

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.*



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

*The Lord's Day
Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Third 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 gather and engage these Sundays after the Epiphany, imagine the concentric rings made when a pebble is thrown into a pool of water. Each week, we watch the good news of Jesus spreading ever wider, reaching new people with each wave of witness. The thrust of preaching and proclamation radically expanded the once narrow limits of an exclusively proprietary faith perspective, advancing the ancient tradition far beyond tribe and clan. Eventually, the gospel will reach far beyond the safe confines, the limitations of an insular Jewish audience, extending even into gentile territories. The Jesus movement would eventually be heavily influenced by the Hellenistic world, greatly impacting Greek culture, all of it now pondered by a Western mindset. But long before Jesus and the Gospels advocated for a universal salvation, the writer of the book of Jonah was declaring to the children of Israel the need to escape the bonds and bounds of religious and cultural sectarianism, moving Judaism beyond a stifling and suffocating xenophobic tribalism.

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

Here in this sacred setting, gather as one people longing for the word of the Lord!

For now is the appointed time to worship the One in whom we believe, to rejoice in the rock of our salvation!

Our souls wait in silence for the One in whom we place our hope, the One who is our rock and refuge, the One in whom our deliverance rests, a God of steadfast love!

We long for the good news of the Holy One, that the realm of God would come near to us this day!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 86 (*Chalice Praise*) *Change My Heart, O God*

Eddie Espinosa

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of hope and steadfast love, we have gathered in this sacred setting to hear the word of the Lord this day, to rejoice in the God of our salvation, our rock and our refuge, the One who delivers us in times of trouble; we long for rest, refuging God, even as our souls wait in silence for you, for a word that only comes from you; help us to follow you ever closer, proclaiming your good news until that appointed time when your realm comes near to all your people; 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

Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother?

BUNESSAN

*Who is my mother, who is my brother? All those who gather round Jesus Christ:
Spirit-blown people, born from the Gospel sit at the table, round Jesus Christ!*

*Differently abled, differently labeled widen the circle round Jesus Christ:
Crutches and stigmas, then cultures' enigmas all come together round Jesus Christ!*

*Love will relate us— color or status can't segregate us, round Jesus Christ:
Family failings, human derailings— all are accepted, round Jesus Christ!*

*Bound by one vision, met for one mission we claim each other, round Jesus Christ:
Here is my mother, here is my brother, kindred in Spirit, through Jesus Christ!*

*The Litany of Praise

Our souls wait in silence for God alone, the One who is our hope, our rock, and our refuge, the God of our salvation!

For God alone is our fortress, the stronghold of our faith! Therefore, we will not be shaken!

Our deliverance rests in God, the One we seek to honor, a mighty rock in whom we find refuge and strength!

Continually, we place our trust in the Holy One, our hearts poured out before the God of our salvation!

All power belongs to God, the steadfast love of the Holy One belonging to the Lord alone!

The voice of the Holy calls us to follow, proclaiming the good news that the realm of God has come near! 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

The word of God sometimes comes as a warning. How often we have pushed aside words of rebuke, finding them off-putting, troublesome, and unpleasant. Even if we grudgingly acknowledge their truth, we would tend to postpone any action that would bring about needed change within us. God comes to us today, reminding us our days are numbered, far fewer than we think. The time for us to seek forgiveness is now. There is no time like the present! 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 hope and steadfast love, we reluctantly confess that unfortunately, it is easier for us to install our own gods in our lives. They take our time. They use our resources. They exact from us care and devotion. They can be very demanding! We do not like to hear that our way of life really does not suit us. When we are honest with ourselves, we realize that what seem like innocent steps into self-indulgence can masquerade as deliberate strides away from you. We hear distant echoes of warning and judgment. We want to return to you. We seek forgiveness for everything in our lives that cuts us off from you and from one another.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news. The evil people of wicked Nineveh proclaimed a fast and put on the garments of repentance. They begged God to turn around what seemed so inevitable—their own destruction. God listened, God repented, and they were saved. The present

form of our world is passing away. God has better things in store for us than we could ever imagine. Our lives, enlisted in the realm of God, can count for something good. Forgiven and forgiving people make a difference.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Nancy Diepenbrock

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

JONAH 3:1-5, 10

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.” Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city. It took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day’s journey into the city, proclaiming, “Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.” The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, God relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened!

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

Thanks be to God!

The Response: PSALM 62

WINCHESTER NEW

*Our souls, our God, in silence waits! Our hope secure without a sound!
The Lord’s our refuge and our rock, in whom the joys of life abound!*

*We set our trust in you beyond the futile boasts of mortal pride!
With confidence we hold your prize, and cast dishonest claims aside!*

*Into our silence, you have said that goodness rests with you above!
The recompense for our delight, a share of your unending love!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MARK 1:14-29

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The realm of God has come near! Repent and believe the good news!” As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me!” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people!” At once they left their nets and followed him. When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek! The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits, and they

obey him!” News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee. As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew.

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Anthem

Follow Me

arr. John Carter

Chancel Choir

The Sermon

A Parable for Our Time!

Timothy W. Shirley

The Hymn, No. 668

For the Healing of the Nations

CWM RHONDDA

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. 344

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

ASSAM

*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: Steve Burrill

Ushers: Mary Lou Congdon and Susan Krivichi

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.

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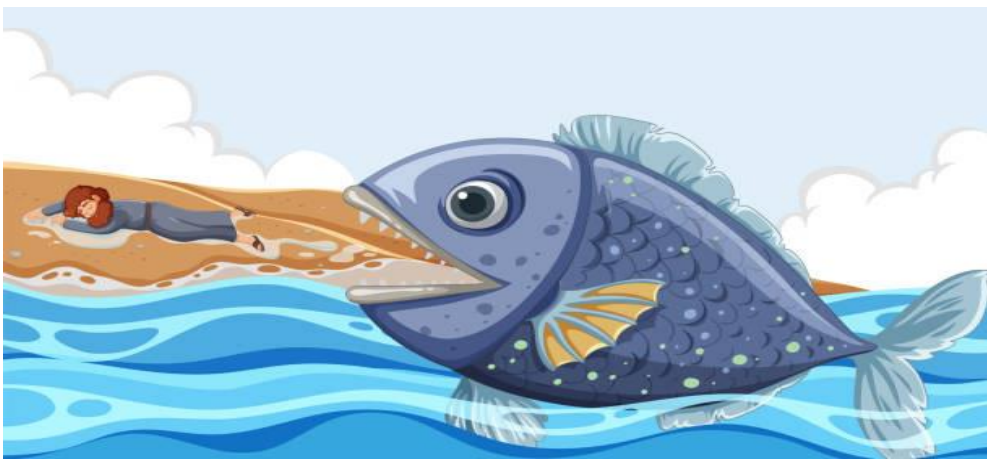
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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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