

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is a Stranger”  
Sixth Sunday of Easter  
May 14, 2023

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Come to worship, people of God, with praises on your lips.

Many: We glorify the One who holds our hands when we slip.

One: Come into the presence of the One who calls us into this sacred space.

Many: Where the doors to grace are thrown open so all may enter.

One: Come and hear the stories of the One who loves you.

Many: We will tell of the joy and of the love, of the peace and of the hope which is ours.

### \*OPENING SONG

“I Sing the Almighty Power of God”

#31

### \*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Loving God, we give you thanks and praise for being with us today and always. You have gathered us here to celebrate you—our Creator, our Mother, our Father—with the gift of your Holy Spirit. Let our worship be all about you as we humbly pray for the Holy Spirit to keep our hearts, minds, and souls in tune with the risen Jesus. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

We admit, Knowing God, that from plastic cards to websites, from handheld devices to stock options, we are surrounded by a variety of gods who demand our worship. We can all too easily believe that work is our life, that wealth is the reason for our being, and that success is the very air we breathe.

Forgive us, God of mercy. You are not found in a computer chip, but in the child who holds our hand. You are not a chatbot note, but the Word that can transform our very lives. You are not a disembodied, constantly recalculating voice, but the One who calls us to life, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Despite everything we do, God loves us. This grace is why we can dare to hope.

Many: We will witness to this hope in every word we speak to every person we meet. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.

## SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

John 14:15-21

### \*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(read together)

I believe in truth as a living Reality, not captured in theory or a creed, but revealed to those who love; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I trust, not blindly but open eyed and bold as a child climbing into a mother’s lap; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I serve, not as a slave that serves a tyrant but like farmers reaping a harvest; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

### \*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

Acts 17:22-31

read from *The Message*

## MESSAGE

“We Know Better”

Pastor Chris

## EASTER SEASON SONG

“That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright”

#299

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

## 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)

May these gifts be our testimony of our faithfulness to you, Abiding God, even as we offer to you all that we are and all that we have for your glory, honor, and praise. Amen.

### \*CLOSING SONG

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

#358

## GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

## POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance, are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer (adapted) and Offering Prayer of Dedication are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Affirmation of Faith is by Bruce Prewer.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Vicki Merchlewitz
May Radio Sponsor:	Marilyn Deal

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Birthdays: May - 16: Mark Scuffham; 20-Jimmy Tinneh

Today, May 14: 10:00 am. – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee  
Mother’s Day/Rural Life Sunday

Tuesday, May 16: 9:30-11am. -Pastor at Feed Mill  
6:30pm.: Food Pantry Meeting  
7pm: ASK Team Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, May 17: 7pm. – Baccalaureate

Thursday, May 18: Pastor at Pilgrim Heights Meeting via Zoom

Sunday, May 21: 10:00 am. – Worship  
Last day of Sunday School  
Coffee

Pilgrim Heights Summer Camp flyer is on the bulletin board.

Carter Center Report to donors is on the table in the parlor.



*"God overlooks it as long as you don't know any better - but that time is past. The unknown is now known, and God's calling for a radical life-change."  
Acts 17:30*