

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2020

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: Friends, let's bless God with all our strength and never forget God's gifts—

Many: Forgiveness flowing into healing, tireless goodness and joy, strength and youth of the eagle's flight.

One: Let's bless God with all our strength and never forget God's gifts—

Many: Vindication, justice for all those oppressed; liberation from bondage, and guidance for the way; unending mercy, steadfast love.

One: Let's bless God with all our strength and never forget God's gifts—

Many: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is God's love toward those who are faithful; as a parent has compassion for children, so our God has compassion for us.

***OPENING SONG** "Let All Creation Bless the Lord" insert (verses 1 & 3)

OPENING PRAYER (read together)

Compassionate-One, Lover-of-Goodness, Patience-with-Sinners, draw near to us.

Surround us with confidence in your good news: that you love us as parents love their children; that your mercy is boundless and generous, that you beckon us always and will wait forever as we find our way back to you. Open our hearts to receive your compassion; And then show us how to forgive, so that we may be vessels of resurrection hope in our troubled world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (read together)

It is never easy for us to confess, God, but deep down inside, we know that graced, we have trouble being grace-full to others; forgiven, we are eager to judge and punish all who hurt us; freed, we find ways to put restrictions on people we fear. Forgive us, Servant God. You show mercy more often than we deserve; you pardon us more times than we can count. And why? Because we are the Lord's – sisters, brothers, and siblings of Jesus Christ, who died and lived again, so we might live beyond death with you. Amen.

SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: God's hand of mercy is stretched out to us, making a way through all that threatens us, to touch us with grace and hope.

Many: We stand before our God, singing praise to the One who turns our despair into joy, our fears into faith. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Romans 14:1-12

* AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (read together)

We believe in God, maker of all things, provider of all things, who loves all people.

We follow Jesus, in whom salvation has come to us: he sees us for who we are, heals the wounds of our hearts, and makes us new. In his death and resurrection, we see the deepest truth of life.

We live by the power of the Holy Spirit, which empowers us for self-giving love.

We give thanks for the Church, the Body of Christ, and for the gift of forgiveness, the power of resurrection and the mystery of eternal life. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI (music only, not sung)

FOCUS SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:21-35 read from the *Good News Bible*

MESSAGE: "Fire Hose Forgiveness" Pastor Burtnett

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER

AFFIRMING OUR GIFTS

***DOXOLOGY**

(music only, not sung) Words #44

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

(prayed together)

May our gifts become symbols of our intention to minister with you, God. Accept and bless them that they may meet the needs of those whom you love. Amen.

***CLOSING SONG** “I Then Shall Live”

insert (verses 1 & 3

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship (adapted), Opening Prayer, and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are from *Worship Ways- Worship Resourced for the United Church of Christ*. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is by Steve Garnaas-Holmes.

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Organist:	Liz Reynolds
Lector:	David Burrow
Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett

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September Radio Sponsor: Scott and Sandy Buchanan

Birthdays: 9-15 Tyler Steburg, 9-18 Carol Logue, 9-19 Kathryn Myers

The Board will zoom meet this Wednesday, the 16th, at 7 pm.

You are invited to read the other two lectionary scriptures for today.
Ex 14:19-31 and Ps 114

The September-November Our Daily Bread is in the Fellowship hall entry.

Next Sunday we will hold the Peace Pole service at 4 pm.

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United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa**



“Where No One Is A Stranger”

315 S. Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511

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