

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa
Second Sunday after Easter
April 23, 2017

PRELUDE
RINGING OF THE BELL
GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE FIRST READING FROM SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 1:3-9

OPENING SONG: In the Bulb There Is a Flower

#515

SHARING JESUS' PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

Leader: Sing a new song!

People: **A springtime shout-out to new life!**

Sing praise to our joyful Easter God

Whose power brings new life out of death!

Immerse doubt and despair in the fountain of new birth

Our visions and hopes are refreshed, made new!

For God has taken ordinary things

And made them extraordinary

All: **Sing a New Song!**

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God,

You have transformed absurd impossibility

into reality: resurrection...

You have coaxed us to sing springtime alleluias

where once there was a gray dawn,

You have called us out of the tombs we inhabit

into an undreamed of tomorrow,
we praise you for this day!
Come, Risen Christ,
in newness and hope on this Eastertide day. **Amen.**

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Redeeming God, with you there is always more life, more hope, more joy.
When doubt assails us, and we fail to recognize you at work in our lives,

Lord, have mercy!

When fear impairs our faith, and our eyes and ears and hearts do not know you,

Christ, have mercy!

When anger and sorrow stop us from doing the risky work of love,

Lord, have mercy!

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND REPENTANCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Within every kernel of doubt, there is a tree of life and hope. In those times when our faith falters, when we cannot bring ourselves to see the presence of the Holy among us, God takes our faith and transforms it, patiently showing us the many ways Christ walks among us. Look around you: as close as your own beating heart, and in the eyes of your nearest neighbor, grace abounds at the heart of all life. You are all God's children, loved without condition, go in that peace. **Amen.**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

John 20:19-31

MIDDLE SONG: Now the Green Blade Rises

#311

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

(front of hymnal)

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Acts 5:27-32

GLORIA PATRI

#734

MESSAGE:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Offertory Prayer

Loving God, can a laughing prayer be lifted up to you this Eastertide? Can these gifts, given with love, be further transformed like echoes of grace, delighting all who receive their blessings? May it be so, through the giddy power of your Holy Spirit, and may our lives speak of a Still Laughing God, full of Easter surprises. Amen.

***DOXOLOGY**

***DEDICATION OF OFFERING**

CLOSING SONG: Let All Things Now Living

***BENEDICTION**

Follow now the new path Christ has opened up for us.
Just around the corner of your life is a spiritual surprise!
Easter!
Christ is Risen!
May you dance an alleluia dance, and sing a resurrection song.
Laugh with God and let joy reside in your hearts always. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

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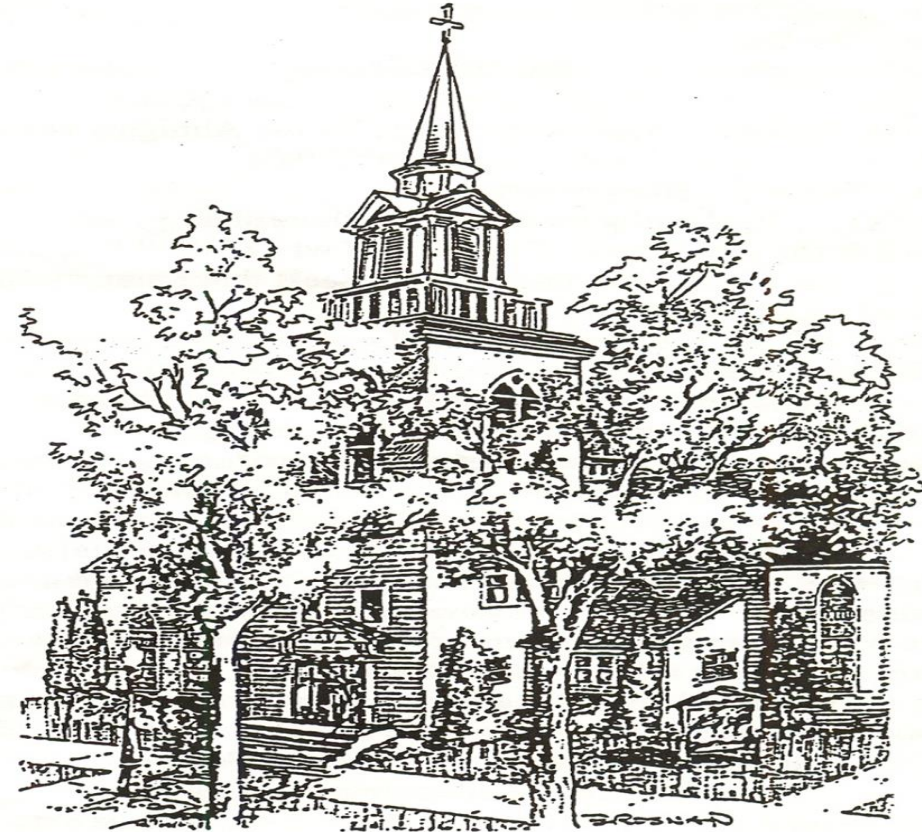
Organist:	Liz Reynolds
Lector:	David Burrow
Worship Leader:	Pastor Smith

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April Radio Sponsors: Don and Becky Marine

Birthdays: 4-22 Sandy Harmes-Buchanan, 4-24 Mark Rowley

**First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa**



“Where No One Is A Stranger”

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