

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is a Stranger"
Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 22, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: Come out of the shadows and into God's light!

Many: We will not play hide and seek, but will make a pilgrimage to God's heart.

One: Lay down all which is a burden to you!

Many: We will give our fears to God, who is our help in every moment.

One: Follow the One who will lead you to new life!

Many: We long to live in God's presence every day of our lives.

*OPENING SONG "Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" #345

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

God of light, we come tired and weary, carrying many burdens. We come wondering if you are even here. We come seeking your face, seeking your love. In this moment, Holy One, open our hearts to the mystery of your love. Remind us that you are always with us and that you never leave us. Reassure us that you love us, even as you invite us to love one another. In this time and space, may we say yes to you. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

We admit, God our Light, that we do indeed try to tear Jesus apart - a piece of him here to support our politics, a part of him to undergird our economic views, the rest of him to bolster our fears of others. We could leave immediately to follow him, but need to wait until we see where he might lead us. We want you to look upon us with favor always, but have no trouble turning our backs on those around us.

Hear us, God our Deliverer, as we speak of our failures! Have mercy on us, we appeal to you, have mercy! May your love become the core of our hearts, may your compassion become the words we speak, may your hope illuminate the ways in which we serve others, even as we seek to follow the One who calls us to new life, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: God is our help, so why should we be afraid? God keeps us safe, there is nothing to dread! This is good news for all of us.

Many: Sheltered in God's gracious heart of mercy and love, we raise shouts of joy: thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 4:12-23

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (read together)

The star of divine promise shines before us still. Over a world of mute hopes, dim visions, dark fears, still the light shines. In a world shrouded by darkness both tragic and willful, still we proclaim: Our light has come, the glory of God shines upon us. For One born of God is born of our own flesh, and that One is light for our lives. As we receive the light and let it shine through us, it rises as a beacon for a darkened world. The peoples shall stream towards its promise; meek and mighty alike share in its dawning brightness. Then all shall say: Arise! The glory of God is upon us! Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 read from *The Message*

MESSAGE "A Life In Common" Pastor Chris

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY Words #44

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (prayed together)

Loving God, we thank you for these gifts that we offer back to you. Bless them that they may share your joy and your hope bringing reconciliation and help to those seeking to walk in your ways. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG The Church's One Foundation" #544

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted) and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. Opening Prayer, and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Karin Ellis from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is from Wheadon United Methodist Church, Evanston, Illinois from *Flames of the Spirit, Resources for Worship Like Bread For The Journey*, edited by Ruth C. Duck.

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Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector: David Burrow
Organist: Vicki Merchlewitz
January Radio Sponsor: Pastor Chris and Pam Burtnett
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Birthdays: January 23- Grant Person

Today, January 22: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Tuesday, January 24: 9:30-11am.- Pastor at Feed Mill

Wednesday, January 26: 10am – Pastor Chris at Clergy Cluster in Humboldt

January 29: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
Annual Meeting
Potluck after Annual Meeting

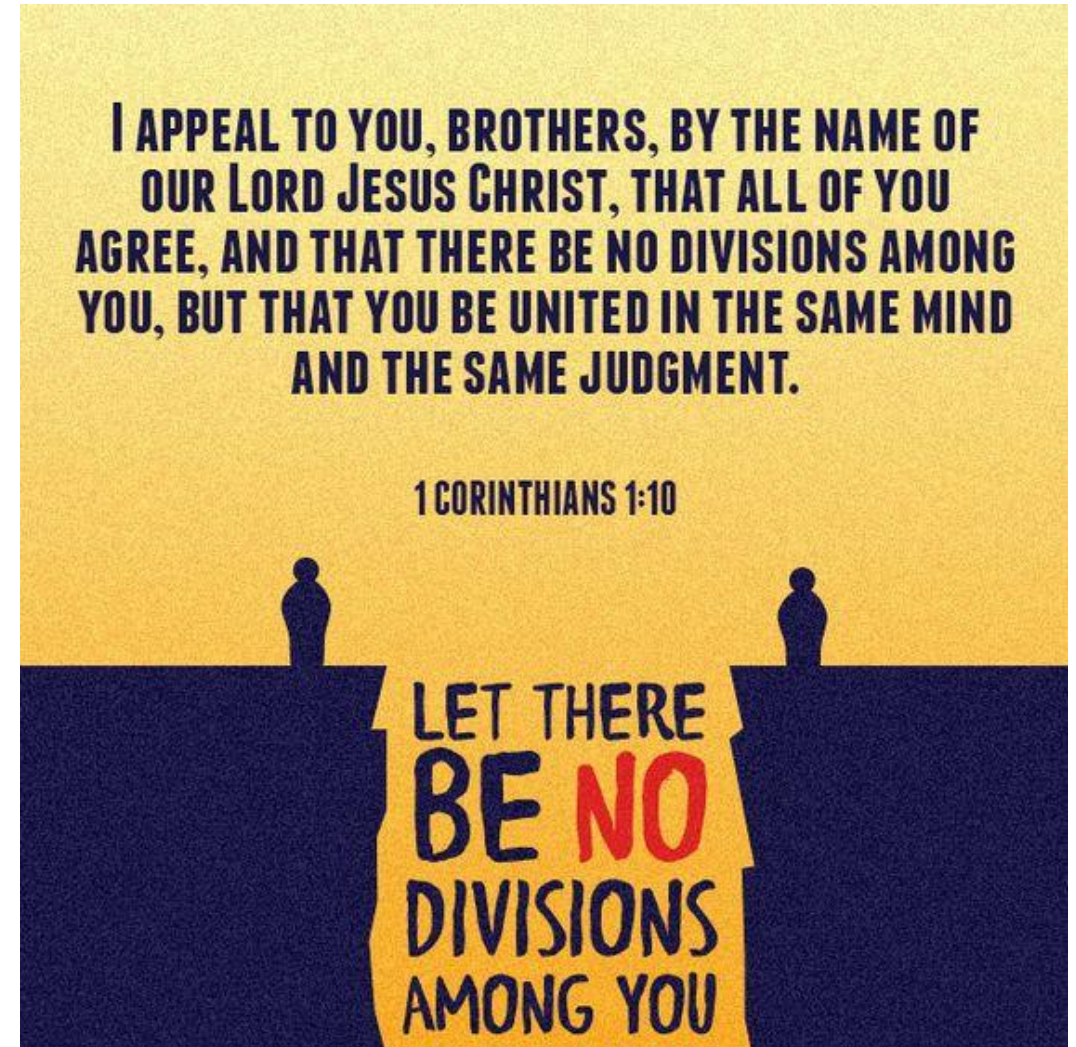
I am still missing some annual reports, please have them in by Tuesday January 24. Thank you.

January 26, Chuck West will be 97. If you would like to send him a card, his address is: 412 W Kennedy, Algona, IA 50511. He would so enjoy hearing from you.

We will be collecting good used or new towels, blankets, etc. for the Care team for the month of January. If you would like to donate, please bring them to the church.

The monthly radio sponsor sign-up sheet for 2023 is posted on the bulletin board in the parlor. The months that are open are: April, May, July, September, October and November.

February/March newsletter articles are due in the office by January 25th



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