

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.*



*Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
A Celebration of Our Laity*

*The Lord's Day
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
A Celebration of Our Laity
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 Mark we read about an interesting dynamic. In their vain attempt to protect the proprietary mission and ministry, the one of one kind of preaching and teaching offered by the rabbi, the disciples arrogantly forbid a fellow follower of doing exactly the kind of thing Jesus had advocated for and instructed his adherence to do. They saw someone casting out demons in the name of Jesus and believed that this individual was in error, misguided, and that their actions were just and warranted. We are never told who this unnamed individual was, or of what tribe and clan, perhaps a gentile or a woman or both. This text reminds us that diversity is the key to living the gospel, that just because someone is different does not mean they are wrong. As we celebrate our laity in worship today, lay leaders carrying the liturgical load, we are reminded that it takes all kinds, all types of people, all of us to weave the fabric of faith and this abundant life, this wonderful adventuresome journey we travel.

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

Susan Krivichi

On this day of feasting and gladness, let us bring our gifts of worship before the Lord our God, gathering to worship our maker, to sing our songs of praise to the Holy One!

As brothers and sisters, we gather to hear a word from God, to taste holy food, sipping from cups of water that satisfy our spiritual hunger and thirst!

As beloved faith community in this sacred time and space, our sorrow is turned into gladness and our mourning into a holiday, a festival day set aside before the Lord!

Let us feast from the One who stands by our side in the midst of our greatest need, the One who anoints us with the oil of faith, forgiveness, and fellowship!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 99 (*Chalice Praise*)

Make Me a Servant

Kelly Willard

The Collect

Woody Chenault

Let us pray to the Lord,

Blessed Lord, we have gathered in this holiest of places today to pray, to sing songs of praise, and to be anointed by the touch of your Spirit; season us, protecting God, the One who always sides with those who side with God, doing things that are pleasing to the Holy One; in this sacred time together we long for the salt of your presence, that your truth and righteousness would turn our sorrow into gladness, our mourning into joy, as we worship you on this glorious festival day full of feasting; 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.

Amen.

*The Opening Hymn, No. 6 *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above*

MIT FREUDEN ZART

*The Litany of Praise

Kathy Craffey

The Lord is on our side, for God always stands with those who are faithful! In the midst of our enemies, the Lord is with us!

Amidst everything that would drag us to the depths of our despair, swallowing us alive, threatening to dampen our spirits, killing our souls, God is with us!

Against the wrath of those whose anger is kindled against us, we trust, by faith that the Lord is with us indeed!

Even as we struggle against the raging floods of life, fearing the torrents of all that threatens to undo us, we will prevail because God is with us!

Our help is in God, the One who made heaven and earth, the one who protects us from the snares of evil!

Blessed be the Lord, the One on whose name we call, our help in times of trouble, the hope of our salvation! 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

Mark Holperin

Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so you may be healed. Prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective. We seek that right relationship with God that empowers our prayers and our service as we seek right relationships with one another. 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,

Mark Holperin

Gracious God, we confess that sometimes we are deviant or deceptive in our ways.

Even when prayers for others are on our lips, we sometimes seek ways to secure our own advantages. We often put our trust in things we can accumulate rather than aligning ourselves with your will and way. Oft times, our behavior creates enemies and multiplies divisions among us, this your people. In this sacred hour we pray for your forgiveness, restoring us to be all that we can be as your divine creation.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Mark Holperin

Beloved faith community, hear the good news! The snares that entrap us are broken. Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Prayers of faith make a difference. They are powerful and effective. We are changed in the hands of a loving God. We have much to give, beginning with the simplest of gifts, like a cup of water offered to one who is thirsty. We are being transformed in these very moments.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Nancy Diepenbrock

The Witness from the Epistles (Kay Scharpf)

ESTHER 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

So, the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you! And what is your request? Even to half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled!” Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated! If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace, but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” Esther said, “A foe and an enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Look, the very pole that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that!” So, they hung Haman on the pole that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated. Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all

the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday, that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

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

Thanks be to God!

The Response, PSALM 124

NEW BRITAIN

*If God had not been on our side, when wars around us rose,
Who would have been the sure defense against our mortal foes?*

*Though anger at our presence raged, their wrath, a swelling tide,
To draw us underneath the flood, but God was on our side!*

*The Lord be praised, at whose right hand our enemies are stayed!
Our lasting shield, the name of God, who heaven and earth has made!*

The Witness from the Gospels (Kay Scharpf)

MARK 9:38-50

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us!" But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me! Whoever is not against us is for us! For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward! If any of you cause one of these little ones who believe in me to sin it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea! If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire! And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell! And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out! It is better for you to enter the realm of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched! For everyone will be salted with fire! Salt is good, but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another!"

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon *Different, Not Wrong!*

Timothy W. Shirley; Joy Turpin

The Music for Meditation

The Concerns of the Church

Susan Krivichi

The Pastoral Prayer

Barb Helmick

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

Tobi Johannsen
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

Tobi Johannsen

*The Closing Hymn, No. 464 *God of Grace and God of Glory*

CWM RHONDDA

*The Extinguishing of the Altar Candles

*The Procession of the Light

*The Benediction and Blessing

Joy Turpin

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: Kay Scharpf

Ushers: Mike Mettler and Carlton Schroeder

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
in memory of Duane Preisler from his family.***

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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