

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is a Stranger”  
Third Sunday of Eastertide  
April 23, 2023

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

Leader: Children of God, welcome to this place of love and grace.

**All: Where we find hope and perseverance as part of a beloved community.**

Leader: God welcomes us as we are and invites us to share the good news

**All: To be God’s people and do God’s work.**

Leader: May we share the love of God with others.

**All: Let us worship God!**

### \*OPENING SONG “We All Are One in Mission” #552

### \*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

**Risen Christ, make us aware of your presence with us. Fill us with boldness and fresh hope. Strengthen and sustain us that we may proclaim your name, do your work, and continually serve you in righteousness and truth. Fill us with the peace that only you can give. Amen.**

## BRIEF REFLECTION

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

**Jesus, Teacher, we confess today our outright foolishness. We have been foolish to doubt your promises. Foolish to withhold love from our neighbors. Foolish to chase riches, prestige and power. Foolish to waste your gifts and spoil your creation. Foolish to divide your children from each other. Foolish to think hope is lost. Wise us up again. Open our hearts to your presence in our lives, in our neighbors, in our world. In your grace, help us grab onto our millionth second chance, and forge a new road from here on. Amen.**

## A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

Hear the good news! New life is not only possible; it has drawn near to us in Jesus. The promise is for us, and for all the children of God.

**By the grace of God, the glory of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are forgiven and we are free! Alleluia! Amen.**

## SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Luke 24: 13 – 35

### \*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (read together)

Leader: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic, and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

**All: We believe in God Almighty, infinite in wisdom, power, and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed his children’s good. We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and also man, the gift of the Father’s unfailing grace, the ground of our hope, and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death. We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need. We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in our example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth, Amen.**

### \*GLORIA PATRI #734

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.**

## FOCUS SCRIPTURE Matthew 25: 31 – 40

## MESSAGE “He’s Everywhere” David Burrow

## EASTER SEASON SONG “Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service” #575

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER (with debts/debtors)

Respond: **Hear our prayer.**

## PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

## OFFERTORY

### \*DOXOLOGY Words #44

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

(prayed together)

God of new life, out of the abundance of our lives, we offer these gifts to you. Through your blessing and our willingness to share, may these offerings become a source of hope and love in this church family, in the community around us, and throughout our entire world. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

**\*CLOSING SONG**

“They’ll Know We Are Christians”

#595

**GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

**POSTLUDE**

(Call to Worship from Beth Merrill Neal on the blog “Hold Fast to What Is Good”; Opening Prayer from *Common Worship*, the official worship book of Church of England; Prayer of Confession from Carol Holbrook Prickett in *Worship Outlook*, Presbyterian Church—USA; Affirmation of Faith, “A Modern Affirmation” from the United Methodist *Book of Worship*; Prayer of Dedication from St. Martin’s Church – Christchurch, New Zealand; Benediction from the Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars)

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Vicki Merchlewitz
April Radio Sponsor:	Scott & Sandy Buchanan

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Birthdays: April 26-Greyson Burtnett

Today, April 23: 10 am.- Worship - David Burrow, Worship Leader  
Sunday School

Tuesday, April 25: 9:30-11:30am. – Pastor Chris at Feed Mill

Thursday, April 27: 10am.- Pastor at Clergy Cluster in Humboldt

Saturday, April 29: 9:30 am.- Northwestern Association Meeting and Ordination of Shonda Deranleau in Humboldt

Sunday, April 30: 10:00 am. – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee

Pastor Chris will be on vacation April 17 - April 24. Karen Dearchs will be on call. If you need pastoral assistance, please call Helen Scuffham at 515-341-4879 and she will contact Karen.

The *Our Daily Bread* special Easter devotional “Easter The Promise of Forgiveness-10 Reflections from Our Daily Bread” is available on the cart in the entry way to the Education/Office/Fellowship Hall building.

Thank you to David Burrow for leading us in worship today!



# *First Congregational United Church of Christ*

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