

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost  
July 21, 2024

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Neighbors and newcomers, families and strangers,

Many: we gather in this place built by God’s steadfast love.

One: Strugglers and stragglers, pilgrims almost at the end of the journey,

Many: each of us seeks to follow Jesus, the compassionate One.

One: Builders of bridges in fractured communities, those who stand on either side of walls of fear,

Many: the Spirit of faithfulness calls us to live as one people – God’s people!

### \*Opening Song:

“Community of Christ”

#615

### \*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Healer of divisions, your Son came to abolish enmity and to create one humanity in his name. Unite us with your saints, and bring us into the peace of your household, that we might dwell as one family through the one Spirit. Be present in our worship this day and seal us in the heart of Jesus, our shepherd. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Steadfast God, we confess that we are so busy putting up walls between ourselves and others, we cannot see the home you are building for all of us. We spend so much time noting the differences between us and others, while you are embracing everyone as your child. We run to welcome those who look, talk, and act like us, and you throw open your doors to the stranger, the alien, in our midst.

Forgive us, Faithful Heart. By your grace, help us to see the household you are building for all people: there are no plastic protectors on the furniture; there are no rooms that are

off-limits; and even the smallest child is welcome to sit at the big peoples' Table and be fed by your grace. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our peace, our hope, our Savior.

## A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Do you remember? At one time, you were without Christ; you were the stranger, the outsider, and the alien. But now, in Christ, you have been brought home, living in God's household of hope and peace.

Many: God's covenant with us is everlasting; God's steadfast love is forever; God's forgiveness makes us new and whole. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

### \*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

(read together)

We believe in God the creator, who is always creating and invites us to affirm and explore who we are, with all our differences; and who is the source of our faith.

We believe in Jesus the Savior, who reveals God to us, who died and is risen, the one Lord of the church.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Reconciler, who is always with us bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

We believe that our smallness can never diminish God’s vastness; that our frailties can never overcome God’s will for wholeness; that our sin can never crush God’s power for new life, even in the face of death.

We believe, and in this belief, we need one another, as a choir needs every voice and every part for the harmony to be complete. We believe - that in the Holy Spirit, in Jesus Christ and in the love of God - we are one!

We believe - may our lives reflect our belief.

### \* GLORIA PATRI:

“Glory Be to the Father”

#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:

Ephesians 2:11-22

read from the *Good News Bible*

### MESSAGE:

“It’s All Jesus’ Fault”

Pastor Chris

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER (with debts/debtors)

**PRESENTING OUR GIFTS**

**\* DOXOLOGY:** “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #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, we give these gifts to you through this faith community. May you lead and guide us with discernment so that our ministry would give you glory, honor your name, and benefit your creation. Amen.

**\* CLOSING SONG:** “God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian” #149  
**\*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

**POSTLUDE**

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

Other Lectionary Scripture Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-14a and Psalm 89:20-27

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 (adapted) is by B.J. Beu from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2024* edited by B.J. Beu and Mary Scifres. The Offering Prayer of Dedication is by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay who serves as Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *An Affirmation for Christian Unity* by Ian Tozer (1997 UCA Assembly)

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Organist: Antonia Rupert  
Worship Leader: David Burrow  
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett  
July Radio Sponsor: Marilyn Deal

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Birthday's: July 22-Cam Buchanan

**Sunday, July 21:** 10:30am – Worship  
Coffee  
**Tuesday, July 23:** 9:30am- Pastor at Feed Mill  
**Saturday, July 27:** 9:00am.-Mobile Mission-Farmer’s Market  
**Sunday, July 28:** 10:30am – Worship  
Coffee  
ASK/Into the Future Meeting following Worship

August/September Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday, July 30

The Led By the Spirit - 10 Reflections from Our Daily Bread may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.

SO THEN, YOU GENTILES  
ARE NOT FOREIGNERS OR  
STRANGERS ANY LONGER;  
YOU ARE NOW CITIZENS  
TOGETHER WITH GOD'S  
PEOPLE AND MEMBERS OF  
THE FAMILY OF GOD.

Ephesians 2:19  
Good News Translation

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