

# 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 of Easter  
Doubting and Believing  
A Unity Service*

*The Lord's Day  
Second Sunday of Easter  
Doubting and Believing  
Nine o'clock in the Morning  
A Unity Service*

## ***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**

Whoever they are, those great, mystical purveyors of all things liturgical, along with their lectionary editor companions, must have a sick sense of humor. On Easter Day, we reveled in the rejoicing of resurrection, our own spirits risen to new heights. We could barely contain our "Alleluias!" And then comes this unofficial day called Low Sunday, full of the darkness of dread, doubt, depression, and despair. Welcome back to reality! Aren't you glad you are here? Perhaps one of the many reasons it is called Low Sunday is the low attendance, many folks bailing, avoiding this downer like the plague after the intoxicating high of the previous week. Let's face it, we live our spiritually-guided lives of faith somewhere between "I do not believe" and "My Lord and my God!" Our refrains proclaim a both/and, not either/or reality. We walk a tightrope, balancing on the between.

## Gathering Music

The Paschal Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you!

**And also with you.**

The Music for Piano

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Gathering

This is the day that God has made! Let us rejoice! We will be glad in all of it! God is our strength and our salvation! Let everything that breathes praise our God!

**We worship the one whose deeds are mighty, whose love is extravagant. We offer our praises to God for loving care and for hearing our prayers.**

Give thanks this day, for God's goodness and steadfast love endures forever! Grace abounds to the faithful from the one who is, who was, and who is to come!

**We are witnesses to the one who acts in our midst! We have gathered to offer praise to the one who has raised Jesus and raises us all to new heights!**

Let us worship God!

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of faith and doubt and resurrection power, we have gathered to worship the God who has raised us with the risen Christ; to the one we have seen, but yet still believe, we long for you to speak to us your word of peace that our inner turmoil may be stilled, our eyes opened, our ears alerted to make a faithful response; may our witness be authentic, that the world may come to know our glory and dominion and respond with joyous obedience to your word; loving God of resurrection power, we delight in your revelation amid our doubts and fears; come to us now with the peace that only you can give; grant us the courage of faith and the freedom of those who have transcended the bonds of earth; on this day we call "Low," with the serious let down following Easter Day, we look for a high with your eternal presence; we would dare to obey you rather than bow to human demands; help us to reach out in understanding and love to all persons;

Speak to us of the abundant life in Jesus' name; 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. 228      *The Day of Resurrection*

LANCASHIRE

\*The Litany of Praise

God's grace and peace is upon us, the One who is, who was, and who is to come!

**As beloved faith community gathered in the name of Christ Jesus, we are faithful witnesses, the firstborn who are raised to new life!**

God calls us to proclaim our faith, to put our trust in resurrection realities yet unseen!

**In Christ, we know the peace of God and freedom from the fears that bind us!**

Receive the holy and still speaking Spirit and recognize the call that is recognized in you! God meets and empowers us as beloved faith community!

**We know God's expectations of us! With gladness and joy, we want to hear and respond! Praise the Lord!**

The Witness from the Christian Scriptures

ACTS 5:27-32

When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey God!"

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

**Thanks be to God!**

The Witness from the Gospels

JOHN 29:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send

you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

**Thanks be to God!**

The Sermon                    *Believing Doubters! Doubting Believers!*                    Timothy W. Shirley  
The Music for Meditation  
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. 231    *Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us*                    HOLY MANNA  
\*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

\*You are invited to stand as you are able.

*The color for Easter Day, the Resurrection of the Lord, and for the Season of Easter, known as Eastertide, is White, symbolizing purity and victory, and remind us of Jesus' victory over death on the cross and his glorious resurrection.*

### Worship Notes:

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## 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.

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](mailto:alex@eagleriverucc.org) or give him a call at 715-802-8501, Option 8.

Prayer Concerns: As we worship today our thoughts are with Bob Mather, Linda Sanborn's daughter-in-law, Michelle Sanborn and with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

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](mailto: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.

*Women's Fellowship Spring Luncheon*, Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. As First Congregational United Church of Christ gradually comes back to life, the Women's Fellowship is pleased to once again be hosting the **Spring Luncheon**. All First Congregational women are invited to join us for fine food and friendship in Fellowship Hall. Prior to our lunch together the Northland Pines top forensics and music students will be presenting short performances in the sanctuary. Norma Yaeger will accompany the musicians. You will be able to visit with the students during lunch. The luncheon originated as a way to thank all the First Congregational

women who have assisted the church in some way over the past year. Even if you have not been able to be active until now, please come and feel free to extend this invitation to 1 or 2 guests. **RSVPs** are required! Please call Sharon Breit at 715-477-2163 or Linda Sanborn at 715-891-5655, (like right now!). A sign-up sheet is available in the sanctuary. Also, please let us know the names of your guests. We look forward to an uplifting mini-concert and the opportunity to enjoy lunch together. See you then!

The Women's Fellowship

### **GAME NIGHT COMING SOON**

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall! Come one, come all! Young (kids welcome) or old, brainchild or dunce...*if you like to play games and have fun*, this night is for you. The games will have you laughing your socks off (sorry, Tim...laughing your shoes off????) with absolutely NO pressure to win (although for you competitive types, there will be a grand champion prize.) No board games, no intricate rules to learn, just lots of silliness, camaraderie, and jollies. And no entry fee! Bring your family, bring your friends (non-First Congregational players welcome) and come and enjoy. Coffee, water, and soda will be provided. If you would like to bring a finger food snack to share, that would be a welcome addition but is not required. We anticipate that the evening will last for 2-3 hours depending on the number of participants. You do not need to pre-register, although it would be helpful in planning if we had an idea of the expected head count. Please contact Barb Helmick or Nancy Diepenbrock if you plan to attend. Or you may put your name(s) on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church. If by chance you do not pre-register, you are welcome to come anyway! There will be room for everyone, and we will make it work! The past two COVID years have been tough on us all. It has been far too long since we spent an evening together in fellowship! Please come and join us and help us get back to some form of normalcy and be ready to have some FUN! Barb Helmick [helmickjanesh@ymail.com](mailto:helmickjanesh@ymail.com) - 920 412 4782 Nancy Diepenbrock [petsX5@gmail.com](mailto:petsX5@gmail.com) - 715 479 2498.

### ***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

April 24, 2022

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