

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.*



*Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
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

The lectionary is an amazing liturgical, homiletical instrument, an incredible tool that always seems to find a way to engage the issues that challenge our faith, even those confronting society and the world. In Genesis, we read the story of Joseph's big reveal to his brothers as he surprises them, that not only has he survived their devious plot, their evil, wicked intentions, but he has made quite a name for himself, now thriving as a prince in Egypt. In Matthew, we read the shocking, horrifying story of Jesus' encounter with a Canaanite woman, a loving mother desperately seeking the Rabbi's help, imploring him to heal her daughter. Jesus begins this conversation by insulting his guest, not so good for a host in an ancient world that valued hospitality as bedrock belief and practice. Just because you think it, does not mean you ought to say it! Jesus gets his comeuppance, shamed by the most unlikely of sources. He learns a valuable lesson about multiculturalism, tolerance, and even affirmation. It is a lesson still to be learned by a very stubborn, narrowly tribal humanity. God's desire for all human creation is that peoples everywhere of every tribe and clan, learn to live in unity and harmony and peace as beloved faith community.

Gathering Music

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

The Holy One invites us to come near, to assemble ourselves before God as beloved faith community!

We long to be closer to God, to draw near to the One whose mercy is always with us!

Call upon the One who ordains us with an eternal blessing, gathering before the One who gives us life forevermore!

Emboldened and empowered by the gifts of God in our midst, we come as we are to this holy place and time!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 305

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Ken Medema

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of our ancestors, we come before the One who has loved us and shown mercy unto us just as we are; we gather before the One who has made us children of God and has blessed us with life forevermore; come closer to us, Holy One, in this hour of worship; honor us with your presence that we might be fed; even like dogs, we would gladly receive the scraps that fall from your table; 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. 6

MIT FREUDEN ZART

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

*The Litany of Praise

How good and pleasing it is when God's children live together as one!

The Holy One draws us together in unity and harmony, inspiring us to witness and service!

The gifts of God are irrevocable! God's mercy is extended to all persons!

The Holy One rejects no one but calls us all children of the Most High!

Beloved faith community is like precious oil poured upon our heads, covering us completely!

God ordains all humanity, blessing all persons, everyone created in the divine image, fulfilling the promise of life forevermore to every human creature!

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 Confession¹

Oft times, our speech and our actions call into question our faithfulness to God. In times of stress, we are prone to say things we regret. Jealousy and anger always lead to deceit, betrayal, and broken relationships. Our best intentions to build beloved faith community sometimes go astray. Rather than being overwhelmed with guilt and shame, we bring the wounds of our common life to this time of confession, that we may receive God's healing. In the silence and stillness of these moments, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession²

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of all peoples and races, forgive us for the sins we recognize in ourselves and the wounds we do not see. Show us how we have hurt one another and grant us courage to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. Reveal to us our disobedience to you and keep us from leading others astray. We seek your mercy for the times we have willfully offended. Help us to put aside all actions and comments that diminish our humanity and all our sacred relationships as beloved faith community. Cleanse us for new life in Christ!

The Anthem

Ubi Caritas

Audrey Snyder

Chancel Choir

*Where there is charity and love,
God is there.*

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Likewise, therefore, when we come together,

Let us be united as one.

And from a sincere heart let us love one another.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news. God is merciful toward us and listens to our honest prayers. Our thoughts and deeds are fully known to God, who is eager to forgive and to lead us to new understandings. When we earnestly seek God's help, we are set free to discover new opportunities. Even in the worst of circumstances, God works with us to bring good and to preserve life.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Nancy Diepenbrock

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

GENESIS 45:1-15

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me!" So, no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me!" And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. So, it was not you who sent me here but God! God has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me! Do not delay! You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty.' And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here!" Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

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

Thanks be to God!

The Singing Response: PSALM 133

WINCHESTER NEW

How good when all the earth is one, and hearts embrace community!

When strife will cease to separate, and love binds all in unity!

As oil anointed Aaron's head, and dew adorns the mountainside,

So, peace and blessing of the Lord within the faithful heart abide!

The Witness from the Gospels

MATTHEW 15:21-28

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon!" But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us!" He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel!" But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me!" He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs!" She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table!" Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish!" And her daughter was healed from that moment!

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon
The Music for Meditation
The Concerns of the Church
The Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Barking at Jesus!

Timothy W. Shirley

**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. 73
*The Procession of the Light
*The Benediction and Blessing

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

WELLESLEY

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.

Lector: Phoebe Spier-Olson

Ushers: Carlton Schroeder and Joe Turpin

***The flowers adorning the Chancel for worship today are given by
Chuck and Sally Kemp in honor of their 60th wedding anniversary!***

The color for the Season after Pentecost is Green, symbolizing the growth and development of the Church. Various symbols of the Trinity, such as the Trefoil and Triangle designs are frequently used to remind us of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the Triune nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Parent, Child, Advocate, Comforter, and Holy Companion; our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Ordinary Time refers to that part of the Church Year that does not fall within one of the major seasons and does not observe any specific aspect of the Mystery of Christ. It consists of thirty-four Sundays in the liturgical year and emphasizes personal faith development and nurture, and the growth and enhancement of the Church and the churches. Ordinary Time begins with Baptism of the Lord and encompasses the Sundays after Epiphany including Transfiguration and the Sundays after Pentecost including Reign of Christ. An interesting bit of liturgical trivia is that Baptism of the Lord is counted but is not named as the first Sunday in Ordinary Time.

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UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

August 20, 2023