

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
First Sunday of Lent
February 26, 2023

*** Some rise to their feet, some rise in their hearts—please rise as you are able.***

GATHERING BELL

At the sound of the bell, please silence yourselves and prepare for worship.

PRELUDE

Courage, Joel Raney

Martha Jones

“I will fear no evil: for thou art with me . . .”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

**Whoever you are...and wherever you are on life's journey...
you are welcome here!**

OPENING REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Drake

What makes a person a hero?

The courage to do the right thing.

The trust in goodness and God-ness.

A hero dares to embody truth.

A hero lives with the heart of compassion.

True heroic action confronts injustice and oppression bringing a new dawn of freedom and hope.

**HYMN Song Folder #54

Beyond the Days

All

Refrain

Beyond the days of hope and mystery we see a light of faith renewed,
and in our longing we thirst for guidance to walk with you day by day,

Forty days and nights, you guide the steps of our journey.
May your presence be felt in the whisper of your voice. *refrain*

Not on bread alone are we to walk on this journey.
Speak the words that give life to the yearnings of our hearts. *refrain*

In your hands, O God, we feel the touch of your guidance.
Keep us safe in your care: may your gentleness be there. *refrain*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

BAPTISM

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Respond to each shared prayer request with “Peace, Shalom, Salaam.”

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Our God, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Joanne

OFFERTORY

Gather Us In, Hayes/Larsen

Choir

**DOXOLOGY (tune: *Old Hundredth*)

All

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Joanne

Source of Courage, grant us the strength to say “No” to the temptations that would make us indifferent, stingy and guarded. Inspire us to live with joyful sharing, open-hearted caring, and arms that embrace the goodness of life. Amen.

**HYMN

When We are Tested (tune: *Slane*)

All

When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.

When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.

When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for the power to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.

When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:1-13

Joanne

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,

MESSAGE

“Dealing with the Devil and Other Darth Vader Types”

Paul

**HYMN Song Folder #60

On Eagle’s Wings

All

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life,
say to the Lord: “My refuge, my rock in whom I trust.”

refrain

And he will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you, and famine will bring you no fear:
under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield. *refrain*

You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day;
though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come.

**BENEDICTION

Paul

**SUNG BENEDICTION

Beyond the Days, refrain

All

Beyond the days of hope and mystery we see a light of faith renewed,
and in our longing we thirst for guidance to walk with you day by day,
to walk with you day by day.

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Today’s Worship Leaders

preacher	Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
liturgist	Joanne Drake
musician	Martha Jones

FCUCC Staff

senior pastor	revpaulashby@yahoo.com	Rev. Paul Ashby
office administrator	office@uccgj.org	Beth Rakestraw
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volunteer financial clerks	finance@uccgj.org	Nancy Palubicki & Martha Jones

Pastoral Care

To call Pastor Paul:

- ***His cell phone, 970-793-8638. [Paul prefers calls over texts]***
- *His extension at church, 970-242-0298, x104.*
- *Home landline, 970-200-2668. [Paul is always up until midnight, do not be shy about calling late when there is need.]*

To share a prayer request with the congregation, contact Beth Rakestraw, office@uccgj.org or 970-242-0298 x 105. **Deadline for publishing in the Sunday bulletin is Thursday noon.**

This Week at FCUCC
February 26 – March 5, 2023

Sunday 26	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	music room
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	gathering space
	11:00	Spiritual Journey Through 2023 Book Study	chapel
Monday 27	5:00	Make Mondays Fun	chapel
Tuesday 28	10:00	Women's Coffee	gathering space
	10:00	Men's Coffee	library
	5:30	Cantabile Ringers	music room
Wednesday 1	1:00	The Story of God Video Study	chapel
	2:00	Mission & Outreach	chapel
Thursday 2	12:15	Health & Wellness	mayflower
	1:00	Fellowship & Hospitality	library
Friday 3	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
Sunday 5	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship w/ Communion	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	gathering space

Church office hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00.

Save the Dates:

April 2 | Palm/Passion Sunday

April 9 | Easter

May 2 – 11 | GJHS AP Testing at Church, Various Rooms

June 15 – 17 | RMC Annual Celebration in Grand Junction

December 3 | First Sunday of Advent

Connections & Collections

Contact: Beth Rakestraw, Office Administrator, office@uccgj.org

Want more information about church events? Contact Beth to sign up for church newsletters.

Connections ...

Guest WiFi Access | The name of our guest WiFi is FCUCCguest; the password is “welcomeall.”

Join us for Coffee after worship | You must be current on Covid vaccinations to join us for social events. Persons with underlying health conditions are encouraged to mask for indoor events.

Tuesday Coffee Hours | Enjoy a beverage, occasional snacks and good, not necessarily church-related conversation with lovely people, and make a new friend or two.

Collections ...

Catholic Outreach | plain old white flour, and plain old white sugar. *March preview: salad dressings.*

Solidarity, Not Charity | hotel and personal size toiletries, water/milk jugs with their lids and plastic grocery bags (more bang for your dime!)

Mission & Outreach First Quarter | Trail Lamp | acrylic paint, acrylic brushes, watercolor paper, sets, and brushes. *March preview: multimedia paper, painter's tape, watercolor markers, and art markers*

Helping Handbags | Donate a purse, donate things you'd like to see in your purse (cosmetics, snacks, personal care items, spare change, etc), donate a handbag filled with things. Please leave things in the box on the shelves by the office.

What's New?

FCC Begins Hosting the final week of WESHELTER Tonight! Volunteers, please plan to arrive between 5:00 – 5:15 pm, today through Saturday, March 4.

Coffee Hour Update | Coffee/Happy Hour will take place in The Gathering Space through March 5 because of the WeShelter winter housing program.

Spiritual Journey Through 2023 meets TODAY | This book study group meets every 4th Sunday, beginning February 26, to read and reflect on a book of daily spiritual readings called *Sacred Seasons, A Year of Meditations* by Beverly Lanzetta. Contact Pastor Paul with questions.

Contemplative Outreach of the Western Slope [COWS] | Annual Day of Prayer | Saturday, March 4 | 1:00 to 3:00 pm | Gathering Space