

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 20, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: Here we can come together, people searching for healing and hope:

Many; here we are met by the One who would bless us with abundant life.

One: Here we are called to gather as the family of God:

Many: we may find those who are strangers, yet are beloved siblings of ours.

One: Here we discover the truth that God makes no distinctions among us:

Many: here we are welcomed and embraced by the One whose arms are open to all.

*Opening Song: “In Christ There Is No East or West” #600

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

We cry to you, God, from the back of the line, from the edge of the crowd, from the corner of the room. But you make no such distinctions, nor do you set such boundaries. Your faithfulness is great; your grace is enough. And we are covered in your love. Through your loving Spirit, reach out to us as we gather to worship you, hear your Word, and grow our faith.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

We admit, Providing God, that we have difficulties living as your children. We could live in unity, but our words fracture relationships. We have been shown the way to your kingdom, but turn into blind guides when asked for the directions by others. When we could offer others the precious oil of peace, we hand them the vinegar of despair and rejection.

Have mercy on us and forgive us, Healing Heart. When you call to us, may we listen with open ears, understand with embracing hearts, and share your grace with others, even as we have been graced by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: The good news for us: God has provided hope for us, filling us with joy, with mercy, with peace.

Many: As mercy leads to mercy, we will take these gifts to share with the world. Thanks be to God.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 133

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH inside the front cover of the hymnal

*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 15:10-28 read from the *Good News Bible*

MESSAGE: “Just a Reminder” Pastor Chris

Prayers of the People/Lord’s Prayer

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY #34

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

Bountiful God, you are the source of all good things. When our dreams are your dreams, the world is truly blessed. Accept these gifts, as a pledge to work and live your dream that all may live together in unity.

*Closing Song: “Dear Christ Uplifted from the Earth” #601

*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ

*Indicates all who are able please stand

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance (adapted) are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer (adapted) and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Paula A. Ferris from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2023* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Affirmation of Faith is our church's Statement of Purpose

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Vicki Merchlewitz
August Radio Sponsor:	Becky Bibler

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Birthdays: August: 20-Adeline Reynolds; 22-Larry Person

Today, August 20: 10 am.- Worship
Coffee

Tuesday, August 22: 9:30-11:30am: Pastor at Feed Mill

Sunday, August 27: 10:00 am. – Worship
Coffee

If anyone has some time, the rooms in the lower half of fellowship hall need to be put back in order from painting.

Sunday School begins 3 weeks from today. The Christian Ed Team could use some help putting the room back in order from the painting project. It should only take a few minutes. Talk to Sandy, Shelly or Pam after worship if you can help.



First Congregational United Church of Christ 165 Years

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