

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
July 13, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS+

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

One: Beloved people of God, welcome to worship.

Many: We come to worship and praise.

One: With love for one another, we gather as neighbors.

Many: With love for God, we gather as God’s community of love.

***Opening Song:** “God of Grace, and God of Glory” #569

***OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

Loving God, thank you for being present in our lives and in this time of worship. Speak love to our hearts and wisdom to our minds, that we might grow in your knowledge of love and that our lives might bear fruit of your knowledge and grace. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

They may not be beaten down or lying by the road, but there are people we pass by, Watching God. Some are family and friends we take so much for granted we cannot see how we have stripped them of our love and compassion. Others are neighbors: who have been left half-dead by crushing work; who have fallen into the hands of despair; who have been abandoned by all those who walked on by them. Many are strangers, people we don't know, but quickly judge: they are weak, or poor, or the enemy or because they remind us of whom we once were, or could become.

Rescue us from the power of our sins, Righteous One of all generations. Pour out your justice on us, rather than your judgment, that we would be moved with pity, and spurred to action; that we would hear of the hope that is ours, and share it with our

sisters and brothers; that we would shower mercy on all we meet, even as we have received forgiveness for our sins through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Children of the Most High: you are forgiven and brought into the kingdom. Be filled with spiritual wisdom, lead lives worthy of your inheritance, bear fruit in all you say and do and think.

Many: God has rescued us and redeemed us from our sins, setting aside judgment to shower us with mercy. We will go and do likewise. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Colossians 1:1-14

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

We believe in God, the maker of all things, source of all life and Mother of all children. Our life is in God, and in God we are one with all beings. We follow Jesus, the Christ, the Revealer of God, who taught us to love, who gave us courage to trust God’s grace, and who bid us to take up our cross and follow him. In his life and ministry and his death and resurrection, he has shown us that in losing our lives we find them. He who was crucified is the Lord of the Universe. We rely upon the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the communion of saints, the unity of the church, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the reality of eternal life. Therefore, we devote ourselves to disciplined practice of the Way of Jesus in our daily lives, so that we may grow in faithfulness, and serve God in humble, confident love for the sake of the healing of the world. 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: Luke 10:25-37 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE: “Tested” Pastor Chris

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER (with debts/debtors)

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

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