

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Thanksgiving Sunday
November 19, 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

We Gather Together, arr Peeters

Shannon Jones

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

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

OPENING REFLECTION

Paul

CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Drake

Let us be grateful for kind and encouraging words...

for people with patience.

for those who encourage us to hold on to hope.

for the saints who live with hearts of joy.

for friends who inspire our compassion.

for friends who let go of grudges when we step on their toes in the dance of life.

for leaders who practice fairness and promote justice.

for those who never stop caring, who never stop loving.

God of grace, we are thankful for all of the people of goodness and God-ness in our life.

We remember to say "Thank You."

*** OPENING HYMN**

A Thanksgiving Flourish

Choir and congregation

Congregation sing on cue

Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise.

With joyful hearts and voices, your alleluias raise.

By God the rolling seasons in fruitful order move.

Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.

God makes the clouds rain goodness, the deserts bloom and spring,
the hills leap up in gladness. The valleys laugh and sing.

God fills them with great fullness. All things with large increase.

God crowns the year with blessing, with plenty and with peace.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Our Creator, 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

****DOXOLOGY** (tune: *Nun Danket*)

**All praise and thanks to God our Maker now be given,
To Christ, and Spirit, too, our help in highest heaven,
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Joanne

God of thanksgiving, You sustained our spiritual ancestors who were exhausted, despairing and constantly ill. Over half of the Pilgrims died the first year. With empty stomachs, tears and grief were their food. Native tribes gave them food and methods of planting that saved their lives. Let us experience thanksgivings for the many gifts we have received. Amen

****HYMN NCH 376***God, We Thank You for Our People*

All

God, we thank you for our people, roots dug deep within the soil,
hardy spirits, rich in loving, strong for struggle, bold for toil.
Faithful Rock of generations, you whom parents' parents praised:
Here in hope as we remember may our song to you be raised.

Thank you, God, for gentle pleasure: lessons learned and secrets told,
hopes and memories saved as treasure, passed to young ones by the old,
Pranks and glories, songs and stories, food by loving hands prepared.
God, we bless you for your presence in our tears and laughter shared.

Still we must confess before you, sometimes, Savior, we have failed;
though we worship and adore you, sometimes love has not prevailed.
Tempers racing, devil chasing, hearts estranged by ice or flame,
You transform by ways forgiving. Grace amazing! Grace, your name!

By your Spirit of creation keep us bold for risking still,
Eager in anticipation, ever strong to do your will.
Bind us close to one another, sharing life and death and birth,
welcoming as sister, brother, all your children on the earth.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 100

Joanne

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness; come into God's presence with singing.
Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

MESSAGE*"If The Only Prayer We Pray is Thank You... That is Enough"*

Paul

****HYMN 419 (vs 1,2)***Now Thank We All Our God*

All

Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices,
Who, from our parents' arms, has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
And keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.

**BENEDICTION

Paul

** SUNG BENEDICTION

World Peace Prayer

All

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace,
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe!

GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

RECESSIONAL

"Nun Danket," arr Hustad

Shannon

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
greeters
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Joanne Drake
Stephanie Goode, Betsy McLoughlin
Shannon Jones

Acknowledgements

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