

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Stewardship Kickoff
October 11, 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

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

Betsy McLoughlin

We cannot hide what we hold in our hearts.

Sooner or later our heart is reflected in our choices, our joys and our concerns.

Liberate our hearts to flow with love, to embrace the goodness of life and creation.

**Grant us the courage to face the anxieties that make us guarded, defensive, and closed
to the gifts of life.**

Let us discover the flow of generosity that is already in our heart.

**Guide our hearts to overflow with compassion, the longing to understand others, and the
courage to make peace a reality, starting with ourselves.**

****HYMN NCH 402

De Colores (Sing of Colors)

All

Sing of colors, sing of colors that over the hills in profusion are springing;
Sing of colors of the birds that fly outside my window their canticles singing;
Sing of colors, in the rainbow's bright colors God's promise of hope we recall;
Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.
Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.

Sing, rejoicing! Every creature that breathes raise a song to the God of creation.
Sing, rejoicing! Sing to God who so earnestly cares, who has offered salvation.
Sing the good news! Sing the love of the Savior reflecting the colors of all.
Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall.
Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall.

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.**

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Betsy

OFFERTORY

You Are Wonderfully Made, Choplin

Choir

****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**

Betsy

Holy Presence, we give thanks for the blessings we have received. Even in months when we have little to share, we know ourselves to be blessed. We bring these offerings to support Your mission of serving the sick, the poor, the hospitalized, the depressed, and the oppressed in our community and across the globe. Amen

******HYMN 562, vs. 1, 3**

Take My Gifts

All

Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me,
Gave me light and food and shelter, gave me life and set me free,
Now because your love has touched me, I have love to give away,
Now the bread of love is rising, loaves of love to multiply!

Take whatever I can offer – gifts that I have yet to find,
Skills that I am slow to sharpen, talents of the hand and mind,
Things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be:
Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:21; 25-34 [NRSVUE]

Betsy

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

MESSAGE

“The Joy of Generosity My Grandpa Missed”

Paul

******HYMN 495**

Called as Partners in Christ’s Service

All

Called as partners in Christ’s service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God’s chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

****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

Make the Sounds of Praise, Hughes

Ellen

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Betsy McLoughlin
Ellen Bradley

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