

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 3, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: The God of our ancestors is with us!

One: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: We call upon the name of our God, and our God responds.

One: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: The steadfast and faithful love of our God lasts forever!

*Opening Song:

“O Worship the King”

#2

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Eternal God, when we search for you, we find you. When we seek you, we find you seeking us. Your presence among us changes our circumstances and our lives. We honor and worship you as an act of devotion and discipleship. Infuse us with your Spirit that our witness and ministry may be a testimony to your everlasting love.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

God of Moses and Mary, we could live at peace with others, but we choose to do wrong to them; we could welcome those we do not know, but choose to close our hearts; we could make outsiders our best friends, but choose the safety of our cliques. Forgive us, Genuine Love, for our foolish choices. Hold on to our shaky lives, until we learn to clasp your goodness to our hearts, so we can give it away to those around us. Whisper your grace and hopes to us, until we can stop cursing our enemies, and bless them as our friends. Smooth the rough edges of our arrogance, until we become polished enough to win the gold in being honorable. Then, we would put aside our stumbling blocks to discipleship, so we can follow Jesus, as he leads us to your way of denial and life.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: In our love for others, we discover God's love for us. In our forgiving of others, we learn once more how deeply God has forgiven us. Friends, this is the good news offered to us!
Many: We are God's children, called to be different, called to act differently, called to live as new people. Thanks be to God. We are forgiven.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 16:21-28

***AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** inside the back cover of the hymnal (read together)

*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

Romans 12:9-21

read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“Shoes on a Cow”

Pastor Chris

Communion Song:

“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”

#698

GATHERING AT CHRIST’S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord’s Prayer (debts/debtors), Sharing the Bread and Cup

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, God, because in your own free gift of love you have reached out to us. You have refreshed us at your table, touched our deepest needs, and called us to a life shared in memory and hope. Send us out into your world with courage and joy in the name of Jesus, that we, too, may become bread and peace for one another and the world.

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

#34

**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**

Generous God, thank you for inspiring generosity in us. May these gifts be a blessing to the ministry of this church. Multiply them and make us fruitful and faithful stewards of our time, talent, and treasure.

***Closing Song:** "Lord, Whose Love and Humble Service" #575

***Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

***Indicates all who are able please stand**

The Call to Worship and Opening Prayer, and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources 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 a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (adapted) is 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
September Radio Sponsor:	Ginny Buchanan

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Today, September 3: 10 am.- Worship with Communion
Coffee
Food Pantry

Tuesday, September 5: 9:30-11:30am: Pastor at Feed Mill

Wednesday, September 6: 7pm. – Board Meeting

Friday, September 8: 10am.- Evangelical and Outreach Committee Meeting

Sunday, September 10: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Peace Ple Service will be Sunday, September 17 at 4pm., soft serve ice cream and toppings to follow. Please bring your own lawn chair.

International Delight-Cuban Night will be Wednesday, September 20.

Our Daily Bread September/October/November devotionals are available on the cart in the entry way to the Education/Office/Fellowship Hall building.

If anyone has some time, the rooms in the lower half of fellowship hall need to be put back in order from painting.



*First Congregational
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315 Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511
515-295-2845