

# 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.*



*Fourth Sunday of Easter*  
*A Celebration of the Good Shepherd*

*The Lord's Day  
Fourth Sunday of Easter  
A Celebration of the Good Shepherd  
Nine 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 our Gospel lection this morning, Jesus says, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly!" What an astonishing statement! One of my favorite authors, Wendell Berry, writes, "To talk about or to desire more abundance of anything has probably always been dangerous, but it seems particularly dangerous now. In an age of materialist science, economics, art and politics, we ought not to be much shocked by the appearance of materialist religion. We know we don't have to look far to find people who equate more abundant life with a bigger car, a bigger house, a bigger bank account and a bigger church." Berry goes on to say that abundance in this verse cannot mean an abundance of stuff, because life does not require an abundance of stuff! It requires only enough! And if we have enough, then life itself, membership in the living world, is already an abundance.

**Gathering Music**

**The Proclamation**

**An Ancient Easter Acclamation**

**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 Contemplation**

**The Lighting of the Altar Candles**

## The Gathering

Enter by the gate that leads to salvation! Gather before the Good Shepherd, the Holy One who knows the sheep, calling each one by name!

**Day by day, we are drawn closer to an awareness of God, a presence that restores and comforts and anoints us!**

A table has been prepared before us! With glad and generous hearts, let us praise God as people of goodwill!

**Our time together is a priceless treasure, moments for us to gather in the green pastures and still waters of this sacred space, restoring our souls!**

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 65 (*Chalice Praise*)

*Psalm 23*

Andra Moran

## The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

Shepherding God, we have come together in this sacred setting with glad and generous hearts to worship the Good Shepherd, the One who offers green pastures, providing still waters, restful places allowing respite and restoration, Sabbath for our weary souls; as people of goodwill, we bring our praises before the One who refreshes us, who comforts us, who anoints us with an overflowing goodness; open the gates of heaven to us this day, great shepherd, that we might find our way to you as the sheep of your eternal pasture; all this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

**Amen.**

\*The Opening Hymn, No. 79

*God Is My Shepherd*

BROTHER JAMES' AIR

\*The Litany of Praise

The Good Shepherd cares for the sheep, making us want for nothing!

**The Holy One makes us lie down in green pastures, leading us beside still waters, restoring our souls!**

The Good Shepherd leads us in right paths in the name of the Holy One, walking with us even through the valley of darkest evil, removing all our fear!

**The rod and staff of God give comfort, preparing a table before us in the presence of our enemies, anointing our heads with oil!**

The Good Shepherd fills our cups to overflowing, satisfying us with the goodness and mercy that shall surely follow us all the days of our lives!

**For we shall dwell in the house of God our whole life long! Praise the Lord!**

\*The Gloria

GREATOREX

*Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Comforter!  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end! Amen! Amen!*

The Call to Confession<sup>1</sup>

The scriptures compare us to sheep who have gone astray. As sheep are unable to see beyond the next tuft of grass, we likewise seem to be attracted to the immediate temptation. We often become ravenous consumers rather than good stewards of God's abundance. Christ calls us to respond to the shepherd's voice! In the silence and stillness of these moments, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession<sup>2</sup>

Let us pray to the Lord,

**Shepherding God, we do not want to admit when our possessions possess us. Yet we do seem bound to all the things we have acquired and all the things we want. We are often reluctant to share too much, lest we be deprived of the comforts we cherish. We really do not want to suffer for our faith, and we acknowledge there are limits to our willingness to follow Jesus. Good Shepherd, help us trust you beyond these limits.**

The Assurance of Pardon<sup>3</sup>

Beloved faith community, hear the good news of the Good Shepherd of Eastertide! God provides for us as a good shepherd provides for a flock of sheep, seeking green pastures and still waters for us even in periods of famine and drought. In fearful times, amid loss, the Good Shepherd's care is always available. Surely God's goodness and mercy will follow us, restoring all who give up their own pretensions that we might live in community with glad and generous hearts!

**Thanks be to God!**

The Witness from the Christian Scriptures

ACTS 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. They would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved!

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

**Thanks be to God!**

The Response: PSALM 23, No. 80 *My Shepherd, You Supply My Need* RESIGNATION  
The Witness from the Gospels JOHN 10:1-10

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit! The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep! The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again, Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep! All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate! Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy! I came that they may have life and have it abundantly!”

