

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Fifth Sunday in Lent
April 6, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: We come to this place, because we want to know God,

Many: who helps us set aside the past, to walk the path to new life.

One: We come in these moments, because we want to know Jesus,

Many: who anoints us with the resurrection, who shares our lives with us.

One: We come with our sisters, brothers, and siblings, because we want to know the Spirit,

Many: who shapes us for life with God, so we may praise God forever!

One: Let's worship God!

***Opening Song:** “Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above” #56

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

Holy One, whether we are eager to draw near to you, or we are cautious, whether we are certain of your guidance, or we are unsure how you call to us, you are present. Open our senses and open our hearts to experience your fullness. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

Like Judas, God of new things, we like to complain about your generous ways, rather than living in your grace. The poor are always with us, we believe, which justifies our ignoring them. In our memories, we see a perceived golden past, and so close our eyes to the new things you do in our midst. We are so enamored with our achievements that we are not willing to throw them away in order to follow Jesus.

Forgive us, Restoring God, and help us to notice the kingdom springing forth in our midst. By your grace, may our fears turn to faith, our seeds of grief produce a bumper crop of joy, and our tears turn into torrents of tenderness as we journey with Jesus, our Savior, to Jerusalem.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Making a way through all the foolishness and mistakes of our lives, God leads us into new life, where we are restored to grace, hope, and peace.

Many: Do we notice what God has done for us, what God is doing in us? This is good news for everyone. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING John 12:1-8

***AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** inside back cover of hymnal (read together)

***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 Philippians 3:4b-14 read from *The Message*

MESSAGE: “What Really Counts” Pastor Chris

Communion Song: “With the Body That Was Broken” #691

GATHERING AT CHRIST'S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors), Sharing the Bread and Cup

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

God of manna and mustard seeds, we came to this Table hungry and we leave feeling full—full of hope, full of promise, full of what could be. For we not only found glimpses of you at this Table, but we caught a glimpse of the way things could be in a meal where all are welcomed and all are fed. Thank you for nourishing our curiosity alongside our spirit and our conviction. May we always seek you the way you seek after us. With grateful hearts we pray, amen.

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**

Holy One, bless these gifts and our lives, that we and our offerings may serve your purposes. Amen.

***Closing Song:**

“Take My Life and Let It Be”

#466

***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 and Offering Prayer of Dedication are by the 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 Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving is adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | *A Sanctified Art LLC* | *sanctifiedart.org*.” The Affirmation of Faith is a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith.

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Antonia Rupert
April Radio Sponsor:	Helen Scuffham

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Birthdays: April 6: Carter Bachman; 7: Becky Marine; 12: Nancy Walker

Sunday, April 6: 10:30am – Worship with Sacrament of Communion
Sunday School
Coffee
Food Pantry
Spring Cleanup following worship with soup lunch

Tuesday, April 8: 9:30am.-Pastor at Feed Mill.
6:00pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

Wednesday, April 9: 7pm. -Board Meeting

Thursday, April 10: 8:30am.-Ministereal Meeting in Fellowship Hall
6:00 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

Sunday, April 13: 10:30am – Worship
Sunday School /Coffee/ Palm Sunday Brunch



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
166 Years*

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