

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is A Stranger"
Second Sunday in Lent
March 16, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS+

*Call to Worship

(read responsively)

One: God, our light and salvation, calls us here.

Many: We gather in faith, confidence, and praise.

One: Come; seek the face of God.

Many: God's face shines upon us with grace and love.

One: Be strong, my friends, for God is here.

Many: Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift!

*Opening Song:

"The God of Abraham Praise"

#16

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Mighty God, we come into your presence from many different places and situations. Light our way in this time of worship. Calm our hearts, focus our thoughts, and strengthen our faith, as we pray and praise this day. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Offered a feast at grace's table, God of the covenant, we choose to gorge ourselves on the empty calories of greed. Invited to live in your house, we move into death's fear-infested boarding house. Though you promise to be with us, we toss you aside, chasing after those who will abandon us at the first chance.

But you will not let the foxes of foolishness devour us, Mothering God, but will gather us under the shelter of your love. You do so in order to give us that peace which heals us, that wonder which surprises us, and that faith which enables us to let go of the present to walk into the covenant of grace made possible through Jesus our Savior. Amen.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: God does not abandon us. God gathers us up, leading us to that shelter of love and life.
Many: Today, tomorrow, and the next day, God's grace rests upon us and gives us hope and mercy. Thanks be to God! We are forgiven. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 13:31-35

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

(read together)

We belong to God, we are made in God's image... all of us. We bring delight and laughter to the Divine one. We carry a spark of the divine light. We believe in Jesus. The man who worshipped and worked and walked alongside so many people. Who laughed and loved and raged and sorrowed. We trust in the Holy Spirit. Who dances and swirls in and around us. Who fills us, inspires us and sends us out into God's world to love and serve. Amen.

* 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:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

read from *The New Jerusalem Bible*

MESSAGE:

"Counting Stars"

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, use our offerings of our resources and of our lives. Bless them and multiply them for your purposes in the world. Amen.

* CLOSING SONG:

"Be Thou My Vision"

#502

*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ

POSTLUDE

*Indicates all who are able please stand

The Call to Worship and Opening Prayer, are by Mary Scifres from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2025* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance (adapted) are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Offering Prayer of Dedication is by Rev. Ruth Garwood, a transitional pastor in the Heartland Conference, a certified facilitator of Sacred Conversations to End Racism, and a certified InterPlay leader. *The Affirmation of Faith* is by Catherine MacDonald.

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Organist: Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader: David Burrow
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett
March Radio Sponsor: Scott and Sandy Buchanan
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Birthdays: 20: Sandy Person, Max Person

Sunday, March 16: 10:30am – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

Tuesday, March 18: 9:30am.-Pastor at Feed Mill
6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

Wednesday, March 19: 8:30am Multi-disciplinary Team Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, March 20: 6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

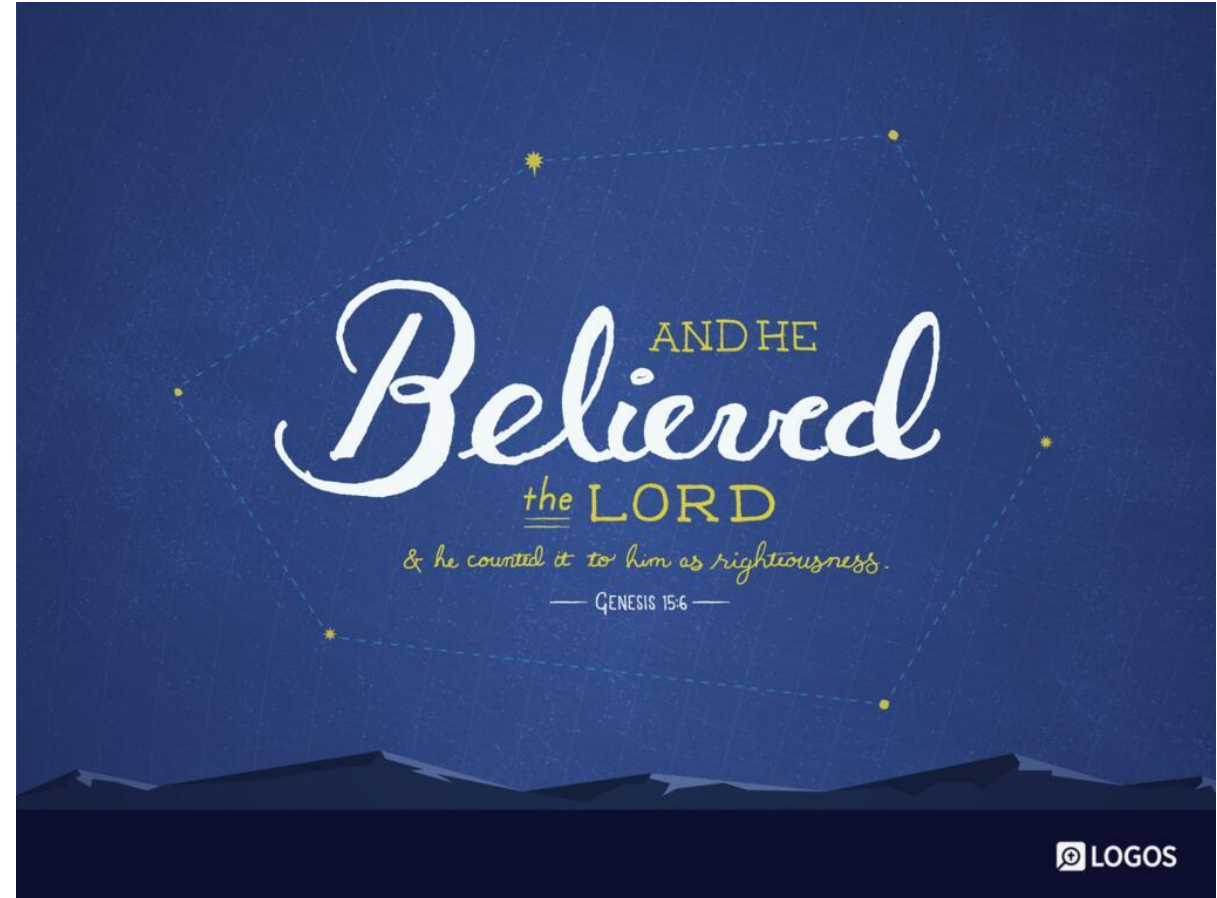
Sunday, March 23: 10:30am – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee

April/May Newsletter deadline will be March 26.

Sunday, March 30: One Great Hour of Sharing will be collected

Our Daily Bread March/April/May 2025 issue may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.

Mark the calendar: Sunday, June 1, there will be a Mahana Scholarship Reunion. More information to come.



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