

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.*



*Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Second 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

In the Witness from the Gospels in John, Nathaniel responded to Philip who claimed he had just met Jesus, the one rumored to be the one Moses wrote about in the Law and the Prophets, "Can anything from Nazareth be good?" It was a great question because Nazareth was a one-horse, backwater, town of no repute. Unlike Eagle River, Wisconsin! The question before us today as we ponder this text and who we are as a missional church is, "Can anything from Eagle River be good?" Surely, part of the answer is found right here in our midst! Yes, much good happens in this place, something good indeed! Indeed, we do much good here! Come and see!

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

Minister to the Lord with all your being, with all your hearts, your minds, and your souls! Declare your presence with words and songs and acts of praise!

Gathered in this sacred setting, our voices proclaim our presence, listening for the voice of the One whose hand is upon us, listening for the call of God!

Come and see and know God in this place! May none of our words aimlessly fall to the ground this day but reach to the highest heavens!

We long for our words and songs and acts of praise to tingle the ears of the One who raises us to a new awareness of all that is possible with God!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 49 (*Chalice Praise*)

Sanctuary

John Thompson and Randy Scruggs

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

Calling God, we have gathered in this place to render praise to the One who has formed each one of us, who knows us intimately, uniquely calling each one of us in our own way to follow in the ways of the Holy; we thank you for your special call to each and every person you call your own; open the heavens before us this day, that we might see your glory and know that you are God; speak to us and make us attentive to your voice; we are listening; let none of our words fall to the ground in vain, but reach to the highest heavens; accept our offerings of worship, that we might glorify the One who raises us as children of the Most High; 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. 16

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

NETTLETON

*The Litany of Praise

Calling God, you have searched us and known us, knowing when we sit down and when we rise up, from far away the Holy One discerning our thoughts!

Even before a word is on our tongues, God knows what we are thinking! The Holy is all around us, behind and before us, the hand of God upon us!

Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, so far beyond our wildest imagination! We cannot even begin to comprehend the wisdom of the Holy One!

How amazing to know that it is God who formed our inward parts, who knit us together in our mother's womb, God acquainted with all our ways!

We are fearfully and wonderfully made, secretly and intricately woven, God beholding our unformed substance, all our days written down before they ever existed!

How weighty are these thoughts, how vast their sum, more numbered than sand! We come to the end, knowing that God is with us, that God is still speaking!

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

We can hide nothing from God, for the Holy One knows our every thought. God is aware of the faults and failures we have not recognized in our lives. Whenever we have broken a solemn trust, whenever we have acted on foolish and selfish impulse, whenever we have trampled the feelings of others or ignored their need, God has noticed. We cannot be right with God unless we examine ourselves and seek forgiveness when we have failed the Holy. 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 who continually calls to us, our lives are an open book to you. Help us to recognize in ourselves all that you have seen there. Remove the distortions and distractions that keep us from acknowledging our faults and failures. Awaken in us a sorrow over the wrong we have done and the good we have neglected. Create in us an earnest desire to change, for we are acutely aware and painfully in touch with the pain we have caused and the pain within us. Continually call out to us, enabling, even empowering, us to face and overcome all that diminishes our humanity.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news. God has heard our cries and felt our pain. Our struggles to know ourselves are prompted by the love of God. The Holy One leads the beloved faith community beyond what is lawful to what is holy. We are glad to claim that we are not our own, but proud members of Christ. We are one in the Holy Spirit. By the grace of God, we are turning from self-serving ways to selfless mission and ministry. Above all else, we are empowered to honor and glorify God.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Deb Stolze

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

I SAMUEL 3:1-20

The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare! There were not many visions! One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called Samuel! Samuel answered, "Here I am!" And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am! You called me!" But Eli said, "I did not call! Go back and lie down!" So, he went and lay down. Again, the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am! You called me!" "My son," Eli said, "I did not call! Go back and lie down!" Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. A third time the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli

and said, “Here I am! You called me!” Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. So, Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if God calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening!” And, the LORD said to Samuel: “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. At that time, I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about. His sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them. Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, ‘The guilt of Eli’s house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering!’” Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, but Eli called him and said, “Samuel, my son!” Samuel answered, “Here I am!” “What was it God said to you?” Eli asked. “Do not hide it from me! May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything God told you.” So, Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, “God is the LORD! Let God do what is good in the eyes of God!” The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and God let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD!

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

Thanks be to God!

The Response: PSALM 139:1-6, 13-18

BEACH SPRING

*You, O Lord, have searched and known us, when we rest, and when we rise!
Not a single thought we cherish is kept secret from your eyes!
Ev’ry word our lips would murmur need no speech to make it known!
All we do, though it be started, is as done to you alone!*

*Whither shall we flee your Spirit? From your presence, vanish where?
Heights of heaven, darkest shadows hide us not, for you are there!
If we take the wings of morning and in earth’s far corner stand!
Even there your love will find us, hold us fast within your hand!*

*In the brilliance of your glory, darkest night is bright as day!
Shadows flee the path before us, when your wisdom lights our way!
You who knit our parts together, knew our lives before our birth!
Sees our faults, yet trusts our promise far beyond our feeble worth!*

*Lord, how precious is your favor shown in your goodwill to us!
To the goddess in their rancor, let us your confessor trust!
Search, O Lord, our heart’s ambitions, thoughts our mouths would dare not say!
Judge with mercy, and preserve us in the everlasting way!*

The Witness from the Gospels

JOHN 1:43-51

The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me!” Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have

found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see!” said Philip. When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit. How do you know me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.” Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!” Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” He then added, “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man!”

The Gospel for today!
Thanks be to God!

The Sermon *Something Good Indeed!* 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. 595 *Be Thou My Vision* SLANE
*The Extinguishing of the Altar Candles
*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, 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: Deb Stolze

Ushers: Carlton Schroeder and Joe Turpin

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 used in our sanctuary, 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 and Comforter; Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

***The Flowers adorning the Chancel for worship today are given by
Douglas and Sharon Breit in memory of Sharon's brother Mike McFaul.***

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

All scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

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, 2024

CHURCH STAFF

*Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor
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

*President, Donna Adams
Kristen Anchor
Steve Burrill
Carol Marshall
Trisha Moore
Eric Olsen
Deb Stolze
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
Service Support Team, Joy Turpin*

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Church Office: 715-802-8501, office@eagleriverucc.org,

Timothy W. Shirley: pastortim@eagleriverucc.org timwshirley@gmail.com



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

January 14, 2024