

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.

X

FUTURE



...LOADING...

*Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty Seventh 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

As we bask in the glow of a very productive Annual Congregational Meeting our local missional church life returns to normal. Today we read in the apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians that this former Pharisee has named a goal, that having already been perfected, is an objective that is now his to pursue. Paul declares, “. . . so that I may grab hold of it because Christ Jesus grabbed hold of me for just this purpose.” He implores his reader, then and now, to forget about the things that are behind and reach for the things that are ahead. “The goal I pursue is the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus.” May it be so for us as we continue our journey into a bright and prosperous future!

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 heavens are telling the glory of God! The firmament proclaims God's handiwork!
In thunder and lightning, in the smoking mountain, all creation declares the presence of the Holy!

Listen for the voice of the Holy, a heavenly sound that draws us closer to the One who is our rock and our redeemer! There is no speech! There are no words!

No voice is heard! The presence of God is declared in echoes resounding through all the earth! May it echo today in our midst!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 190 (*Chalice Praise*)

Peace Be Yours

Blair A'Hearn

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of thunder and lightning and smoking mountain, we have gathered to proclaim the glory of God in this place, to tell of the wonderful works of the Holy in all the earth; yet there are no words, no speech to express the awe and transcendent mystery and majesty of the Holy One; speak to us in this sacred space, glorious God, for we are listening for your voice; remove our fears and make us blameless in your sight, innocent before the Holy; let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer; 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. 277 *Christians, We Have Met to Worship* HOLY MANNA

*The Litany of Praise

The heavens are telling the glory of God! The firmament proclaims the handiwork of the Holy One! Every day pours forth speech and every night declares knowledge!
There is no speech, no words! No voice is heard! Yet a voice rings out through all the earth, a word to every corner!

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul! The decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple! The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart!

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever! The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether!

God's commandments are more desired than gold! They are sweeter than honey from the comb! Great is the reward for those who seek after the ways of the Holy!

Praise be to the One who is our rock and our redeemer! Praise the Lord!

*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

We are tenants to whom God has leased some of the earth's wealth. God comes among us to collect what we have produced, to claim a portion of all that belongs to God. Our creator seeks an accounting of our faithfulness to the way of life designed for us. 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,

Covenanting God, we have no righteousness of our own. All too often, we have bent and ignored your law, dismissing your commandments. We know that they inform us and yet we sometimes fail to be transformed by them. We would rather give lip service to your law, seeking to avoid its implications for our lives. We recognize some of our errors, but many are hidden from us. Our tendency is to devote our energies to accumulating possessions that function as idols, depending on them more than honoring you. Save us, we pray, from great transgressions and help us to reorder our days.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news! Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid! For God has come only to test you and to put the fear of God upon you so that you do not sin." The One who orders all worlds seeks to bring order and joyous freedom into our lives. To fear God is to open our eyes to the amazing vastness of God's dominion and to the astonishing awareness that God knows each one of us, loves us, and has a purpose for us. Let God reign within and among us!

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Tobi Johannsen and Kamie Kolb

The Witness from the Epistles

PHILIPPIANS 3:4b-14

Even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews. As to the law, a Pharisee! As to zeal, a persecutor of the church! As to righteousness under the law, blameless! Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that

comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow, I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

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

Thanks be to God!

The Singing Response: PSALM 19

KINGSFOLD

*The heav'ns unfold your glory Lord, in ev'ry realm of space,
The outmost bounds of all that is resound your wondrous grace!
Succeeding days to day confess, and nights to night record
in words, beyond our sense to hear, the greatness of the Lord!*

*The earth's imagined cornerstones acclaim with joy their source,
Who sets the gleaming stars ablaze, and gives the sun its course!
In ev'ry place within the spere your craft is ever found!
Majestic mountains, seas, and skies with ordered might resound!*

*Your word is sure and perfect still a source of light and life!
Your law is right and reason-filled, your peace, the end of strife!
Your everlasting truth and love can scarce be fully told!
More sweet than honey from the comb, more precious yet than gold!*

*You know the secrets of our hearts, but deign to love us here!
Preserved from pride and self-conceit, we meet you without fear!
May all the words our tongues shall speak, and all our thoughts in store
find grace with you, redeemer, rock, now and for evermore!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MATTHEW 21:33-46

Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. Then he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir! come, let us kill him and get his inheritance!' So, they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing and it is amazing in our eyes'!"

Therefore, I tell you, the realm of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

Onward and Upward!

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. 618

How Firm a Foundation

FOUNDATION

*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: Steve Burrill

Ushers: Woody Chenault and Susan Krivichi

The flowers adorning the Chancel for worship today are given by Ingrid Stephan in loving memory of her father, Luther Stephan, and in honor of his birthday.

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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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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