

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa
Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 14, 2021

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

Leader: Taking part safely from home, staying a safe, masked distance in church, we are reminded of that promise:

People: God's love endures forever!

Leader: Despite our pandemic fatigue in spite of the grumbling it inspires:

People: the Light of Christ shines in our lives!

Leader: Unable to sing together (or too shy to sing alone), when we wonder if we have the energy to continue to care for others,

People: we are taught new songs by the Spirit, who encourages us to not give up!

Leader: Let's worship God!

*OPENING SONG

"God Is Here"

#1

(sung to tune: "Beecher" – "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling")

OPENING PRAYER

(read together)

God of immeasurable grace, you meet us in our time of need and cause your face to shine upon us. You sent Jesus into the world, that we might be saved; and you fashioned us into vessels of your love and light. Redeem us this day, that we may be found worthy of the one who came to bring us life. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(read together)

It has been easier these last few months to be embraced by the shadows, Creating God. Those worries that tap each night at the windows of our souls. Those fears which follow us around like stray kittens looking for a meal. Those doubts that you have not been with us as much as we have been told.

Forgive us, Eternal Love, may the Light of the world lead us out of these shadows, may you raise us up, as your family, so we may go to kneel by the side of the forgotten; may

we be showered with your hope, your grace, your peace which has been given to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

(read responsively)

Leader: Let those worshiping at home say so. Let those safely gathered in sanctuaries say so. Let those scattered in all places say so. God's steadfast love endures forever! This is the good news for us!

People: God's steadfast love endures forever! Thanks be to God! Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

John 3:14-21

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(read together)

The grace of God has dawned upon us with healing for all the world, and so we rejoice to declare our faith in God: We believe in God who has revealed God's love and kindness to us, and in God's mercy saved us, not for any good deed of our own, but because God is merciful.

We believe in Jesus Christ, who gave himself up for us to free us from our sin, and set us apart for himself - a people eager to do good.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, whom God poured out on us generously through Christ our Savior, so that justified by grace we might become heirs with the hope of eternal life. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

#734

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:1-10

read from *The Message*

MESSAGE:

"Embraced By Grace"

Pastor Burtnett

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD'S PRAYER

AFFIRMING OUR GIFTS

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

(prayed together)

Generous One, we give thanks to you for your steadfast love endures forever. May our gifts be used to feed the hunger and satisfy the thirst of all those you love throughout your creation. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Words #44

*CLOSING SONG

"Amazing Grace

#422

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

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 B. J. Beu from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2021- Worship Planning Resources for Every Sunday of the Year*, edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance, are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is written by Michael Perry.

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Organist: Liz Reynolds
Lector: David Burrow
Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burtnett
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March Radio Sponsor: Ginny Buchanan

Birthdays: 3-15 Geoff Buchanan, 3-20 Sandy Person, Max Person

Sunday, March 14: One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

Tuesday, March 16: 9:30am. - Feed Mill

Saturday, March 20: Farmers Market Organizational Meeting in Fellowship Hall

March 28th in person worship resumes

April 2 – 7pm. Good Friday Worship

We need radio sponsors for the following months: October, November and December. Please call the church office to reserve a month. Thank you.

Please have your newsletter articles for the April/May into the office by March 30th.

Easter Lilies may be ordered by March 24. The cost is \$8.00. Please email or call the church office to place your order and who they are in honor of or in memory.

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



“Where No One Is A Stranger”

315 S. Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511

515-295-2845