

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
Fifth Sunday of Easter  
May 18, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS+

\*Call to Worship (read responsively)

One: From the highest heavens to the deepest seas,

Many: let all creation praise God!

One: From the rising sun to the waning moon,

Many: let all creation praise God!

One: From the new heaven and new earth,

Many: let everything that draws breath praise God!

One: Come! Let’s worship!

\*Opening Song: “All Creatures of Our God and King” #23

\*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

Wipe away our tears, God, for we are weary of weeping at the injustices of the world. You love us like a mother and protect us like a father. You restore our lives and claim us as your beloved children in a world made new. Dwell among us, we pray, that we may love one another as you have loved us. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Who are we to get in your way, Holy God? We put people into neat, little boxes, but you rip them open, so folks can dance in your joy. We imprison others with our unmet expectations, and you set them free with a Word. We build walls around those we don't know, and you tear them down, so they can run wild in the kingdom.

Who are we to get in your way, Saving Power, especially in the way of your forgiveness offered to all! Give us your vision that sees everyone as equal - forgiven, graced, loved - even as we seek to follow Jesus our Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: We know who God is by the love shown to us in Jesus.

Many: We will show others who we are - and Whose we are - by the loved poured out by our lives. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

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

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: (read together)

We believe in God, who is love, whose love is manifest in all Creation, in our lives, and in all people.

We follow Jesus, who embodied God’s love. In his life and ministry, his death and resurrection, and his granting to us of his Spirit, he filled us with that love as well.

We live by the Spirit, the presence of God’s love in us. In that love we participate in the Church, Body of Christ, in loving God by loving our neighbors through our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service.

Love is our faith, and it is a gift from God. We thank God, and ask God’s blessings, that we may love in the name of Jesus and the power of the Spirit, to God’s glory. 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: Psalm 148 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE: “A Place in the Choir” 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

God of abundant generosity, may the gifts we bring before you this day be a sign of our commitment to love one another well. Amen.

CLOSING SONG: “Let All Things Now Living” #22

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

**POSTLUDE**

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

The Call to Worship (adapted), Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Mary Scifres from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2025* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. Call to Confession (adapted), Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is by Steve Garnaas-Holmes.

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Organist:	Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader:	David Burrow
Pastor:	Rev. Chris Burtnett
May Radio Sponsor:	Larry & Sandy Person

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Birthdays: May-20-Jimmy Tinneh; 22-Ginny Buchanan, Mick Schlievert; 23-Aaron Burtnett;

Sunday, May 18: 10:30am – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee

Tuesday, May 20: 9:30am.-Pastor at Feed Mill

Wednesday, May 21: 8:30am.- Mult-disciplinary Team Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, May 25: 10:30am – Worship  
Coffee

Our Daily Bread June/July/August devotion book may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.

There will be a Celebration of Gladys Mahana Scholars from 1993 -2025 on Sunday, June 1 at 2pm in Fellowship Hall. Please let past scholarship recipients know. If they can’t attend, a note on how this generous gift has impacted their life would be appreciated. Donations of some bars or cookies will be needed. Thank you.

Thursday, May 29: 5pm-Hospice of the Heartland’s 2025 Butterly Release and Memorial Program at Kosuth Regional Health Center. A tax-deductible gift of \$15 will purchase a butterfly in memory /honor of your loved one You can send the names of those you would like to honor, along with your name, address, and a check of \$15 per butterfly to Hospice of Heartland, 1515 South Phillips, Algona. Checks are made payable to Hospice of the Heartland If you have questions, please call 515-295-4430.



*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ*

**167 Years**

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