

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is A Stranger"
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 10, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Let our praise today be made new.

Many: May we sing a new song, pray a new prayer, dance a new dance, and speak and hear a new word.

One: Let the faithful delight in the Holy One's marvelous acts

Many: From the seats in the sanctuary to the couches in our homes.

One: Let us glorify God with our voices, the work of our lives, and the joy of our souls.

Many: Glory to God! Praise the Holy One!

*Opening Song:

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

#59

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

God who journeys with us, we give thanks to be gathered in your presence. May we acknowledge you in the brightness of the day and in the stillness of the night. Provide us a vision of your reign on earth and in our lives. Make us your witnesses to a world in need of hope and peace. Infuse us with your love, and may this time gathered as your people transform us to reflect your goodness in the world.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

Holy One, we confess that accountability can be discomfoting, and we avoid discomfort. We seek the good enough, convenient, and easy over the good, possible, and hard. Hold us accountable to the gospel. Hold us accountable to our claim and commitment to follow you. Hold us accountable to your will. Help us to receive your grace and liberate us from shame in order to embrace accountability as a loving act of community.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Beloved, accountability from God is rooted in love, hope, and mercy. Know that our past actions and attitudes do not define our present nor limit our future.

Many: Through God's grace, we can grow, learn, and thrive. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven!

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 12:1-14

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, who is love, whose love is manifest in all Creation, in our lives, and in all people.

We follow Jesus, who embodied God's love. In his life and ministry, his death and resurrection, and his granting to us of his Spirit, he filled us with that love as well.

We live by the Spirit, the presence of God's love in us. In that love we participate in the Church, Body of Christ, in loving God by loving our neighbors through our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service.

Love is our faith, and it is a gift from God. We thank God, and ask God's blessings, that we may love in the name of Jesus and the power of the Spirit, to God's glory.

*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 13:8-14

read from *The Message*

MESSAGE:

"It's the Law!"

Pastor Chris

Prayers of the People/Lord's Prayer

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

Gracious God, thank you for the gifts you give and allowing us to be gift givers as well. May our generous offerings bear fruit to nurture our community, our neighbors, and all creation.

***Closing Song:**

“Community of Christ”

#615

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

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

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

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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 10: 10 am.- Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Tuesday, September 12: 9-10:30am.-Committee on Ministry Zoom Meeting
10:30-Noon: Pastor at Feed Mill
3pm. -International Delight Team Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, September 14: 8:30am-Ministerial Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Friday, September 15: 6pm. -Pastor at Pilgrim Heights Overnight Board Meeting

Sunday, September 17: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
4pm.- Peace Pole Service with soft serve ice cream & toppings to follow.

Sunday, September 17: 7am-12:30pm.-Flight Breakfast at Algona Municipal Airport with a free will donation

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.

Love one another;
For the one
who loves another
has fulfilled
the law.
Romans 13:8

*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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