

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Epiphany Sunday
January 8, 2023

** *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

Fairest Lord Jesus, arr. Diane Bish

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

Carolyn Holmgren

Do not be content to live a life of boring security and unending sameness.

But we do not like risks. Why do you think we have multiple insurance policies?

God calls us to boldly go where no one has gone before!

That sounds more like the original theme of Star Trek.

Actually, it began with Abraham and Sarah, then Moses and The Hebrews liberated from slavery, the Magi crossing the desert to Bethlehem, Jesus marching into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and the disciples boldly going across the known world.

Holy One, grant us this year the gift of a spiritual journey that could be an inward awakening or an outward pilgrimage to distant places.

**HYMN NCH 160, vs 1,2,4 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)* **

All

Hark! the herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world;
Glory to the Christ-child bring, Jesus the light of the world.

Refrain

We will follow the light, beautiful light,
come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright,
Shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus the light of the world.

Joyful, all you saints arise, Jesus the light of the world;
Join the triumph of the skies, Jesus the light of the world. *Refrain*

Hail the Bearer of God's peace! Jesus the light of the world;
Hail the Sun of righteousness! Jesus the light of the world. *Refrain*

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 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

Carolyn

OFFERTORY

What Star is This? arr Hal Hopson

Ellen

**DOXOLOGY

Glo - - - - ria. In excelsis deo. Glo - - - - ria. In excelsis deo.

All

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Carolyn

Holy One, Through the seasons of life knit us together with mutual love and caring. You have already blessed us with spiritual gifts and talents to share. Let us be warm, grateful, joyful mirrors of Your radiant heart of hope. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-12

Carolyn

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MESSAGE

Are You Looking for Jesus in the Right Place?

Paul

**HYMN NCH 153

Who Would Think That What Was Needed

All

Who would think that what was needed to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think despite derision, that a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

Shepherds watch and sages wonder, monarchs scorn and angels sing:
such a place as none would reckon hosts a holy, helpless thing;
stabled beasts and passing strangers watch a baby laid in hay:
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

Centuries of skill and science span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether with such progress we improve.
In our search for sense and meaning, lest our hopes and humor fray,
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

COMMUNION

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today!

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;
Proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
Bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing: God's power will make us strong.

**BENEDICTION

**UNISON SUNG BENEDICTION

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!

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev Paul Ashby
Carolyn Holmgren
Ellen Bradley

Acknowledgements

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- ◇ *Fairest Lord Jesus*, a Silesian folk melody arranged by Diane Bish © 2980, Fred Bock Music Company.
- ◇ *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*. Words (verses): Charles Wesley (1739). Tune: *Elderkin*, George D. Elderkin (1890). Arr Jeffrey Radford © 1993, The Pilgrim Press. **
- ◇ *What Star is This*, a 15th century Germany melody adapted by Michael Praetorius. This arrangement by Hal Hopson © 2006, Hope Publishing Company.
- ◇ *Doxology*. Tune: *Gloria* (refrain), anonymous 19th century French carol. Public domain.
- ◇ *Who Would Think That What Was Needed*. Tune: *Scarlet Ribbons*, a traditional English melody arr. by John Bell and others. Words: John Bell and Graham Maule. Words and arrangement © 1990, Wild Goose Publications/Iona Community. Used by permission of GIA Publications, Inc.
- ◇ Music during communion: *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace (Prayer of St. Frances)*. Music by Sebastian Temple © 1967 and this arr. by Jane Holstein © 2006 OCP Publications.
- ◇ *Arise Your Light Is Come*. Words: Ruth Duck © 1992, G.I.A. Publications, Inc. #07293. Tune: *Festal Song*, William Walter, 1872. Public domain.
- ◇ *Lead Us from Death to Life (World Peace Prayer)*. Words of refrain by Satish Kumar. Tune by Marty Haugen © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

** This arrangement of an otherwise familiar hymn is typical of adaptations of hymns into a classic gospel waltz style popular in Black churches in the United States. The adaptation was first published in 1890. Jeffrey Radford, who arranged the song for the NCH, was music director at Trinity UCC in Chicago (sometimes known as "Obama's church").

FCUCC Staff

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music coordinator		Martha Jones

Pastoral Care

To call Pastor Paul:

- **His 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. **Deadline for publishing in the Sunday bulletin is Thursday noon.**

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 after worship | You must be current on Covid vaccinations to join us for social events. Persons with underlying health conditions are encouraged to mask for indoor events.

Mission & Outreach First Quarter 2023 Collection | For the first quarter of 2023, Mission and Outreach will be focusing on Trail Lamp, a local organization that empowers underrepresented youth through art and business mentorship. For the month of January, please choose from the following items: sketchbooks, graphite pencils, pencils, ink pens, and erasers. Most of these items can be found at Target or Wal Mart as well as at Michael's. As always, please place your donations in the designated bin across from the church office. Thank you! ~M & O team

Church Administrator on Vacation | Thanks to Carolyn Holmgren, a full slate of Office Angel volunteers has been organized for the time when I am away in Texas. Thanks also to Marie Koontz for agreeing to let volunteers without keys into the building.

Special Two Week Edition of Church Chat | There will be one Church Chat email sent out for the full two weeks Beth will be out on Monday, January 9. Church Chat will continue on its regular Thursday schedule January 26.

January Collection for Catholic Outreach | We're continuing our collection of good ole' plain ole' Tomato Sauce for the CO cooks to use to prepare a variety of foods. Let's collect 100+ more cans, shall we?

Mission & Outreach Ongoing Collections for Solidarity, Not Charity | We currently collect hotel and personal size toiletries, and water/milk jugs with their lids for Solidarity, Not Charity. The sleeping mat makers would like for people to begin bringing plastic bags again.

A Note from the Finance Team | If you have made a donation in 2022, you will receive a year-end statement by the end of January. You should not file your taxes until you have this statement in hand. We will distribute them by email if the church has your email address. We will also distribute printed copies on Sunday mornings around the middle of January and will mail those not picked up.

This Week at FCUCC
January 8 – January 15, 2023

Sunday 8	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Undecorating the Sanctuary, etc	
	11:00	Happy Hour	fellowship hall
Monday 9	1:00	Property Team	chapel
	5:00	Make Mondays Fun Again	pilgrim
Tuesday 10	10:00	Women's Coffee	pilgrim
	10:00	Men's Coffee	mayflower
	5:30	Cantabile Ringers	music room
Thursday 12	12:15	Health & Wellness	mayflower
Friday 13	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
Sunday 15	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	sanctuary
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	fellowship hall
	11:15	Church Council Meeting	chapel

Congregants are welcome to attend council meetings.

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

Save the Dates:

February 1 | The Story of God video and discussion group begins

February 5 | Baby Shower for Dana Brosig

February 19 | FCC Hosts WeShelter Program through March 4

February 22 | Ash Wednesday

February 26 | Spiritual Journey through 2023 Book Group begins

April 9 | Easter

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.*