

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is A Stranger"
First Sunday after the Epiphany
January 7, 2024

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: Christ's light is shining

Many: Calling us to respond with joy!

One: Christ's light is shining!

Many: Calling us to worship and praise!

*Opening Song: "Arise, Your Light Is Come" #231

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

God of power and majesty, you call forth creation, acting with power and strength. We praise you, as we stand in awe of your glory. You are mighty and powerful, and yet you care for us, pouring your Spirit of love upon us, recreating us for your work in the world. You are at work in our midst, offering a new day of hope and possibility. Open our hearts to the sound of your voice. Send the power of your Spirit among us, that we might become agents of your love and peace.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

Timeless God, you cast Light into sin's dark places and call us your Beloved. Forgive us: when we still linger in the shadows; when we treat others in hurtful ways; when we speak ill of your friends. As he knelt in the waters of Jordan, you proclaimed Jesus as your Child, pointing to him as the way to you. Forgive us: when we put ourselves ahead of him; when we think he is no longer needed; when we fail to see him in the broken of our world. Baptized and blessed in your living waters, you would have us be your servants in our time. Forgive us: when we fail to welcome the stranger; when we refuse to forgive as we should; when we believe we are too good to kneel down and tie the shoes of the lost, the least, the last, the little.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Touched by the waters of life, fed at the feast of grace and hope, embraced in the warmth of God's love and hopes - this is good news!

Many: Blessed by baptism's tears, called to servanthood by the Beloved, filled with the peace of the Spirit, we are indeed God's people - redeemed, restored, refreshed to serve. Thanks be to God!

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 2:1-12

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH inside back cover of hymnal (read together)

*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 Mark 1:4-11 read from *The Message*

MESSAGE: "From the Inside Out" Pastor Chris

Communion Song: "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" #461

GATHERING AT CHRIST'S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors), Sharing the Bread and Cup

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God, our life, our strength, our food, we give you thanks for sustaining us with this bread and this cup. By your Holy Spirit, enliven us to be Christ's body in the world, that more and more we will give you praise and serve your earth and its many peoples. In the name of our Savior, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

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**

Holy One, receive our offerings as gifts of ourselves. Increase these gifts and uplift our generosity to new heights. May our giving bear fruit that sustains, nurtures, and feeds a new world into being.

***Closing Song:** "We Three Kings of Orient Are" #233

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

POSTLUDE

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

Other Lectionary Scripture Readings: Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7

The Call to Worship and Opening Prayer are by Mary Scifres and Mary Petrina Boyd from the Abingdon Worship Annual 2024 edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance are by Thom M. Shuman from Lectionary Liturgies. 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 is a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (adapted) is from St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Moorestown, New Jersey.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Antonia Rupert
January Radio Sponsor:	Chris & Pam Burtnett

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Sunday, January 7: 10:30am- Worship with communion
 Sunday School
 Coffee
 Food Pantry

Tuesday, January 5: 9am.- Committee on Ministry Zoom Meeting
 10:30-Noon-Pastor at Feed Mill
 2:00pm.-Good Sam Bible Study

Thursday, January 11: 8:30am.-All Agency Ministerial Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 10: 10:30am- Worship
 Sunday School
 Coffee

Sunday, January 28 will be our Annual Meeting following worship. Please have your annual reports into the office by January 18.

We are celebrating the sacrament of communion this morning. Everyone is welcome at the table. The inner ring is wine and the outer ring is grape juice.

We will be collecting good used or new towels, blankets, etc. for the Care team in January. If you would like to donate, please bring them to the church.

Algona Blood Drive: Monday, January 8, 12:30-5:30pm at 1st United Methodist Church and Friday, January 12, 9am-2pm at 1st Lutheran Church.



**First Congregational
 United Church of Christ
 165 Years**

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