus

Holy, holy, holy

Is the Lord, God Almighty

Who was and is and is to come

With all creation I sing, praise to the King of Kings

You are my everything

And I will adore You

Clothed in rainbows of living color
Flashes of lighting, rolls of thunder
Blessing and honor, strength and glory and power be
To You, the only wise King

Chorus

Filled with wonder
Awestruck wonder
At the mention of Your name
Jesus, Your name is power
Breath and living water
Such a marvelous mystery, oh

Chorus

SERMON TEXT & NOTES

Colossians 4:2-18

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. **3** And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. **4** Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. **5** Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. **6** Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. 9 He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

10 My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

11 Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. **12** Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. **13** I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14** Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. **15** Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

16 After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea. **17** Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord."

18 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

[illegible]

Children's Ministry

Fall 2026

Our goal in all our ministry to children is to point them to the person and work of Jesus. Through intentional relationships and gospel-centered teaching, we seek to help children grow in their faith, be empowered in their spiritual journey, and discover and use their God-given gifts to serve others. We look forward to serving your family this year!

Chrysa Bliati, Children's Ministry Director, cbliati@fcchamilton.org

Class at 8:30 am

Nursery/Toddlers
(Infant - Age 3)

Teachers

Rotating Leaders

Location

Church Nursery

Little People's Church (LPC)
(Age 4 - Grade 1)

Rotating Leaders

Church Lower-Level
Classroom

Class at 11:00 am

Nursery/Toddlers
(Infant - Age 3)

Rotating Leaders

Church Nursery

Children's Sunday School Begins Sept. 13, 9:45 am

Nursery (Infant - 18 months)

Church Building, Infant Room

Toddler (19 months - Age 3):

Through brief lessons and multi-sensory learning, our babies and toddlers experience Jesus' love and all that He provides for us.

Teachers: Karen Guay, Bonnie Mower

Church Building, Toddler Room

Preschool/Kindergarten:

Early childhood lessons will journey chronologically through the Bible, discovering friendship with Jesus throughout God's story. The class will be using the *Simply Loved* curriculum by Group.

Teacher: Elizabeth Bellucci

Church Building Lower Level, LPC

Grades 1 - 5:

All of our elementary classes will use *The Biggest Story* curriculum by Crossway. Through this curriculum, our children will be led on an exciting journey through the Bible, discovering how the whole story points to Jesus. This year, we will continue our journey through the Old Testament, focusing on the books of History, Poetry, and the Prophets.

Grades 1 & 2 Teachers: Beth Burridge, Keith Welch

Ministry Center Room L4

Grades 3, 4, & 5 Teachers: Debbie Bateman, Krisie Brown, Alice Fraser

Hamilton Youth Sunday School Begins Sept. 13, 9:45 am

Middle School Sunday School (Grades 6 - 8) This year, Middle School Sunday School will conduct a biblical survey of the Old Testament using the framework of *CASKET*, developed by Dr. Carol Kaminski, to see how the Old Testament is crucial to knowing who God is and His plan of salvation.

Ministry Center Room 11

Hamilton Youth Ministry, continued

Fall 2026

Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6 - 8) This year, we will read the Gospel of Matthew, as we explore the life of Jesus and His teachings. Matthew is especially useful for understanding how the life of Christ was the fulfillment of the Old Testament, a concept that students will study in Middle School Sunday School. Through studying this Gospel, students will encounter Jesus as promised Messiah and Savior. Join us on Wednesday nights for a time of games, worship, lesson, and Bible study!

Begins Wednesday, September 17, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Heritage Hall/The Barn

High School Sunday School (Grades 9 - 12) This year, High School Sunday School will explore the topic of "Community." When God saves someone from their rebellion, they are saved into a community. God gives us instructions on how to thrive as a family of faith all across Scripture. The Bible also makes it clear that the way we live as a Christian community is vital to our gospel witness. Let's grow as a Christ-centered community together!

The Barn

High School Youth Group (Grades 9 - 12) Have you ever wondered: "Is there a guide to help me live my Christian life?" This fall, the High School Youth Group will do a deep dive into the practical and spiritual wisdom in the book of James. Join us on Tuesday nights for a time of games, worship, lesson, and Bible study!

