

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.*



Second Sunday in Lent

*The Lord's Day
Second 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

In today's texts, we are introduced to animal imagery, each species telling its own story, providing a different perspective, metaphorically describing Jesus' present predicament. Jesus described Herod as a fox while imaging himself as a mother hen, depicting his people as a brood of chicks! What a metaphorical menagerie! Today, Jesus introduces us to chicken theology, a reminder that we might well crow like a rooster, but that we are all vulnerable creations living by grace and hope. In Jesus' life, we learn the price of vulnerability, the cost of personal integrity, of being authentic, genuine in every way. How would you like the Gospel Bird prepared? Fried? Grilled? Or charbroiled? The cross always looms as possibility for those who choose to follow the way of Jesus and the way of Christ and the cross, honest and transparent, guided by the gospel that calls us to a different way of life.

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

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Collect

God of foxes and chicks and all of us combined, we have gathered in this sacred time and space to worship the God of all creation, the one whom we meet in quiet retreats and on busy streets; be to us in this hour an overshadowing presence, gathering us as beloved faith community that we might hear your voice and receive your word this day; instill within us a fresh word that we might be emboldened as authentic witnesses empowered to follow Jesus wherever he might lead, sending us wherever you would have us go; we await your word, God of todays and tomorrows, that even through words written long ago, we might discover a timeless word for today in our hearing, a relevant word that would enliven our faith in you; remove the fears from the foxes that hound us; we are listening for your voice as your covenant people, eager to know what you would have us do; change us to be like Christ, setting our minds on things that are above; 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, No. 24 *The God of Abraham Praise*

LEONI

*The Gathering

Come away from the gods we vainly create to worship the living God, leaving behind anxious toils and idolatrous worries, finding rest in our Creator's presence!

In this sacred setting, we are blessed to turn away from all preoccupation with earthly things, left to ponder eternal truths!

Before the wonders of creation, we *can* see, we gather to ponder timeless mysteries that *are* unseen.

As beloved faith community, God gathers us in covenant relationship like a hen gathers her brood under her wings.

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

GENESIS 15:1-12, 17-18

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.” But the word of the LORD came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.” He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness. Then he said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.” But he said, “O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?” He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.”

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

Thanks be to God!

The Witness from the Gospels

LUKE 13: 31-35

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

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

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon *Chicken Theology!* Timothy W. Shirley
The Music for Meditation (7:30)
The Solo (10:00) *When Twilight Comes* text, Moises Andrade, tr. James Minchin
Lori Hunter music, Francisco Feliciano
Soprano

The Service of Holy Communion
The Concerns of the Church
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. 612 *O Jesus I Have Promised* ANGEL'S STORY
*The Benediction
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

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.)

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 16th, 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 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.

In light of the spike in the omicron variations of COVID, the First Congregational United Church of Christ is now requiring parishioners to wear a mask during worship no matter their vaccination status. For those who are uncomfortable attending worship in person we continue to offer an online version of the 7:30 service, made available as quickly as it can be edited and produced. In addition, we remind you that if you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or you are feeling ill, please stay home! We are all in this together!

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.

Prayer requests can be sent to the prayer group through Tobi Johannsen (920-450-1402). 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.

Frederick Place meal is scheduled for March 18 (Friday). Please sign up on sheet next to poster in upstairs church lobby.

We have a set of keys in the Church office.

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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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

March 13, 2022

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