

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Eighth Sunday After Pentecost
July 14, 2024

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

PRELUDE *Piece V, Harald Rohlig, from Ten Pieces for Organ* Shannon Jones

GATHERING BELL

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

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

Beth Rakestraw

Worship calls us to be awake to the splendor of creation, and to be aware of the gentle web of life.

Worship calls us to respond with our hearts and minds to the joys and concerns of people across the street and across the globe.

Worship is a desire to be a student of Jesus and share the spiritual gifts we can offer the world.

Too often we reduce worship to rituals, liturgies and sacraments. Enable us to experience a deep gratitude for life as our worship together.

May God be manifest in our conscience and consciousness

Let our worship connect our hearts to humanity, to creation, to all living beings and the very ground under our feet.

**HYMN NCH 420

We Praise You, O God

All

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.

We lay it before you, we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name, glad praises we bring.

We worship you, God of our mothers and fathers;
through life's storm and tempest our guide you have been.

When perils o'ertake us, you never will forsake us,
and with your help, O God, in life's struggles we win.

With voices united our praises we offer,
and gladly our song of thanksgiving we raise.

Our sins now confessing, we pray for your blessing;
to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!

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.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Beth

OFFERTORY

Piece IV, Rohlig

musician

**OFFERING RESPONSE (tune: *Holy Manna*)

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.
Open wide our hands in sharing as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, honoring you by loving all.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Beth

Holy One, help us to live a simple and holy life. Through our giving, let us experience gifts of gratitude and hope. Grant us the joy of being a source of help and healing as we follow in the path of Christ's compassion. Amen

**HYMN NCH 17, vs 1 & 4

To You, O God, All Creatures Sing

All

To you, O God, all creatures sing, and all creation, everything
Sings your praises, alleluia!
Your burning sun with golden beam, your silver moon with softer gleam
Sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

To you, O God, day after day, your planet earth in every way,
Sings your praises, alleluia!
As savory fruit and fragrant flower show forth your glory and your power,
Singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 29

Beth

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory of the Holy Name; worship the Lord in holy splendor.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters.
The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
God makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire.
The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl and strips the forest bare,
and in God's temple all say, "Glory!"

The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as ruler forever.
May the Lord give strength to the people! May the Lord bless the people with peace!

MESSAGE

"Why Worship? Why Come to Worship?"

Paul

**HYMN NCH 76

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

All

Sent forth by God's blessing our true faith confessing,
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.
The service is ended, O now be extended
the fruits of our worship in all who believe.
The seed of the teaching, receptive hearts reaching,
shall blossom in action for God and for all.

God's grace did invite us, and love shall unite us
to work for God's realm and to answer the call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,
the tasks of our everyday life we will face.
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
embracing God's children of each tribe and race.
With your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us,
unite us as one in this life that we share.
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving
give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

**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

Piece VI, Rohlig

Shannon

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Beth Rakestraw
Shannon Jones

Acknowledgements

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Music Notes

Harald Rohlig (1926-2014) was a German born musician who immigrated to the USA in 1955. He was on the music faculty at Huntington College in Alabama for 55 years, conducting choirs and teaching violin, piano and organ. He was choirmaster and organist at Methodist, Baptist and Episcopalian churches in the area.