

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.*



*A Celebration of Trinity
First Sunday after Pentecost
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time*

The Lord's Day
A Celebration of Trinity
First Sunday after Pentecost
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

Last Sunday, as we observed the Day of Pentecost, we celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit in the wake of the Ascension of Christ. Today we begin the long succession of Sundays “after Pentecost” on the liturgical calendar, Ordinary Time making up the largest part of the Church Year, with a Sunday all its own that honors a doctrine, or teaching of the Church, about the nature of God, called the Trinity. In our own denominational history, this teaching was so problematic to some that it caused a split between Trinitarians and Unitarians, a severing of relationships, ironic since the Trinity reminds us that God is relationship.

Gathering Music

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be upon you; Father, Son, and Holy and Spirit—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer!

And also with you!

The Music for Contemplation

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Gathering

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts! Gather to worship the One who fills the whole earth with the glory of God!

Listening for the voice of the Holy One, we come to this sacred setting to offer gifts of adoration and praise, to worship the Lord in holy splendor!

High and exalted, let praise continually fill the temple! "Glory to God! Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!"

Sensing the sound of the voice of the Holy in this sacred setting, we sense God calling us to go forth, sending us to proclaim the good news of God!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 42 (*Chalice Praise*) *Lord, Be Glorified*

Bob Kilpatrick

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God the Trinity, in the awe and wonder of transcendence you have revealed to your Church the glorious majesty and perfect love of one God in trinity of persons, presence of being in three divine personas; triune God, to you we ascribe glory and honor, strength and power, as we worship you in holy splendor, praying this day for your strength and the blessing of peace on all your people; trinitarian God, give us grace to steadfastly continue in your love as we confess our faith, constantly offering our gift of worship before you, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; all this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

*The Opening Hymn, No. 4 *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!*

NICAEA

*The Litany of Praise

Ascribe to God and to all the heavenly beings, ascribe to God glory and strength!

Ascribe to the Lord the glory of God's name, worshiping in holy splendor!

The voice of the Holy One echoes over the waters! The God of glory thunders over mighty waters!

The voice of the Lord is powerful! The voice of the Lord is full of majesty! The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon!

The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire! The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness!

The voice of the Holy One causes the oaks to whirl, stripping the forest bare! Glory to the One who sits enthroned over all creation!

All praise to the Lord, the One who gives strength to the people, who blesses the people with peace! 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

In the midst of a time of grieving, the prophet Isaiah went to the temple to pray. In the temple he saw a vision of the majesty of God unfolding before him, moving him to recognize his own unworthiness with a profound sense that he was unclean in the sight of God. Sometimes we think we have nothing to confess, until we are confronted by the awesome presence of the creator of all things. In the presence of God, we come to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. In the awe and wonder, wrapped in the mystery of a transcendent trinity, and in the sacred silence and stillness of our moments together, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession²

Let us pray to the Lord,

Trinitarian God, we confess that sometimes we are too much people of the flesh, living in slavery to our possessions and our fears. We can be so attached to our little corner of the world that we find it difficult to identify with people whose experience is far different from our own. We tend to turn away from the suffering of Jesus to pursue temporary advantages. Sometimes, we act like just another human organization, not the body of Christ, a church making a difference in the world. God of the trinity, forgive us and reclaim us as your children.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news of Trinity! God always claims us and loves us. When we confess our lostness and seek new birth in the Spirit, putting to death our selfish pursuits, we can receive what God always offers, participation in the realm of God. We are born anew to life which already partakes of eternity. The cleansing coals of forgiveness touch our lips, taking away our guilt and blotting out our transgressions. Receive this precious gift from God!

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Dale Bishop

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

ISAIAH 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of God’s robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above God! Each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts! The whole earth is full of God’s glory!” The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips,

yet my eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts!” Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed, and your sin is blotted out!” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I! Send me!”

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

The Response, PSALM 29

AUSTRIAN HYMN

*All on earth and all in heaven, raise to God a song on high!
Strength unmeasured, love unbounded, God alone we glorify!
At God's voice the clouds assemble, thunder roars and torrents fall!
Earth shall quake before God's presence, mountains tremble at God's call!*

*Trees shall bow in awe and wonder, bend their branches to the ground!
From God's lips one word in anger wreaks destruction all around!
But the word which sets in motion such travails can make them cease!
That same voice which tumult beckons in a gentler breath speaks peace!*

The Witness from the Gospels

JOHN 3:1-17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the realm of God without being born from above!” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the realm of God without being born of water and Spirit! What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit! Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above!’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit!” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony! If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life! Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him!”

The Gospel for today!
Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

Nouns Are Overrated!

Dale Bishop

The Hymn for Trinity, No. 66

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

ST. DENIO

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: Steve Burrill

Ushers: Susan Krivichi and Mike Mettler

*The color for Trinity is White, symbolizing purity and victory. Trinity
always follows Pentecost and celebrates the triune nature of God;
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
Mark and Tobi Johannsen in memory of their parents
and siblings they have lost over the years.*

¹⁻³ Reprinted by permission United Church Press from *Led by Love: Worship Resources for Year B*, by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1996 by United Church Press.

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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