The Gospel for today!  
**Thanks be to God!**

The Sermon *Shepherding, Day by Day!* Timothy W. Shirley

The Music for Meditation

The Concerns of the Church

The Pastoral Prayer

The 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 Receiving of Our Gifts

The Offertory

\*The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Christ all creatures here below!  
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!  
Praise triune God whom we adore!*

\*The Prayer of Thanksgiving

\*The Closing Hymn, No. 78

*The Lord’s My Shepherd*

CRIMOND

\*The Procession of the Light

\*The Benediction and Blessing

To our guests! At your choosing, we invite you to join us in a long-standing tradition at First Congregational United Church of Christ as we form a circle as one, joining hands and singing together our Fellowship Song.

\*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 Reflection

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

*The flowers adorning the Chancel for today's worship are given by Barbara Flaherty in celebration of the baptism of her grandson Kodiak Legler.*

Lector: Ursula Charaf

Ushers: Susan Krivichi and Mike Mettler

*The color for the Season of Eastertide is white,  
symbolizing purity and victory, and reminding us of  
Jesus' victory over death on the cross and his glorious resurrection.*

<sup>1-3</sup> Reprinted by permission United Church Press from *Taught by Love*, by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 2002 by the Pilgrim Press.

Today's scripture lessons are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Updated Edition.

All music and text is reprinted through permission of either copyright licenses:

OneLicense Annual Reprint License: A-738560; expires March 20, 2024

CCLI Copyright License 1562668; expires October 31, 2023

**CHURCH STAFF**

*Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor*

*Debbie Brown, Church Administrator*

*Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education*

*Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music*

*Linda Brainard, Pianist*

*Norma Yaeger, Pianist*

*Christine Clough, Cleaning Service*

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

*President, Donna Adams*

*Vice President, Mark Johannsen*

*Trisha Moore*

*Cathy Palmer*

*Deb Stolze*

*Steve Burrill*

*Clerk, Norma Yaeger*

*Pastor Parish Relations, Tobi Johannsen*

*Women's Fellowship, Sharon Breit*

*Sanctuary Arts Group, Patti Roberts*

*Facilities, Donna Adams*

*Finance, Paula Hendrickson*

*Gifts and Endowments, Bill Marshall*

*Safety and Security, Carlton Schroeder*

*Scholarship, Ursula Charaf*

## Concerns of the Church

**Don't forget!** We have *Coffee Hour* every Sunday following worship. Please stop by for refreshments and some wonderful conversation! After all, fellowship is the spice of the steeple!!!

A special shout out to **Kristen Anchor** who is managing our social media presence, specifically updating weekly our Facebook account.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the **Homebound Ministry**, or know anyone who could benefit from this outreach, please contact Tobi Johannsen.

**Prayer Concerns:** As we worship today our thoughts are with Ruth Hibbard, Molly Jaeger, Gary and Bernice Gilbert, Marshall Patten, and Bernard Stanke. We continue to pray for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

### ***Tri-County Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:***

This month we are collecting items to help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The **Tri-County Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault** provides refuge for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault from Oneida, Vilas, and Forest counties. According to the Tri-County Council's website, survivors often flee abuse with nothing more than the clothes on their back. Traumatized and fearful, they turn to the Council for safe shelter and to be provided with everything they need to start over from bedding and towels to toothbrushes and shampoo.

Please remember to bring your coins to contribute to the ***Melody of Compassion*** fund, the proceeds of which go toward helping those in our community who are in need.

Just a reminder that the **Church Council** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 6:00 pm in the Conference Room. Church members are welcome to attend. The next meeting is May 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Scripture readers (Lectors) and ushers** 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.

In the interest of keeping the congregation aware, the church is experiencing a significant shortfall based on its expenses and revenue. More information will be forthcoming in the *Church Mouse* to keep you apprised of the church's finances.

Throughout May, we will be collecting items for Wild Instincts, a wildlife rehabilitation facility based in Rhineland. **In 2022, Wild Instincts treated 1,074 animals.** The number included 114 species, from 46 counties (including Vilas) and three states! You can find a list of needed items in the *Church Mouse* or on the table in the narthex.

We have been providing one meal a month to Frederick's Place for one year and seven months. We are so grateful for your financial support and your "Labor of Love" in preparing the monthly meals. Thank you! Thank you!!!

Please sign the **"Who's Who in the Pew"** pads noting the service you attended.

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

105 North First Street ~ PO Box 1385 ~ Eagle River, Wisconsin 54521

Website: [eagleriverucc.org](http://eagleriverucc.org) Church Office: 715-802-8501 Email: [office@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:office@eagleriverucc.org)

Timothy W. Shirley: [pastortim@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:pastortim@eagleriverucc.org) [timwshirley@gmail.com](mailto:timwshirley@gmail.com)



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

April 30, 2023