

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost
August 30, 2026

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

OPENING BELL

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

PRELUDE

Holy Manna, arr. Chuck Marohnic

Martha Jones

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Michael Petri

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

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

OPENING REFLECTION

Bp. Alan Morris

CALL TO WORSHIP (A reading from the *Chandogya Upanishad* as translated by Ecknath Easwaran.)

Michael

"Please instruct me in this Wisdom, Father."

"Yes, dear one, I will," replied his father.

**"In the beginning was only Being,
One without a second.**

Out of Himself He brought forth the cosmos,
and entered into everything in it.

**There is nothing that does not come from Him.
Of everything He is the inmost Self.**

He is the Truth; He is the Self supreme.

You are that [Ketu]; you are that!"

"Please, Father, tell me more about this Self."

"Yes, dear one, I will." [Udda] said.

****HYMN NCH 6, vs 1-3

Sing Praise to God, Our Highest Good

All

Sing praise to God, our highest good profound respect expressing.
God gives us health, life, livelihood, with every needed blessing.
To God, who wondrous works performs, creating life and calming storms,
to God give praise and glory.

Creation thanks you, Holy One: you made us and renew us.
Delighted at what you have done, you show your greatness through us.
So may all living things proclaim the wonders of their Maker's name:
to God give praise and glory.

What God has made, God will preserve, with righteousness unfailing.
Regardless what we may deserve, we see this good prevailing.
To God who governs evermore with justice serving rich and poor,
To God give praise and glory.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Beth

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Alan

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.

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Michael

As a spiritual discipline, generosity demonstrates our commitment to the kingdom of God in a tangible way. When we share our resources, we proclaim our trust in God's abundant provision, our concern for the condition of our neighbors, and our responsibility for the maintenance and care of our community. Let us give generously to the good work of God's church.

OFFERTORY

Peace, Joel Raney

Martha

****DOXOLOGY** (tune: *Lasst uns erfreuen*)

All

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

******PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Michael

Holy One, we present these offerings to you in hope and love. May they be a gift in our community and the world. May they spread hope and love. And, may they witness to your abundant and generous creation. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 12:23-26

Alan

Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

MESSAGE

"What the Mystics Know: Our Cruciform Reality"

Alan

HYMN (Please remain seated.)

At the Table, All Are Equal (tune: *Holy Manna*)

All

At the table, all are equal, all approach the feast as guest.
None sit in the seat of honor; at the table, none are best.
At the table, none go hungry, none must steal or beg for bread;
all receive from God's abundance: at the table, all are fed.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Gluten free options are available.)

Alan

All are welcome who practice the way of compassion.

******HYMN**

At the Table, All Are Equal (tune: *Holy Manna*)

All

At the table, all are cherished, all are sought at any cost,
none abandoned or forsaken, at the table, none are lost.
At the table, none are finished, none sit selfishly content;
all are called to love in service: from the table, all are sent.

******BENEDICTION**

Alan

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

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ, arr John Carter

Martha

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher	Bp. Alan Morris
liturgist	Michael Petri
musicians	Martha Jones

Acknowledgements

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- ◇ *Lead Us from Death to Life (World Peace Prayer)*. Words of refrain by Satish Kumar. Tune by Marty Haugen © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Paul and Pam vacate and study | Pam and Paul are crossing the country to visit 3 new nieces' babies in Virginia, West Virginia and Chicago, and visiting Pam's family in Detroit. Paul will also be doing continuing education days at 3 different monasteries he has connected with in the past, including one in Chicago that has a major program to fight hunger on the southside. If you need anything or face a personal or health crisis, please call 425-286-8169. Pam's cell has better reception in rural areas. Peace, Paul