

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
October 15, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Here in this place, we come to worship the living God.

Many: In God, we hope; in the Creator of love, we live.

One: Here in this sacred space, in these very moments, we are invited to gather with joy in our hearts.

Many: In Jesus the Way, we rejoice; in Jesus our Brother, grace is as near as our hearts.

One: Here on this day of gentleness and beauty, we are filled with the peace of God.

Many: In the Spirit, we find our path; in the Teacher of hope, we learn to serve.

One: Let's worship God!

*Opening Song:

“Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above” #56

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Holy Spirit, heavenly God, shine upon us with the wisdom of ancient words. Enlighten our minds, that we may perceive your presence. Strengthen our resolve, that we may press toward growth in love and faith. Help us grow closer to your likeness each and every day.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

You would call us to your feast, Inviting God, but our busy lives keep us from responding. You remember every word we utter, every prayer we whisper, but we forget all the little ways you care for us. You would make your gentleness known through us, but we lash out in anger and fear towards others.

Forgive us, God of all hope, and remember your Servant, Jesus. In him, we can live in your way. Through him, we can learn the dreams you have for us. With him, we can open our arms and embrace all the people we meet.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: As we are forgiven by God, we can begin to reflect on all those ways in which we can live justly, act honorably, love completely. This is indeed good news for us.

Many: We are fed with grace, and nourished with joy, so we may go and bring hope and peace to everyone we meet. Thanks be to God! We are forgiven!

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 22:11-14

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We belong to God, eternal and infinite, Creator of all things and all that is to come. We follow Jesus, who comes to us from God, and reveals God to us. He heals people and transforms lives, and calls us to join in his ministry. He was crucified, died, and was raised again by God, and reigns over all Creation; he bids us to die and rise with him in the service of the healing of the world.

We are moved by the Holy Spirit, together with the communion of saints, as members of the Body of Christ, God's holy universal church. We are confident in the forgiveness of sin, the power of resurrection and the reality of eternal life. In all things it is our desire to follow Jesus, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for God's glory.

*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

Philippians 4:1-9 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“Practice, Practice, Practice” 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

Generous, Loving God, for the abundant gifts in our lives, for the peace that passes all understanding, for keeping our minds and hearts in Jesus, we thank you, we praise you,

we honor you. Receive the gifts we bring to you this day. Help us to stay focused on the things that are excellent, admirable, holy, just, righteous and pure.

*Closing Song: "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart" #113

*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ

*Indicates all who are able please stand

The Call to Worship (adapted), Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance (adapted), are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Mary Scifres & B.J. Beu from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2023* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is by Steve Garnaas-Holmes.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	
October Radio Sponsor:	Larry & Sandy Person

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Sunday, October 15: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Sunday, October 22: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Pastor Chris will be on vacation from October 16-23. Dave Skilling will be on call. If you need pastoral assistance, please call Dave at 319-290-2302.

October 16: Our church will be responsible for Meals on Wheels. There is a sign-up sheet on the back bulletin board.

Bags of candy are being accepted for the Trunk or Treat. We will also be participating in the Trunk or Treat and need ideas for the trunk.

Other Scripture Readings: Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23.



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
165 Years*

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