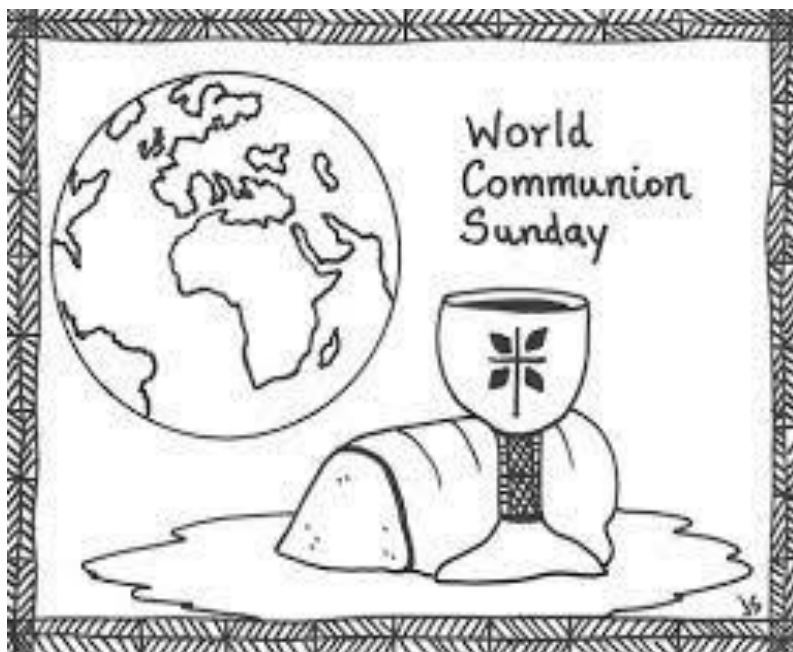


First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and
our hearts to all, in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



*Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
World Communion*

*The Lord's Day
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
World Communion
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

Paul writes to the church at Philippi that we are to be of one mind, having the same love, being of full accord and of one mind! The longing of the Church from its inception is that it be one, an impossible idea if ever there was one. The Church from its foundation, its very beginning, was never cohesive, each church having its own flavor or nuance. As we celebrate World Communion today, we join with millions around the globe celebrating what we do hold in common. Despite our radical differences we are still here after more than two thousand years, a testimony to our staying power and the Spirit that holds us in divine hands.

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

Give ear, O people, to the voice of the Holy! Receive living water from the rock of our salvation!

We thirst for the presence of God, longing to know if the Holy One is with us!

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, a humility emptied before the Lord your God!

With one voice we proclaim that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow before the glory of the Lord!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 354

Seek Ye First

Karen Lafferty

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

Exalted God, we seek to come before you with millions on this World Communion day, gathered with one accord and one mind, seeking to have the mind of Christ, empty and humble before the One who quenches our thirst with living water from the rock of our salvation; we long this day to hear a word from the Holy; may our voices echo the ancient proclamation of our ancestors in the faith who boldly declared “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God;” all this way 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 (insert)

At the Name of Jesus

KING’S WESTON

*The Litany of Praise

Incline your ear to the teachings of the Holy One, listening to the words that flow from the mouth of God!

God has spoken through parables of old, once dark sayings that reveal the light of God!

We have heard and known of the things of the Holy, glorious tales told to us passed down from our ancestors in the faith!

We will not hide these stories from our children but will boldly proclaim them to coming generations!

Speak to the little ones the glorious deeds of the Holy One, telling of God’s might, all the wonders that God has done!

For God has done wondrous things in all the earth! 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

Like the chief priests and scribes of Jesus' day, we are tempted to confuse our ways for God's way. We trust our own authority and defend the way we live as if we have earned all that we claim as our own. Our church sometimes reflects our priorities more than the mind of Christ. 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,

We fear to approach you with our confession, holy God, for you may require changes of us that are costly. You ask us to have the mind of Christ, a mind free of pretense and self-interest. You challenge us to lay aside our advantages to go where you send us. We fear loss of security if we are obedient. It is hard to see ourselves as exploiters when we pursue advantages for our families. It is difficult to consider others when we feel like we are victims. We confess our need for you and our desire to find your purpose for us.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news of World Communion! God accepts us in the midst of our struggles. There is encouragement in Christ, there is consolation from love, there is compassion, sympathy, and the opportunity to share in the Spirit. God blesses us as we gather in community, calling us to find our common mind in Christ Jesus. May we not only agree to do the work God places before us as a ministry of love but let us do all we can to share our faith with a faithfulness stripped of pretense and conceit. May our lives praise God!

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Pat Tucker

The Witness from the Epistles

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

If then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death even death on a cross. Therefore, God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my beloved, just as you

have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

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

Thanks be to God!

The Singing Response: PSALM 78:1-4, 12-16

BROTHER JAMES' AIR

*“Give ear, my people, to my law,” thus did the Lord command!
“My words, though cast in parable, your hearts can understand!
To tell your children of my might is all that I demand!”*

*Each passing generation sings the wonders of the Lord,
That those who follow in their steps may be of one accord
to keep God’s law above all else, and hold god yet adored!*

*How marvelous the Lord preserved our kindred in distress!
The sea a path did yield, and springs did feed the wilderness!
No less are we today the heirs of truth and righteousness!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MATTHEW 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question! If you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So, they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things! What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you; the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the realm of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon
The Anthem

One!
In Remembrance
Chancel Choir

Timothy W. Shirley
Ragan Courtney and Buryl Red

The Service of Holy Communion
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. 91 *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!*

CORONATION

*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.

Lector: Ursula Charaf

Ushers: Miriam Chenault and Mike Mettler

***The flowers adorning the Chancel for worship today are given
in loving memory of Noel Hope from Leta and Linda Cole.***

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.

¹⁻³ Reprinted by permission United Church Press from *Taught by Love*, by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 2002 by the Pilgrim Press.

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Debbie Brown, Church Administrator

Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education

Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music

Norma Yaeger, Pianist

Christine Clough, Cleaning Service

CHURCH COUNCIL

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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

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

October 1, 2023