Begins Tuesday, September 16, 7:00 pm to 8:45 pm

Heritage Hall/The Barn

Adult Sunday School Classes Begin Sept. 20, at 9:45 am

Economics and the Bible – The Bible was written to address real-world issues, and that includes economics (the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services). In class, we will see how an understanding of economics is critical for a fully-formed Christian perspective on life.

Dr. Sean McDonough, Dr. Glenn Butner, Dr. Robert Gough, Jr. Chapel

The Church, The Spirit, and Union with Christ – In New Testament teachings on the church, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were personally and actively present, and consciously experienced. How can we continue to experience this supernatural presence, power, and love today? The historical context of FCCCH's congregational form of government and experiences of revival during the Great Awakening will be noted, as well as today's context of social media, phones, and AI.

Dr. Jack Davis

Ministry Center Room 21

Forgiveness – In the class, we will analyze the theme of forgiveness in Scripture, looking at the most important of the some five-hundred passages in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation that speak of God's forgiveness, the forgiveness granted by Jesus, and of interpersonal forgiveness.

Dr. Eckhard Schnabel

Ministry Center Room 22

Exploring Your Marriage – "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Charles Dickens describes well the delights but also the difficulties we find in the amazing God-ordained relationship we call 'marriage.' This fall, eight couples in the church will facilitate a conversation on the ways we can best nurture godly marriages in our church. Topics will range from the various stages in marriage and ways to better communicate and resolve conflict to home finances. And where do hospitality and service fit in? Plan on a class filled with transparency and authenticity.

Priscilla Masterson, NP; Pastor Kevin Baird, Dr. David Horn and more! Ministry Center, Room 23/24

Announcements

Signup for events



- **The Alpha Course Is Back!** Invite someone to join you on Monday, September 14, at 6:30 pm for dinner (free) and launch night. Week 1: "Is There More to Life Than This?" For invitation cards and volunteer sign-ups, see the table in the hallway or contact Diann Lloyd-Dennis at dldennismn@gmail.com.
- **Women's Bible Study:** We'll study the book of Romans, using the *N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides*. SonLight begins on Tuesday, September 15, at 9:45 am, and NightLight begins on Thursday, September 17, at 7:00 pm. Sign up with the QR code, or in person after the service.
- **Pilgrim's Pint:** We often celebrate the American Revolution as a great triumph of freedom from tyranny, taxation, and a corrupt king (or was it his ministers?) But what is freedom for? Join theologian and GCTS professor Dr. Christian Cuthbert as he examines the competing visions of freedom that shaped the emerging republic, on Monday, September 14, at 7:00 pm at the Post (16 Bay Road, S. Hamilton). Sign up using the QR code above.
- **Fall Kickoff:** Sunday morning worship services return to the Meetinghouse at 8:30 am and 11:00 am on September 13. Sunday school for children and youth also begins. Adults are encouraged to join us in Heritage Hall on September 13, at 9:45 am, for a Ministry Fair. Prayerfully consider ways you might serve our church family this year. We look forward to seeing you there!

September Events | For details, scan the QR code above.

- 13 **Fall Kickoff** | 8:30 am · 9:45 am · 11:00 am, Meetinghouse & Ministry Center
- 14 **Alpha Begins** | 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Ministry Center, Heritage Hall
- 14 **Pilgrim's Pint** | 7:00 to 8:00 pm, Post restaurant, South Hamilton
- 15 17 **Women's Bible Study Begins** | Tues., 9:45 am | Thurs., 7:00 pm, Ministry Center
- 15 16 **Youth Group Begins** | 7:00 pm, Ministry Center & Barn (Tues., HS; Wed., MS)
- 26 **Men's Breakfast** | 8:00 am to 10:00 am, Ministry Center, Heritage Hall
- 26 **Family Apple Picking Event** | 10:00 am to noon, Russell Orchard, Ipswich

Kevin Baird, *Lead Pastor of Care & Outreach*
Oliver van Ruth, *Lead Pastor of Preaching & Teaching*
Matthew Schuberth, *Pastor of Youth & Young Adults*
Chrysa Bliati, *Children's Ministry Director*
Lisa Clay, *Women's Ministry Director*
Cece Gough, *Executive Director*

Hana Lee, *Music Director*
Jay Foss, *Audio-Visual Manager*
Jill VanderWoude, *Administrative Assistant*
Phil Best, *Facilities Manager*
The People of God, *Ministers to the World*

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