

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**May 29, 2022**

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*\*\* 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

*Courante from French Suite no. 6, J.S. Bach, BWV 817*

Max Reilly

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Paul Ashby

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Drake

God loves freedom. In the process of creation, we each received the gift of free will.

**The longing for freedom is planted within our consciousness and heart.**

The enslaved in our nation cried out for freedom; their voices lifted songs of liberation. The words of spirituals are words of God's Spirit.

**People of all ages risk their lives for freedom in Ukraine.**

In Myanmar, the people long to break the chains of a military dictatorship.

**In our own nation, millions of lives are crushed by prisons that lock up the futures of those convicted of minor drug offenses. May the God of freedom unlock our hearts with mercy and justice to open the doors to freedom.**

\*\*HYMN NCH 2

*Glory, Glory, Hallelujah*

All

Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down. (repeat)

I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down. (repeat)

Feel like shouting "Hallelujah!" since I laid my burdens down. (repeat)

Every round goes higher, higher, since I laid my burdens down. (repeat)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Paul

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

*Improvisation*

Max

\*\*DOXOLOGY

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

All

\*\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Joanne

**Holy One, let your work be done through our commitment to mission. Let our gifts be a source to set people free from the enemies known as fear, ignorance, racism, violence and oppression. Let us strive for the day when all our brothers and sisters celebrate the joy of freedom. Amen**

HYMN

*In Wilderness We Wander* (tune: Passion Chorale)

All

In wilderness we wander alone and full of fear,  
our home lies far behind us, our failures feel so near.  
Yet far on the horizon an unmade fire burns bright,  
and when we dare approach it,  
you speak from its strange light.

In mystery we meet you, O God of wind and flame,  
you do not promise safety, but pledge instead your Name:  
“I am the God of Abram, who sets my people free,  
and in my Name I promise, I AM WHO I WILL BE.”

In wilderness we wonder, where are we called to go,  
though we lack all the answers and try to tell you no?  
Yet where oppression festers, your call remains the same,  
to speak and act for freedom, empowered by your Name.

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 14:21-31 and 2 Corinthians 3:13-18

Joanne

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

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... we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

MESSAGE

*Breaking Chains – The God Who Loves Freedom*

Paul

\*\*HYMN

*When the Lord Redeems the Very Least*

All

When the Lord redeems the very least, we will rejoice.  
When the hungry gather for the feast, we will rejoice.

*refrain*

We will rejoice with gladness. We will rejoice.  
All our days we'll sing to God in praise. We will rejoice!

When the Lord restores the sick and weak, we will rejoice.  
When the earth is given to the meek, we will rejoice. *refrain*

When the Lord revives the world from death, we will rejoice.  
When the word of God fills every breath, we will rejoice. *refrain*

When the Lord returns in victory, we will rejoice.  
When we live in glorious liberty, we will rejoice. *refrain*

\*\* BENEDICTION

Paul

UNISON SUNG BENEDICTION

*World Peace Prayer*

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!

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### **Today's Worship Leaders**

preacher  
liturgist  
musician

Paul Ashby  
Joanne Drake  
Max Reilly

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### **Acknowledgements**

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## **FCUCC Staff**

senior pastor	revpaulashby@yahoo.com	Rev. Paul Ashby
choir & bell director	topcatkc@aol.com	Karen Caton
custodian		Anna Driggs
office administrator	office@uccgj.org	Beth Rakestraw
volunteer financial clerks	finance@uccgj.org	Nancy Palubicki & Martha Jones
music coordinator		Martha Jones

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## **Pastoral Care**

*To call Pastor Paul:*

- **His new 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.*

As of this writing, Creta Payne and other residents of Grand Villa are in lockdown. Creta reports there are six active Covid cases there, but she is not one of them.

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## **Announcements**

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

**Guest WiFi Access** | The name of our guest WiFi is FCUCCguest; the password is “welcomeall.”  
**Join us for Fifth Sunday Potluck after worship** | No worries if you didn’t bring a dish –there will be plenty to eat.

**Dishwashers for Church Events Needed** | As Fellowship & Hospitality (formerly Congregational Life) plans more events for our church family, we find ourselves in need of more help. In this case I hope to find four willing persons who can lift up to 30 pounds to rotate on Sundays to help us clean up and run the dishwasher. Your commitment would be for one Sunday a month, and after special events (would be scheduled in advance). Brief training will be provided. Please give it some thought and be generous with your time. I can be contacted by phone or email. ~Thanks, Barbara Eyler.

**New Directory Update** | Beginning TODAY, and for several Sundays thereafter, a draft of the new directory will be available for your review. I’d like congregants to review their photos and contact information, make any necessary corrections, and initial next to the entries to show it has been reviewed. Your initials will also express your permission for your photo and contact information to appear in the directory. Arrangements for new photos or retakes can be made at that time.

**Next Sunday | Pentecost & Wear Orange for Gun Violence Awareness** | Every year on the first Friday in June, members of anti-gun-violence movements come together to honor survivors of gun violence and demand a future free from this crisis. Moms, students, veterans, survivors, and others wear orange throughout the weekend to show their support—in every state across the country. Congregants at our church are invited to participate in this event on Sunday, June 5 by wearing orange to worship that day.

**Mission & Outreach June Collection** | June is the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year, and Mission and Outreach continues to focus on **Solidarity, Not Charity**. For June, we will be collecting items to create sani-packs. Watch Church Chat for more details.

**Mission & Outreach Ongoing Collections for Solidarity, Not Charity** | We currently collect hotel and personal size toiletries, water/milk jugs with their lids and plastic grocery bags for Solidarity, Not Charity.

**June Collection for Catholic Outreach | Beverages** | With the weather heating up in the Valley, C.O. guests are thrilled to have a bottle or can of a refreshing beverage to take with them into the heat of their afternoons. Let's collect at least 100 cans or bottles or cartons of juice and/or soda, cold drinks, soft drinks, soda-pop (or whatever y'all called it back home) to share with our thirsty friends here in the Valley.

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**This Week at FCUCC**  
**May 29 – June 5, 2022**

<b>Sunday 29</b>	9:00	Choir Practice	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:15	Fifth Sunday Potluck	pilgrim
<b>Monday 30</b>	<b>Church Office Closed for Memorial Day</b>		
<b>Wednesday 1</b>	4:30	Mission & Outreach	mayflower
<b>Thursday 2</b>	1:00	Fellowship & Hospitality	library
<b>Friday 3</b>	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
<b>Sunday 5</b>	<b>Pentecost   Wear Orange for Gun Violence Awareness</b>		
	9:00	Choir Practice	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship w/ Communion	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	pilgrim

**Save the Dates:**

June 9 - 11 | RMC Annual Celebration Business Meeting

June 18 | Women's High Tea

June 19 | Father's Day | Juneteenth

July 4 | Independence Day | Church Office Closed

August 12–14 | Church Camping Trip | Island Lake [on Grand Mesa]

September 5 | Labor Day | Church Office Closed

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

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**Vision & Mission**

*As a progressive Christian community of faith, we seek to walk with compassion, inclusion, acceptance, bravery and understanding as Jesus did.*

*We STRIVE to:*

- ◇ *be a welcoming congregation where you are safe to be who you are.*
- ◇ *be life-long learners that question and challenge each other to grow in faith, thought and actions.*
- ◇ *work for peace, equity and justice for all people*
- ◇ *protect and restore the integrity of our earth and all of creation.*
- ◇ *be change-makers.*