

The Rev. Rebecca Crosby
The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme
Pastoral Prayer – July 5, 2026

O thou eternal God, creator of heaven and earth, we give thanks this day for the abundance of life, for the joy and comfort of family and friends, for the beauty of the New England shores, for the shade of the woodlands covered with moss and fern, for the songbirds that wake us in the morning, for the gifts of the summer garden that grace our tables, for the gentle breeze that whispers your love that has no end... for your compassion that has no measure, for these blessings and so much more, we are truly grateful. Grant that we be advocates for your beautiful creation and for one another.

Loving God, we see around us actions and policies that counter the teachings of Jesus and our inner moral guide, help us to be honest and true to who we are as your beloved, and let love guide our mutuality in our relationships and ultimately with you as the creator of love. Help us to be true to ourselves as we grow and develop our faith through the journey of our lives. Grant that everything we do and say may be grounded in kindness and thoughtful consideration for all people. Help us see one another with an open-mind and more compassion, ‘to walk a mile in the other’s shoes,’ and to consider all people through the thoughtful, compassionate wisdom of Jesus Christ, our great teacher of life, who taught us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Sometimes loving our neighbor is difficult, so we pray for guidance and strength to try. To work towards letting our guard down and building bridges that will heal open wounds and move us towards forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace. We pray that our divided country may become more unified with common goals to work toward honest and meaningful conversations that generate new ideas and new truths.

We pray this morning for world peace and an end to violence and war. Our prayers continue for an end to the war and violence in Iran, Ukraine, Lebanon, Gaza, and Haiti and in many places in our beleaguered world. We yearn for a new time of rebuilding the ravished countries and earnest peace making. Grant your vision of peace to the world leaders to do what is right in the face of all crises around the world. We ardently pray for our brothers and sisters in Venezuela and many in this country who have endured unspeakable tragedy through natural disasters. We also hold in prayer our Haitian and Syrian friends who have lost their temporary protected status in our country and face an unknown future for themselves and their families.

There are so many broken people in this world too numerous to name and so we pray in silence for those loved ones who are on our minds and in our hearts this morning.

Hear our prayers, O Lord, incline your ear to all and grant us your love and peace. Guide us in ways that will offer fellowship to those in need in our midst.

Through all these sorrows and heartaches, help us to continue to see the beauty and kindness that surrounds us each and every day, and to never take for granted the simple pleasures of our lives. Help us to live our lives more simply, more truthfully, more lovingly, and in closer communion with you. In the spirit of mutual love, we pray. Amen

Rebecca Crosby