

First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and hearts to all,
in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



Third Sunday in Lent

*The Lord's Day
Third Sunday in Lent
Seven Thirty and Ten O'clock in the Morning*

The Worship of God

Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by God's holiness; the nourishment of the mind with God's truth; the purifying of the imagination by God's beauty; the opening of the heart to God's love; the surrender of the will to God's purpose—all of this gathered up in adoration.

~William Temple

The Prologue

Today's texts offer a plethora of interesting perspectives. The Witness from the Hebrew Scriptures in Isaiah presents a glowing narrative promising a veritable smorgasbord, a banquet feast fulfilling in every way. What a wonderful metaphor! In I Corinthians, Paul waxes eloquent in his usual peculiar and somewhat disturbing way, his obsessive tendencies fully on display. The man clearly had issues, many of which it seems revolved around a fixation on sex! Finally, in the Witness from the Gospels in Luke, Jesus seems perturbed, a bit bent out of shape, perhaps even angry, revealing a frustration seldom seen in other gospel narratives. Compassion and empathy are painfully in short supply, strangely absent. All combined, these images are the rocks that roll, a reminder of life's ups and downs, complexity and conundrums at every turn! Even so, they offer us spiritual food, still relevant words for our living today.

Gathering Music

The Greeting

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you.

And also with you.

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Music for Piano (7:30)

The Music for Hand Chimes (10:00) *Go to Dark Gethsemane*

Susan Krivichi, director

John A. Behnke

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Collect

Let us pray,

Spiritual rock, we have gathered in this holy sanctuary to worship the One who rolls our faith, the One who feeds our spirits and quenches our thirst; we offer our prayers and praise to God, whose call comes to us through the scriptures, in the remembrance of our baptism and in our shared life in the Church; feed us now with your word, that we may bear fruit, confronting us with your truth, keeping us from being tempted beyond our own strength; we seek to be faithful in our covenant with you and responsible in our relationships with one another; may we together as beloved faith community witness to your steadfast love in ways that transform evil into good; all this we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God now and forever.

Amen.

*The Opening Hymn (7:30)	<i>Morning Has Broken</i>	BUNESSAN
*The Opening Hymn (10:00)	<i>Come to the Water</i>	John Foley

(Choir will sing stanza one; congregation sings stanzas two and three)

*And let all who seek,
let them come to the water!
And let all who have nothing,
let them come to the Lord!
Without money, without strife!
Why should you spend your life,
except for the Lord?*

*And let all who toil,
let them come to the water!
And let all who are weary,
let them come to the Lord!
All who labor, without rest!
How can your soul find rest,
except for the Lord?*

*The Gathering

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters! All those who thirst in a dry and weary land, come and enjoy the living waters of God! The Holy One invites everyone here!

Even without money, God invites us to come and buy and eat, joining in this great banquet feast of worship! We seek God's power and glory in the sanctuary!

Listen for the voice of God! Let every tongue praise God with joyful lips, meditating on the living God, delighting in the rich food that only comes from the Holy!

In this sacred setting, our souls are satisfied and inspired, the Holy One providing the steadfast love of covenant relationship, calling us to be faithful witnesses!

The Witness from the Epistles

I CORINTHIANS 10:1-13

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. Now, these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So, if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing, he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Listen to what the Spirit of the still speaking God is saying!

Thanks be to God!

The Witness from the Gospels

LUKE 13:1-9 At

that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way, they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.” Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So, he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still, I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be

wasting the soil?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

Listen to what the Spirit of the still speaking God is saying!
Thanks be to God!

The Sermon *Taking up Space!* Timothy W. Shirley
The Music for Meditation
The Pastoral Prayer and Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and
forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever!
Amen.**

*The Closing Hymn, No. 73 *There’s Wideness in God’s Mercy* WELLESLEY

*The Benediction

*The Fellowship Song *Let There Be Peace on Earth* WORLD PEACE
*Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.
With every step I take, let this be my joyous creed.
To take each moment and
live each moment in peace, eternally!
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.*

The Music for Piano

The color for the Sundays in Lent is Purple, symbolizing the penitential nature of this holy season.

*You are invited to stand as you are able.

Concerns of the Church

In accordance with CDC guidelines, wearing of masks is now optional. We will continue to sign in for worship. If we have cases of COVID within our congregation brought to our attention, we will notify everyone as soon as possible.

In case of inclement weather, if you have any question as to whether we will have Sunday services, please call the church office and you will find a message if services have been cancelled.

As of this week, we are putting together a Prayer List that will be available each Sunday. We invite all of you to submit names of people in need of prayer. Please make sure the individual of concern has permission to be added to this list. Also, we have a new Prayer Wall on the church's website under the Ministries heading. You are invited to visit the Prayer Wall and see who is listed or to add a name to the list.

We need volunteers to be readers at the Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service and for the Palm/Passion liturgy on Sunday, April 10th. We would like to have as many readers as possible. First come, first serve!

Lent has arrived! Each week during Lent we will offer a soup supper beginning at Six O'clock in the Evening, followed by a brief worship service, hopefully with some discussion. Those dates are: March 23rd, 30th, and April 6th. Maundy Thursday worship, April 14th, will begin at Six O'clock in Fellowship Hall with an Agape Meal, followed by Holy Communion, Footwashing, and the Service of Tenebrae in the Sanctuary. On Good Friday, April 15th, the Sanctuary will be open for meditation, prayer, and reflection from Noon until Three O'clock in the Afternoon. Finally, we will have a unity service at Nine O'clock in the Morning on Palm/Passion Sunday and Easter Day. We hope to see you there!!! Volunteers are needed. Sign-up sheets are located in the back of the Sanctuary or call Sharon Breit (715-477-2163) or Linda Sanborn (715-891-5655). Also, we invite you to please sign up for the Wednesdays you plan to attend to help us know how many people will be in attendance.

Online Giving is now available on the church website. If you have questions on how to get started with online giving feel free to reach out to Alex at alex@eagleriverucc.org or give him a call at 715-802-8501, Option 8.

As a church family, we are ready, willing, and able to share with you in your prayers of sadness and celebration. Please feel free to share your prayer with us on the church website, or by calling the church office at 715-802-8501. To protect the privacy of all individuals please only share prayers for those, you have received direct permission to share on their behalf. We ask that any prayer requests mentioned from the pulpit have the permission of the one desiring prayer. Thank you for your understanding.

Scripture readers, ushers, and camcorder operators are always needed as well as readers for the Concerns of the Church. You may sign up by visiting our website; or you may also contact Joy Turpin at: joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com or (715) 479-6560.

Just a friendly reminder! The last Sunday of the month is always A Unity Service, meeting at Nine o'clock in the Morning. Please put these services on your calendar. (Please take note, the Palm/Passion and Easter Day services will be unity services.)

Prayer Concerns: As we worship today our thoughts are with the family and friends of Nan Pophal and with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

Church Staff

Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor

Debbie Brown, Church Administrator

Jonathan Alexander (Alex) Fluegel, Information and Technology Director

Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education

Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music

Linda Brainard, Pianist

Norma Yaeger, Pianist

Christine Clough, Cleaning Services

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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March 20, 2022



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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