

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 24, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: In the prayers and the praise, in the words and the wonder:

Many: we are given enough joy to live each day.

One: In the justice for the oppressed, in the unexpected generosity for the lost:

Many: we are given enough compassion to use in service each day.

One: In the promises made to all, in the mercy offered to each:

Many: we are given enough grace to share each day

*Opening Song:

“Give to Our God Immortal Praise”

#63

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Might God, we enter your presence with thanksgiving and hope. You have formed us as your people. You join us on the journey of life through valleys, upon mountains, and on the plains. We set our attention and seek your wisdom, encouragement, and grace. Reveal your will and display your glory among your people as we worship your holy name.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(prayed together)

It seems we cannot decide, Cloud of Glory. We say we will live to serve others, but end up meeting only our needs. We claim to live in a way that honors Jesus, but we do not take him to work, school, home. We believe that the gospel can transform lives, (at least, for those who need it – but surely, not us).

Forgive us, Presence of Peace. Instead of grumblers, may we be ambassadors of grace. Instead of continual complaining, may we carry compassion to the hurting. Instead of whiners, may we be workers with Jesus our Savior, to reach out and bring the kingdom of God to everyone we meet.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: This is the good news: there is no ranking in God's kingdom. God graces everyone with the same gifts: mercy, restoration, new life.

Many: God has kept the covenant. We have been forgiven, we have been made new people. Thanks be to God.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, creator of all things, ruler of all that is and all that is to come. God is transforming the world into the place of God's justice and mercy.

We follow Jesus, who taught and healed, who died and rose, revealing God's abundant grace. He sent disciples out into the world to heal, to proclaim the good news of your grace, and to participate in the Reign of God in all that we do. He reigns in love over all Creation, and holds all accountable to their faithfulness to God's rule of grace.

We rely upon the unfailing grace of God, the presence of the Holy Spirit, the community of the church as the Body of Christ, the unity of all believers, the power of forgiveness, the reality of resurrection and the alluring blessing of eternal life.

*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

Matthew 20:1-16

read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“Graced”

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**

Great God, please receive our gifts for the glory of your name and the blessing of your people. May we be dedicated stewards of your abundance and use these gifts for the benefit of your kindom.

***Closing Song:** “God of Grace and God of Glory” #569

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

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

The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted) and Words of Assurance, are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Affirmation of Faith is by Steve Garmaas-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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Birthdays: September 26-Margaret Herbst; Derek Person

Today, September 24: 10 am.- Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Tuesday, September 26: 9:30-11:30am: Pastor at Feed Mill

Wednesday, September 27: Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, October 1: 10:00 am. – Worship- World Communion Sunday
Neighbors in Need Offering
Sunday School
Coffee
Food Pantry

Our church will be responsible for Meals on Wheels the first two weeks of October for all routes. There is a sign up sheet on the back bulletin board.

We are putting together a float for Band Day, Saturday. Contact Helen Schuffham if you are able to help put it together.

October Radio Sponsor is still needed.



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
165 Years*

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