

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**Earth Day Sunday | Second Sunday of Easter**  
**April 24, 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

*Invention in Dm, Reilly*

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

Janis Woodley

Do you hear the earth sing?

**The rivers ripple in delight.**

The canyons echo their prayers.

**The Spring blooms with its best dressed colors.**

The wind whispers its stories of Utes who danced in delight upon these lands.

**Lift up your hearts to join in the songs of nature...**

The birds sing with joy for the goodness and grace that sustains them.

**The mountain sheep skip across the rocks and train the newly born how to race over cliffs.**

Even our house cats stretch and sit in the lingering sun of the afternoon.

**We are all dressed up, but did we realize the party has already started?**

\*\*HYMN NCH #567, vv. 1-4

*Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit*

All

Stars and planets flung in orbit, galaxies that swirl through space,  
powers hid within the atom, cells that form an infant's face  
these, O God, in silence praise you; by your wisdom they are made.

Skies adorned with sunset splendor, silent peaks in calm repose,  
golden fields awaiting harvest, foaming surf and fragrant rose:  
earth, its bounty clothed with beauty, echoes all creation's praise.

Life in wondrous, wild profusion, seed and fruit, each flower and tree,  
beast and fish and swarming insect, soaring bird, rejoicing, free:  
these, your creatures, join in chorus, praising you in wordless song.

Humankind, earth's deepest mystery, born of dust but touched by grace,  
torn apart by tongue and color, yet a single, striving race:  
we, in whom you trace your image, add our words to nature's song.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Paul

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

Janis

OFFERTORY

*Improvisation*

Max

\*\*DOXOLOGY, NCH #567, vs. 5      *Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit*

**Gracious God, we bring before you gifts of human life alone,  
truth that throbs through song and story, visions caught in paint and stone;  
these, O God, we gladly offer, gifts to praise the Giver's name.**

\*\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Janis

**God of this vast song of life we call creation, open our eyes and hearts with awe and  
gratitude. Teach us the path of giving and sharing, for in Your giving and sharing, life  
became possible. AMEN.**

\*\*HYMN NCH #566

*Heaven and Earth, and Sea and Air*

All

Heaven and earth, and sea and air all their Maker's praise declare.  
Wake, my soul, awake and sing, with creation praises bring!

See, at dawn, the rising sun, show the wonders God has done!  
Moon and stars with silvery light praise God through the silent night.

Look around this earthly ball, God has richly dressed it all,  
urban lights and canyons deep, forests, fields, with cows and sheep.

Waters surge and windstorms blow, thunder, lightning, hail, and snow:  
through their frenzy, even these, God would praise and God would please.

All these things with curious force, find them drawn to praise their source:  
wake, my soul, awake and sing, to your Maker praises bring.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 96:1-6;11-13

Janis

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.  
Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy  
before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with  
righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

MESSAGE

*The Earth Sings Its Songs of Life*

Paul

\*\*HYMN NCH 556, vs. 1 & 2

*God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens*

All

God, who stretched the spangled heavens infinite in time and place,  
flung the suns in burning radiance through the silent fields of space;  
we, our children, in your likeness, share inventive powers with you;  
great Creator, still creating, show us what we yet may do.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of since the childhood of our race,  
known the ecstasy of winging through untraveled realms of space;

probed the secrets of the atom, yielding unimagined power,  
facing us with life's destruction of our most triumphant hour.

\*\* BENEDICTION

Paul

UNISON SUNG BENEDICTION     *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens*, NCH 556, vs. 3     All

As each far horizon beckons, may it challenge us anew,  
children of creative purpose, serving others, honoring you,  
may our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavor, well begun;  
great Creator, give us guidance till our goals and yours are one.

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

preacher	Paul Ashby
liturgist	Janis Woodley
musician	Max Reilly

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### **FCUCC Staff**

senior pastor	revpaulashby@yahoo.com	Rev. Paul Ashby
choir & bell director	topcatkc@aol.com	Karen Caton
music coordinator, organist/pianist	finance@uccgj.org	Martha Jones
custodian		Anna Driggs
office administrator	office@uccgj.org	Beth Rakestraw
volunteer treasurer/finance	finance@uccgj.org	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.

**This Week at FCUCC**  
**April 24 – May 1, 2022**

<b>Sunday 24</b>	9:00	Choir Practice	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:15	Happy Hour	pilgrim
	11:15	Council Meeting	chapel
<i>Congregants are welcome to attend council meetings.</i>			
<b>Tuesday 26</b>	5:30	Cantabile Ringers	music room
<b>Wednesday 27</b>	1:00	Through the NT Study	chapel
<b>Friday 29</b>	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
<b>Saturday 30</b>		Sharefest	
<b>Sunday 1</b>	9:00	Choir Practice	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship with Communion	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:15	Happy Hour	pilgrim

**Save the Dates:**

May 3 through May 12 | GJHS AP Exams

May 8 | Super Singing Sunday

May 22 | Annual Meeting

**“Corona Time” Church office hours:** Monday through Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00.

**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 Coffee Hour after worship** | You must be up to date with vaccinations to attend all church social events including Coffee Hour.

**Sally Shell Memorial Fund** | The Mission and Outreach Team has established a Sally Shell Memorial Fund for memorial gifts that can be donated in her honor. This outreach fund will be collected through the end of 2022 and disbursed by the end of 2023 to bless those in need in our community. Checks can be made out to First Congregational with the note “Sally Shell Fund,” or you may give online at uccgj.org. Click on the Donate button, then Donate Now. In the dropdown menu, choose Sally Shell Memorial Fund. You may also donate by texting “\$[amount] Sally” to 970-822-0212.

**Sharefest Update For Volunteers** | We have a good crew signed up for Sharefest so far and the sign up sheet will be available Sunday for more volunteers. Volunteers: remember you are meeting at 8:00 am Saturday April 30 in the church parking lot for instructions and will carpool to the work destinations.

**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.

**Mission & Outreach April Collection** | April begins the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year, and for this quarter, Mission and Outreach will focus on **Solidarity, Not Charity**, with each month concentrating on a different item. For April, we will be collecting canned soups with pop-off, pull tab lids.

**April Collection for Catholic Outreach | Plain Tomato Sauce** | Not the prepared, pre-flavored and expensive kind like Ragu or Bertollis. Not whole or diced tomatoes. Just plain old tomato sauce. Let's wow them again w/ 100 cans this month.

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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.*