

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 of Easter

*The Lord's Day
Third Sunday of Easter
Half Past Seven 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 Witness from the Gospels in John, we read one of the great resurrection narratives, Jesus' appearance beside the sea. It is a bizarre text! One writer once called this narrative, "The fish-fry by the lake!" It is a wonderful story in which Jesus takes the boys fishing for old time's sake, reliving the good old days back before things got complicated and very messy! They catch 153! Holy abundance! The verse giving us that profound number may constitute the only literal words in the Bible, for as we all know, anglers always count their catch. Fisherpersons may fudge on size but never the amount. The tender, touching moment in this drama occurs when Peter and Jesus kiss and make up, making amends for what turned out to be a very bad ending that seemed like a lifetime ago. The good news, after some cajoling and calling to accountability, flavored with some admonishment and hurt feelings, is that all is made well! All is well! And so it is with us! A table of grace awaits on this, another morning with Jesus.

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

Let your speech be silenced and your ears attentive to the Holy! Open your hearts to the presence of Christ and the eternal word of the still speaking Spirit!

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive honor and glory forever and ever!

Turn from your sadness and sorrow! God loosens our sackcloth and girds us with gladness! Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning!

As the saints of God, we have gathered to joyfully lift our songs of praise, giving thanks in God's holy name! Let every soul praise the Holy One!

Let us worship God!

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of loaves and fishes and bread and wine, we have gathered this day to worship the one who has pierced the shadows of our doubt and despair, any anger and scorn within us, that we might deign to allow the Holy to rule in our lives; turn us from ways that deny your rule among us, awakening us from dull routines, empowered to worship as we are risen to new life, filled with awe and wonder, spontaneity and joy; surprise us with a presence we cannot avoid, a summons we dare not evade, a mission we cannot escape; we are gathered by the love of Christ who feeds us, empowering us to feed others even as we have been fed; 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

Celebrate with Joy and Singing

HYMN TO JOY

Celebrate with joy and singing, "Alleluia" be our song!

Jesus Christ has ris'n to save us, praises to our Christ belong!

Through great love has come the vict'ry, life, not death, can be our claim!

Let us now declare Christ's greatness, spread good news, proclaim Christ's name!

Honor, glory, praise, thanksgiving give we now to God above!

With the cross and grave Christ loved us! Let us now return that love!

By our lives of dedication, as we teach and testify,

May we show Christ's love around us, may it grow and purify!

*Worship now with shouts of gladness, for the Christ, the Holy One,
On this day of resurrection, for the world new life has won!
Let us pray and praise the Holy, trust the acts, believe the word!
Our salvation has been purchased by our loving, risen Lord!*

*The Litany of Praise

Bring your praises to God, O glorious saints! Give thanks for God's holy name!

We offer our praises as a joyous gift of this new day! Thanks be to the Holy One for healing and ever-present help!

Extol the one who lifts us up from defeat! All praise we would render to the one who upholds us when we are depressed and discouraged!

God sees and hears our weeping, sensing the emotional distress that seeks to overwhelm us! God lifts our souls from the pit of despair, raising us to new heights!

Give thanks to God who turns mourning into dancing! Praise to the one who hears our cries and responds to our prayers!

We cried out to you in need, and you heard our pleas! We trust that you are working to restore us with resurrection power, calling all creation to wholeness! Praise the Lord!

The Witness from the Christian Scriptures

ACTS 9:1-6

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

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

Thanks be to God!

The Witness from the Gospels

JOHN 21:1-19

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. He then showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to

him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So, they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” So, Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them. And though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord” you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord” you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

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

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon
The Music for Meditation
The Service of Holy Communion
The Concerns of the Church

Count Them One by One!

Timothy W. Shirley

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. 717 *Let All Things Now Living*

ASH GROVE

*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.

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.

The Northwoods Singers will present a concert "A Journey in Peace" on Thursday, May 12th at 7:00 p.m. at Ely Memorial Church; 4302 County Road B, Land O' Lakes.

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.

Beginning Sunday, May 8th, we will resume Coffee Hour in the parlor following each Sunday service. Coffee and tea will be provided. We are looking for people to provide goodies to share along with the beverages. These can be homemade or purchased. You can contribute cookies, muffins, or other baked goods. If you would be willing to volunteer, please put your name on the sign-up sheet or email or call Debbie Brown in the Church Office. An email will be sent at the beginning of the month to those who are providing snacks for that month.

Women's Fellowship Spring Luncheon, Tuesday, May 10th, 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, 715-477-2163 or Linda Sanborn, 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 18th 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; 920-412-4782 or Nancy Diepenbrock, petsX5@gmail.com; 715-479-2498.

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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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

May 1, 2022