

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
First Sunday After Christmas/New Year’s Eve
December 31, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Praise the One who spoke and made everything!

Many: Let the rivers ripple with joy; let the mountains stomp their feet.

One: Praise the One who adopts all of us as children!

Many: Let old folks tell familiar stories; let little children swim with dolphins.

One: Praise God!

Many: We will sing of God's glory; we will shout our joy to the heavens.

*Opening Song:

“The First Noel”

#229

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Almighty creator, we come this morning to shout and rejoice in the wonderful gift of your Son for our world. It’s a miracle that fills our lives with your glory. On this last day of the year, may our celebration honor the good we have received from your hand, even as we look forward to walking faithfully with you in the year ahead. As those who came before us, we will not be silent in our love for you; we will not mute our pure joy for what you have brought into our lives.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

Abba God: we know that given the chance, we rarely praise others. We are guided more by meanness than by your gentleness. And we are seldom wise enough to listen to your voice, preferring instead the sweet, sweet songs of sin.

Forgive us, Heart of Heaven. Touch those inner places of hope and joy that they might become the gifts we can offer to those around us, as we seek to follow Jesus, our Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Hear the good news. the time is now; the place is here: God has redeemed us from sin; God has claimed us as the children of Hope.

Many: Praise God, all people, for life is given to us anew; eternity is our home. Thanks be to God.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 148

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, who mothers us and fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Jesus. Hunted at birth and humiliated at death, he entered our fearful darkness so that we might enter his glorious light and share the life of his resurrection.

We believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

*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

Luke 2:21-40

read from *the Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“In the Aftermath of Christmas”

Pastor Chris

Prayers of The People/The Lord’s Prayer (with debts/debtors)

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 God, we thank you for every good and perfect gift you have given to us and through us. Use our offerings this day for the benefit of creation, the redemption of humanity, and your glory.

***Closing Song:** "All Creatures of Our God and King" #23

***Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

POSTLUDE

***Indicates all who are able please stand**

Other Lectionary Scripture Readings: Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Galatians 4:4-7

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted) and Words of Assurance are by Thom M. Shuman from Lectionary Liturgies. The Opening Prayer is by Catrina Paton from The Abingdon Worship Annual-2023 edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Offering Prayer of Dedication is by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ. from Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is by Nathan Nettleton.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Antonia Rupert
December Radio Sponsor:	Mick & Kris Schlievert

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Sunday, December 31: 10:00am- Worship
Coffee

Monday, January 1: Happy New Year 2024

Tuesday, January 2: 9:30-11am.-Pastor at Feed Mill

Saturday, January 6: Epiphany

Sunday, January 7: **10:30am - Worship**
Sunday School Resumes
Coffee

Poinsettias-If you ordered a poinsettia and would like to take it home, please feel free to take it home today.

The Mitten Tree is up. Donations of hats, waterproof mittens or gloves, scarves, socks, and underwear are welcome. We will be collecting through today.

The month of January we will be collecting towels, blankets for the Care Team.

The 10 Reflections from Our Daily Bread, O Holy Night, Carols of Christmas and the December, January, February issue of "Our Daily Bread" devotionals may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.

The radio sign-up sheet is in the Parlor. The rate per Sunday is \$32.50-which is \$130.00 for months with 4 Sundays and \$162.50 for months with five Sundays. You may also call the church office for a Month 515-295-2845. The months left are May, July, and September.



First Congregational United Church of Christ

165 Years

315 Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511
515-295-2845