

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.*



*Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty-Fifth 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 reading from last week in the Witness from the Gospels in Mark, Jesus brought good news and bad news to the disciples. The good news was that yes, as Peter speculated, Jesus is the Messiah. The bad news was what that actually meant—the cross. Today we ponder the disciples' response. Like the prefigured Church that they were, they argued among themselves.

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

Draw near to God in worship! Gather before the One who draws near to us! Welcome the Holy, as we offer ourselves to the one whose wisdom abounds throughout the universe!

**We desire the wisdom of God in our midst as we bring our gifts of praise and worship!
We long for Sophia, the pure wisdom that only comes from above!**

Submit yourselves before the Holy One, delighting in the law of God, gathering as a congregation of the righteous, a gentle people guided by the way of peace!

We come to worship as a people filled with mercy and peace, producing good fruits as peace loving people of God, no trace of partiality or hypocrisy found within us!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, Hymnal, No. 326

Thy Word

words, Amy Grant; music, Michael W. Smith

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of wisdom, mercy and peace, we have drawn near to you in this sacred hour of worship to offer ourselves in acts of praise and adoration to the One whose law is our delight, whose presence is more precious than anything we can imagine; draw near to us this day, wisdom God, Sophia, even as we welcome you into our midst; let your wisdom from above rain down in this place, that righteousness sown in peace may become the order of our day; we long to be pure and peaceable, gentle, merciful, and hospitable to all; 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. 322

O Word of God Incarnate

MUNICH

*The Litany of Praise

Happy are those who refuse to follow the advice of the wicked or take the paths of evil that sinners choose to tread!

For the righteous delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on the law of the Holy One day and night!

The faithful are like trees planted by streams of water which yield their fruit in its season, flourishing with leaves that do not wither!

Unlike the wicked who are like chaff driven by the wind, those who seek to follow God shall ultimately prosper in everything they do!

The wicked stand in judgment before the Holy, their guilt transparent, sadly going before them, sinners never found in the eternal congregation of the righteous!

For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous ones, but the way of the wicked will surely perish! 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 are called to resist evil and to purify our hearts, however, our need for such cleansing is not always apparent to us. We are hard pressed to find anything bad that we need to confess, but take delight in the good we have done, resting on our laurels. Yet the peaceful community God seeks, the serving church that embodies Christ, and the spirit-filled company we are meant to be, are never fully realized but always in process. Our prayer of confession is for the whole people of God, including ourselves. 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,

Forgive us, wisest God, when our attitudes are complacent, and our comforts are self-serving. We often fail to think of sacrificing for the larger good we cannot see, for people with whom we find it difficult to identify, those who seem invisible to us. Oft times, we compare ourselves favorably against many who seem less attuned to your purposes than we assume ourselves to be, forgetting that our true standard is Christ Jesus. We ask you to take from us all the bitterness, envy, and anger that stands in the way of your reign, forgiving us with your graciously loving mercy and peace.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news! In our daily meditation, God meets us, and in our encounters with one another, the presence of God is revealed in unexpected ways to those who are alert and receptive. Nourished by the streams of living water which our God provides, we will prosper in the work God gives us to do.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Joy Turpin

The Witness from the Epistles

JAMES 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Who is wise and knowledgeable among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be arrogant and lie about the truth. This is not wisdom that comes down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it, so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it, so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not

receive because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God! Resist the devil, and the devil will flee from you! Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you!

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

Thanks be to God!

The Response, PSALM 1

WINCHESTER NEW

*How blest are they who venture not
into the dark and sinful way,
But find delight in God's own law,
And contemplate it night and day!*

*As trees beside the stream they grow
and flourish, wholesome fruit they bear!
The wicked lot are cast aside
and lost to their own dark despair!*

*The judgement of the Lord is sure
and good to those who seek God's face!
The righteous find themselves redeemed,
And heirs to God's all-knowing grace!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MARK 9:30-37

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it, for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again!" But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. Then they came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all!" Then he took a little child and put it among them and taking it in his arms he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me!"

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

Arguing on the Way

Dale Bishop

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. 676 *O God of Love, O Power of Peace*

CANONBURY

*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: Nancy Diepenbrock

Ushers: Susan Krivichi and Joe Turpin

Pianist: Tobi Johannsen

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.

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 counted backwards from the Reign of Christ and emphasizes personal faith development and nurture, and the growth and enhancement of the Church and the churches.

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

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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