

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Pledge Dedication Sunday
November 10, 2024

*** 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

Great is Thy Faithfulness, arr. Joel Raney

Shannon Jones & Martha Jones

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

Michael Petri

Faith without work, does not work.

Every achievement requires effort.

Jesus never said "just believe and you are saved." That line was invented by 19th century evangelists.

The work of the church is to help the weak, the sick, the orphans and widows living in poverty.

Our work is also to be wise enough not to be seduced by computer-based attention-grabbing algorithms designed to make us it's slaves.

May we know the freedom that cannot be given to those focused on being consumers within a corporate run culture.

Grant us the faith that inspired Jesus.

Give us the courage that opens the path to mercy.

****HYMN NCH 565, vs 1 & 2**

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

All

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

Skills and time are ours for serving, that your will on earth be done:
all at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone:
born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

DEDICATION OF PLEDGES

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.

A MOMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP

Ken Puhler

OFFERTORY

Beyond All We Could Imagine, Pepper Choplin

Choir

**OFFERING RESPONSE (tune: Old Hundredth)

All

**O hear your people as we trace
your mercy and your boundless grace;
receive our praise that's never done,
O God, O Christ, O Spirit One!**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Michael

Holy One, too often we cannot see beyond ourself. Too often we wish for an easy life rather than a life that is meaningful. We pray for the challenges we need to grow our hearts and souls. We pray for the strength to fully love our neighbors in a nation that is divided by fear and selfishness. Amen

**HYMN NCH 575

O for a World

All

O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,
Where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
Where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice
That opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.

The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn: outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.

O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,
Where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

SCRIPTURE

James 1:2-5, 22-27

Michael

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials, consider it all joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance complete its work, so that you may be complete and whole, lacking in nothing.

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.

Be doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

If any think they are religious and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

MESSAGE

"Faith That Produces Mercy and Justice"

Paul

**HYMN NCH 565, vs 3 & 4 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*

All

Treasure, too, you have entrusted, gain through powers your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, honoring you by loving 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.
Then when years on earth are over, and we've lived our human span,
God, fulfill beyond our dreaming, all our stewardship began.

**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

Let There Be Peace on Earth, Marohnic

Martha

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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.

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musicians

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Michael Petri
Martha Jones, Shannon Jones, Kam Macar