

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is a Stranger”
Ascension Sunday/Seventh Sunday of Easter
May 16, 2021

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: From comfortable pews, from tricycle seats, from easy chairs in front of TVs:

Many: God gathers us in, giving us the words with which to proclaim the gospel.

One: At kitchen sinks, at laptops and blackboards, at nursing stations:

Many: Christ calls us to share in serving all creation.

One: In communities gathered to pray, in memories of those who served, in families grilling in the backyard:

Many: The Holy Spirit fills us with God's joy.

One: Come, let's worship!

*OPENING SONG

“We Praise You, O God”

#726

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Life-giving God, your love and light guides us on the path of courage, compassion, generosity, and grace. Lead us as we seek to follow your transformative love that turns sorrow into joy, and despair into hope. Help us embrace your guiding love that calls us to live as your faithful witnesses, who reflect your grace and redemptive love. Open our hearts to receive your gracious love, and strengthen us to carry the Good News of your healing power found in the light, love and life of Jesus the Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

Gracious God, we confess our doubts that stifle our joy. Forgive us when we lack faith in you and comfort us when our fears outweigh our praise. Forgive us when we fail to trust you, and help us when we do not live as your faithful witnesses. Forgive us when we are self-consumed and lack the time needed to serve our neighbors. In these times, have mercy on us, and encourage us to be your love-lived, by renewing us daily in your strength. Amen.

SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

(read responsively)

One: We are no longer blown about in the winds of the world, we are grounded, yesterday, today, tomorrow in God's forgiveness, hope and love.

Many: Today, tomorrow, forever: we can bear fresh fruit, sharing God's peace and joy with everyone we meet. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

John 17:6-19

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(read together)

I believe in one God, who made life possible, and is the creator of all things that exist. God watches over me, listens to me, and has given me the ability to determine good and bad.

I believe in Jesus, the Son of God, who is my protector and teacher, helping me to learn about God in terms I can understand.

I believe the Holy Spirit is the presence of God inside me. It is how God helps me understand the relationship we have.

I believe in a community of faith where I can connect with God and other believers in worship. This is my church and is a place where I can find forgiveness and peace.

I believe in the resurrection of Christ.

I believe God speaks to me in the Bible.

I believe I will find my faith inside me, and I will find myself in my faith. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI

#734

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“A Share of This Ministry”

Pastor Chris

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD'S PRAYER

AFFIRMING OUR GIFTS

*DOXOLOGY

Words #44

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

(prayed together)

We offer our gifts, God, as a sign of our gratitude for creating us to care for one another. We pray your blessings upon these gifts, and hope they serve as our love for you and the world.

May these offerings be a witness to your healing and faithful love in order to bring hope to a hurting world. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING SONG**

“Arise, Your Light Is Come”

#231

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer (adapted), Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Offering Prayer of Dedication, (adapted) are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*, The Affirmation of Faith is by the 2021 Confirmation Class of Larchwood United Church of Christ.

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Organist: Liz Reynolds
Lector: David Burrow
Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burnett
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May Radio Sponsor: Dennis and Connie Schwab

Birthdays: 5-20: Jimmy Tinneh, 5-22: Ginny Buchanan, Mick Schlievert

Today, May 16: 10:00 am. – Worship

Tuesday, May 18: 9:30 am. - Pastor Chris at Feed Mill

Wednesday, May 19: 9:30 am. – Multi Disciplinary Meeting in Fellowship Hall
7 pm. – Board Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, May 20: 1-3 pm. – Pastor Chris Group Project Meeting for Intentional Ministry
Network

Next Sunday, May 23: 10:00 am. – Worship – Pentecost Sunday, wear red
Strengthen the Church offering

Our sympathies to the family of Don Myers. Please hold Kathryn and her family in prayer.
There will be a private family memorial service for Don on Saturday May 22 at the church.

