

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost
October 13, 2024

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: We look in the mirror and what do we see?

Many: We see people who try to be faithful, even as questions and struggles challenge our faith.

One: We look in the mirror and how do we see?

Many: We see with hearts which are open to God's love, with lives which seek to trust when all the evidence tells us not to be so foolish.

One: We look in the mirror and who do we see?

Many: We see Jesus, the One who struggles with the questions we raise, who models faithfulness for all who would follow.

All: Let's worship our Maker in spirit and in truth with the fullness of our being.

*Opening Song:

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

#48

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Everlasting God, we come before you with questions, and you question us in return. We declare that you are good, and you have declared us good. May we acknowledge that you make all things new, you redeem our days, and you empower us to be your people. In your presence, there is joy, and there is struggle. Peace surpasses understanding, and our hearts break. This defines the fullness of human community and experience in companionship with you. We give thanks for your presence and trust that you continue to transform the impossible into the possible. Make it so in us and through us in your precious name. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We stand before you, Saving God, stripped of our pretensions and pride, for nothing we do or say, or do not, can be hidden from you. You hear the angry words we preach to ourselves; you sift through the rubble of hurts we have caused; you see how we stumble, weighed down by all that 'stuff' which keeps us from following Jesus.

We stand before you, Holy Grace. As you empty our hands of that wealth of unneeded things we cling so tightly to, fill them with your grace and hope. As we let go of all which might hold us back, give us the trust to follow Jesus, our Savior, into that life with which he offers to each of us.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Hear the good news! Because God loves us, we lack for nothing; because God forgives us, we have everything we need; because God surrounds us with sisters and brothers, we do not journey alone.

Many: Committing everything to God, trusting in the One who redeems us, we decide to live as God's faithful and forgiven people. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING:

Hebrews 4:12-16

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

(read together)

We are the people of God. We are a sign of the New World. We are sisters, brothers, and siblings of Jesus.

We believe in God. We believe in the goodness of God, the presence of God in human history, and the nearness of God's love.

We believe in Jesus. We believe that God was and is revealed in human life, that out of human suffering may come rescue and healing, that out of death comes new life.

We believe in the Eternal Spirit, who moves among God's people and invites the world into God's reign.

We believe that the world can change, that peace and wholeness can come, and that the New World can arrive.

We are the people of God. We are the sign of the New World. We are the sisters, brothers and siblings of Jesus.

* 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: Job 23:1-9, 16-17 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE: “Dealing With Darkness” 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**
Gracious God, may the gifts we bring be magnified and do miracles in our community.
Use them for restoration and hope as your kingdom is demonstrated before us all. Amen.

*** CLOSING SONG:** “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” #84

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

POSTLUDE

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

Other Lectionary Scripture Readings: Mark 10:13-21, Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 and Psalm 90:12-17

The Call to Worship (adapted) is by Thom M. Shuman from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman and 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 Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication are by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay who serves as Minister for Worship and Theology 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 by David Beebe from *Flames of the Spirit-Worship Resources for Worship Like Bread for the Journey* edited by Ruth C. Duck.

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Organist: Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader: David Burrow
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett
October Radio Sponsor: Larry and Sandy Person
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Sunday, October 13: 10:30am – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Sunday, October 20: 10:30am – Worship- World Communion Sunday
Sunday School
Coffee

Pastor Chris will be on vacation starting October 14 and will be back in the Office on October 22. If you need pastoral assistance, please call Dave Skilling at 319-290-2302.

*I travel East, then West
looking for God.....
not a trace!
I go North, then South.....
not even a glimpse.
God has hidden God's
tracks.

(Job 23:8-9 adapted from The Message)*

*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
166 Years
315 Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511
515-295-2845*