

Rev. Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager  
The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme  
Pastoral Prayer  
September 20, 2026

For our prayer this morning, I offer a poem by Rosemary Whatola Trommer

“For When People Ask”

*I want a word that means okay and not okay,  
more than that: a word that means devastated and stunned with joy.  
I want the word that says I feel it all at once.  
The heart is not like a songbird singing only one note at a time,  
more like a Tuvan throat singer able to sing both a drone and  
simultaneously two or three harmonics high above it—  
a sound, the Tuvans say, that gives the impression of wind swirling among  
rocks.  
The heart understands swirl, how the churning of opposite feelings  
weaves through us like an insistent breeze...blesses us with paradox  
so we might walk more openly into this world so rife with devastation,  
this world so ripe with joy.*

Let us pray,

O God of Swirling Hearts,

Let us begin in silence today,  
to hold all that is Ok and Not OK,  
In our hearts.  
To let the silence ground us  
in the quiet for a moment.

Whatever comes bubbling up out of the depths is all there is  
A blessing of paradox for our open hearts  
whether we hold the pain of deep loss,  
worry over a friend, heartbreak for the world  
And  
Whether our heart beats with the quiet joy over time spent with a precious friend.  
Or with gratitude for this meetinghouse of love

and the ongoing hair-raising surprises found in raising and loving a child

Whatever it is O God,  
You are with us in the shadows and the rain,  
And the beauty of yesterday's bright skies.  
You remind us of the sacred power of Presence  
And how even a wounded heart can heal through time and love and by sharing our  
daily bread.

We hold dear all those mourning a beloved one,  
People caregiving a loved one at home or in the hospital  
We remember those living estranged from family today  
And give thanks for softening edges of hurt.

Merciful God, we widen our gaze this day to our wounded world, to  
those seeking safety and sanctuary across the globe due to war and and awaiting  
asylum and safe harbor. For those in detention and those who love them. May they  
know they are not forgotten.

May love and friendship be our guide in the days and weeks ahead as we pray for  
peace, as we prepare to make choices for leadership, as we consider our planet and  
as we choose to do the deeds of love and justice as best we can.

Remind us again that we are a people of Love and blessing.  
Remind us again that all the world's children are our responsibility and all people,  
beloved on the earth.  
as we pray in Jesus Name again,

Amen.