

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Third Sunday in Lent
March 23, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS+

***Call to Worship** (read responsively)

One: We come to worship, because we seek our God.

Many: Every morning, every day, every evening, every moment, God is with us.

One: We come to worship, because we hunger for Jesus.

Many: Jesus will feed us with hope, will replace our emptiness with grace.

One: We come to worship, because we thirst for the Spirit.

Many: Who fills our yearning for peace, who ends the drought of justice.

All: May this time of worship fill and refresh us!

***Opening Song:** “God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian” #149

***OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

We come before you, gracious God, seeking what money can't buy. Only you can provide the nourishment for our souls. There is no other source of meaning in our mixed-up world We find no fountain of strength or sustenance apart from you. As a community of faith, we call on you, believing that you are nearer than our next breath, more available to us than we can think, more caring than we ever dare to imagine. Uphold us now, that we may worship you with joy. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The thirsty come, God, and we offer lead-filled water; the hungry come, and we offer a single can from our overflowing pantries; the lonely come, and we cling to our cliques; the broken come, and we hand them an aspirin; the needy come, but we have wasted everything on stuff we do not need.

Have mercy on us, Steadfast love, and pour your heart into our grace-parched souls. As you have been with us in every moment, may we go to be with all around us. May we listen to the needs and hearts of others, even as you lean down to listen to us in Jesus our Savior. Amen.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: In every moment, God seeks what is best for us, continually offering us peace, hope, and forgiveness.

Many: We will bless God in every moment, rejoicing with the One who fills us with steadfast love. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 63:1-8

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** (read together)

I believe in God the Creator, who made me and all things, who set me on my path in this world.

I believe in Jesus the Savior, who is one with the Creator, who rescues me and all creation from the depredations of our violations against God and creation. He walked a path through this world. He lived and worked among people just like me. He walked God's path to death on a cross, and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide, who is one with the Creator and the Christ, who brings me into communion with all people, past, present and future and calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world, caring for creation and the people I meet on the way, loving them, helping them, welcoming them without prejudice, being God's hands and feet in the world.

*** 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: Isaiah 55:1-9 read from *The Message*

MESSAGE: “No Charge” 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**

Loving God, in gratitude for your kindness and mercy, receive our gifts. Take them and our lives and use them for your purposes in the world. Amen.

*** CLOSING SONG:** “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” #501

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

POSTLUDE

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

The Call to Worship (adapted), 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 Lavon Bayler from *Gathered By Love-Worship Resources for Year A*. The Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) is by B.J.Beau from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2025* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beau. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is by Lisa Frenz.

=====
Organist: Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader: David Burrow
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett
March Radio Sponsor: Scott and Sandy Buchanan
=====

Birthdays: 23-Helen Scuffham; 24-Isaac Hines

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

Tuesday, March 25: 9am.-COM Zoom Meeting
6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

Wednesday, March 26: - April/May Newsletter deadline

Thursday, March 27: 10am.-Clergy Cluster in Humboldt
6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

Friday, March 28th-29: Pilgrim Heights Board Meeting

Saturday, March 29: Pilgrim Heights Open House

Sunday, March 30: 10:30am – Worship - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
Sunday School
Coffee

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



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