

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa
Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 21, 2021

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

Leader: We come this day to affirm a new covenant.

People: We come to call on God's steadfast love and mercy.

Leader: We come to seek a strong and vital relationship with God.

People: God's law will be written on our hearts.

Leader: We are eager to know the God who loves us.

People: We are ready to learn God's intention for us.

Leader: Let's worship God!

*OPENING SONG

"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

#461

OPENING PRAYER

(read together)

God of love and mercy, open our hearts to your presence in this time of worship. Give us the strength to respond faithfully to your transforming love, that the joy of your salvation might shine in and through us all. For it is in your perfect love that we are drawn more fully into your image. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(read together)

You are the Heart which seeks ours, God of the new covenant, yet we turn away from you time and again. We have had so many chances to care for others in these days, yet know we have focused on ourselves too much. We have filled our endless days with the empty calories of fear and worry. We have paid more attention to the ramblings of politicians and celebrities, not your Word of hope.

Now, in these moments, and especially in the silence, come and make us new people.

Write the new covenant of grace on our hearts, so we become more forgiving; write mercy, so we might become more compassionate; write hospitality, so we might include all people, just as Jesus welcomes us into the company of people who try to follow him. Amen.

SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

(read responsively)

Leader: A new heart with grace, mercy, hospitality, justice written upon it. That is God's gift to us.

People: A new heart, a new spirit, restored and forgiven, we can go to share this good news with all people. Thanks be to God. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(read together)

We belong to God, eternal and infinite, Creator of all things and all that is to come.

We follow Christ, who comes to us from God, and reveals God to us. He heals people and transforms lives, and calls us to join in his ministry. He was crucified, died, and was raised again by God, and reigns over all Creation; and he bids us to die and rise with him in the service of the healing of the world.

We are moved by the Holy Spirit, together with the communion of saints, as members of the Body of Christ, God's holy universal church.

We are confident in the forgiveness of sin, the power of resurrection and the reality of eternal life. In all things it is our desire to follow Christ, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for God's glory. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

#734

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

John 12:20-33

read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

"Seeing Jesus"

Pastor Burnett

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD'S PRAYER

AFFIRMING OUR GIFTS

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

(prayed together)

Generous and all-loving God, in joy and celebration of everything you have given us, we ask you to bless the gifts that we share. We recommit ourselves to your service and to the service of your people so that Jesus may shine in all the world. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Words #44

*CLOSING SONG

"Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"

#748

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship (adapted) is from *Led By Love-Worship Resources for Yea B* by Lavon Bayler. The Opening Prayer (adapted) is by Bob Rhodes, from the *Abingdon Worship Annual 2021* 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 Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) is from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2021- Worship Planning Resources for Every Sunday of the Year*, edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu and *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Affirmation of Faith is by Steve Garnaas-Holmes.

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

March Radio Sponsor: Ginny Buchanan

Birthdays: 3-23 Helen Scuffham, 3-24 Isaac Hines

Tuesday, March 23: 9:30am. - Feed Mill

Sunday, March 28th in person worship resumes

April 2 – 7pm. Good Friday Worship

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

Please have your articles etc. for the April/May newsletter 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.

The *Our Daily Bread* special Easter devotional “Love-10 Easter Reflections” is available on the cart in the entry way to the Education/Office/Fellowship Hall building. Stop by and pick one up or we will drop one off for you or mail it to you.

**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