

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Yet Another Sunday After Pentecost
October 26, 2025**

**** *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

Autumn, Cecile Chaminade

Ellen Bradley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. 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

With the heart of Christ, we welcome everyone to the temple... Those of faith and those who question faith, those who have resources and those who are homeless, those who are respected by society and those who are rejected and blamed.

We acknowledge that we all have souls under construction. We are not perfect or complete.

We gather not as perfect people in a perfect church but as imperfect and flawed human beings with our own set of life scars.

Let us celebrate that we are welcomed as children of God seeking to walk the path of healing ourself and helping others on this spiritual journey called life.

****HYMN Song Folder #2, VS 1,4,5

All Are Welcome

All

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hope and dreams and vision, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
all are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
all are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
all are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Stephania Vasconez, MAP Executive Director

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

Kathy Goe

OFFERTORY

Keeper of the Song, Joseph Martin

Choir

****DOXOLOGY (*Lasst uns erfreuen*)

All

**Praise God, who makes all people one,
whose healing work is never done,
alleluia, alleluia;
who calls us steadfast to abide
in mercy at each other's side:
alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Michael

God of Love, the greatest gift we bring to this temple is not in a purse or wallet but in the strength to love. We give thanks for a conscience and consciousness that is born to radiate Your light of compassion. Amen

**HYMN SF 79, vs 1,3-5

Sing a New Church (tune: *Nettleton*)

All

Summoned by the God who made us rich in our diversity,
Gathered in the name of Jesus, richer still in unity:

Refrain

Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.

Trust the goodness of creation; trust the Spirit strong within.
Dare to dream the vision promised, sprung from seed of what has been. *Refrain*

Bring the hopes of ev'ry nation; bring the art of ev'ry race.
Weave a song of peace and justice; let it wound through time and space. *refrain*

Draw together at one table all the human family;
Shape a circle ever wider and a people ever free. *refrain*

SCRIPTURE

Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 9:9-13

Michael

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

MESSAGE

"Learning to Love Tax Collectors"

Paul

**HYMN NCH #391, VS 1,3,5

In the Midst of New Dimensions

All

In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey, now and ever, now and ever,
now and ever more.

As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
Grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams. *Refrain*

Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
May your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again. *Refrain*

****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

All Creatures of Our God and King, arr Hopson

Ellen

Acknowledgements

Unless otherwise noted, the following music is reprinted and/or included in the worship recording with permission through OneLicense #A-709231. All rights reserved. All other music in public domain.

- ◇ The doxology words are by Rev. Dr. Mary Luti, published in *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow: Doxologies for the Church* by The God Is Still Speaking® Writers Group of the United Church of Christ © 2024.
- ◇ *Autumn*, Cecile Chaminade, compiled and arranged by William M Felton, © 1940, Theodore Presser Co.
- ◇ *All Are Welcome*. Marty Haugen © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc.
- ◇ *Keeper of the Song*. Words and music: Joseph Martin © 2001, Shawnee Press
- ◇ *Sing a New Church*, SF 79. Text: Delores Dufner, OSB © 1991, Sisters of St. Benedict. Published by OCP Publications. Tune: *Nettleton*. Tune is in public domain.
- ◇ *In the Midst of New Dimensions*. Words and Music by Julian B Rush © Julian B. Rush, 1985.
- ◇ *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
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Michael Petri
Ellen Bradley