

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Tenth Sunday After Pentecost
July 28, 2024

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

PRELUDE *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*, arr J C Bach & Piet Post 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

Andrea Bartlett

Since the dawn of human consciousness, humans have looked for someone or something to blame.

It is not easy to take responsibility for our choices, our mistakes, our failures and our flaws.

Poor choices are blamed on snakes in a garden or devils in the wilderness.

May we have the wisdom to make decisions that do not inspire regret, blame and self-condemnation.

Grant us the peace that accepts what we cannot fix, grant us the awareness to learn from past mistakes, grant us the hope that considers the best options.

In all things, guide us with compassion.

**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.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

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

Andrea

OFFERTORY

Foundation, Anne Krenz Organ

Handbell Quartet & Shannon

****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**

Andrea

Holy One, Source of Life, we are grateful for all the good within us and within our lives. We are blessed by those who welcome us, encourage us and care about our future. We are grateful for the ways in which our giving translates into helping others in our suffering world. In all things let us seek the path of loving, listening and helping. Amen

****HYMN**

How Firm a Foundation

All

How firm a foundation, you saints in the Lord,
is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!
What more can God say than to you has been said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

"Fear not, I am with you, oh be not dismayed,
For I am your God; I will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
Upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand."

"When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
delivering you from your deepest distress."

"When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be your supply;
The flame shall not hurt you; for I have designed
Your soul to make pure just as gold is refined."

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake!"

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:1-11 [NRSVUE]

Andrea

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But Jesus answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'God will command the angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and said to Jesus, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve God only.' "

Then the devil left Jesus, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

MESSAGE *"Does Satan Exist? Should You Worry?"* Paul

**HYMN NCH 573 *Lead On Eternal Sovereign* All

Lead on eternal Sovereign, we follow in your way;
loud rings your cry for justice, your call for peace this day;
through prayerful preparation, your grace will make us strong,
to carry on the struggle to triumph over wrong.

Lead on eternal Sovereign, we follow not with fear,
for in each human conflict your words of strength we hear:
that when we serve with gladness, you will not let us fall,
our trust is in your promise that love will conquer all.

Lead on eternal Sovereign, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
and all your saints together will sing a hymn of peace;
then all in your dominion will live with hearts set free,
to love and serve each other for all eternity.

**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 *Now Thank We All Our God*, arr Piet Post Shannon

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