

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Twenty-Third Sunday After Pentecost
November 5, 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

Autumn, Chaminade

Ellen Bradley

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

Pam Gregory

We often want to divide the world into those who deserve our help and those who don't deserve our help.

Yet Jesus helped everyone.

But can't we say some people are good and others are bad?

Yet Jesus helped everyone.

It is too easy to label people without looking at their life history. It is tempting to create categories of us and "them"

Yet Jesus helped everyone.

Politics divide us, social media splits us into small often angry groups, religion can create walls that keep people out.

Yet Jesus helped everyone.

**HYMN NCH 575

O for a World

All

O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,
Where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
Where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice
That opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.

The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn: outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.

O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,
Where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

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.

MOMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP

Ken Puhler

OFFERTORY

For the Autumn Sky, Ruth Elaine Schram

Choir

**DOXOLOGY

Know That God is Good

All

**Know that God is good. Know that God is good.
Know that God is good. God is good. God is good.**

**Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah.
Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le-lu-jah.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Pam

God of mercy, You call every human being to a life of love. Sometimes we miss the message. Sometimes we want to run in the opposite direction away from caring. Save us from a life that would not be centered on love. Amen

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 4:5-11

Pam

Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

MESSAGE

The Most Clueless Prophet

Paul

**HYMN NCH 571

O God of Love, O God of Peace

All

O God of love, O God of peace, make wars throughout the world to cease;
The wrath of human wrong restrain: Give peace, O God, give peace again!

Remember, God, your works of old, the wonders that our people told;
Heal every malice, harm, and pain: Give peace, O God, give peace again!

Whom shall we trust, O God, but you? For you are constant, strong, and true.
None ever called on you in vain: Give peace, O God, give peace again!

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Paul

All are welcome who practice the way of compassion.

**HYMN NCH 565

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

All

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

Skills and time are ours for serving, that your will on earth be done:
all at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone:
born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.

Treasure, too, you have entrusted, gain through powers your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, honoring you by loving all.

Lend your joy to all our giving, let it light our pilgrim way;
from the night of anxious keeping, loose us into generous day.
Then when years on earth are over, and we've lived our human span,
God, fulfill beyond our dreaming, all our stewardship began.

**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

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher	Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
liturgist	Pam Gregory
greeters	Betty Hall, Gwen Kelly
musician	Ellen Bradley

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- ◇ *Know That God is Good*. Text and music: traditional Congo, arr by John L. Bell © 2008, Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community, Scotland. GIA Publications, Inc.

During communion:

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