

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Penultimate Sunday Before Advent
November 13, 2022

*** 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

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, John Carter

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

Betsy McLoughlin

It is easy to lose hope. It is all too easy to become a professional cynic.

We often imagine what it would be like to live in the good old days, that in reality were not all that good for minorities, or women, or the working class family.

We can be discouraged by election results. But was our hope ever fulfilled by politicians and politics?

Let us experience God's hope for a peace that will require a true evolution of consciousness.

Seek the peace of God.

God of hope, give us the strength to love, to listen, to help.

**HYMN NCH 459, vs 1 & 3

Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

All

Come, O fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing your grace.
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of endless praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing love.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I am drawn anew!
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to you.
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've known;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your very own.

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

Betsy

OFFERTORY

Morning Prayer, Matt Schinske

Martha

**DOXOLOGY (tune: *Lasst uns erfreuen*)

All

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Betsy

God of peace and justice, teach us Your ways. Enlist us in the work of hope that seeks to overcome the poisons of greed, anger and ignorance. Use our gifts to plant new seeds of peace and justice. Amen.

**HYMN NCH 461, vs 1 & 2 (tune: *Hyfrydol*)

Let Us Hope When Hope Seems Hopeless

All

Let us hope when hope seems hopeless, when the dreams we dreamed have died.
When the morning breaks in brightness, hunger shall be satisfied.
One who sows the fields with weeping shall retrace the sorrowing way
and rejoice in harvest bounty at the breaking of the day.

Faith and hope in love's compassion will survive though knowledge cease,
though the tongues of joy fall silent, dull the words of prophecies.
Faith shall see and trust its object; hope shall set its anchor sure;
love shall bloom in Love eternal. Faith and hope and love endure.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 65:17-25 and Romans 5:1-5

Betsy

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

MESSAGE

Living with God's Hope

Paul

I've got a feeling, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ I've got a feeling, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ I've got a feeling, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ I've got a feeling, everything is gonna be all right.

be all right, be all right, be all right.

Jesus already told me, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ Jesus already told me, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ Jesus already told me, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ Jesus already told me, everything is gonna be all right.

be all right, be all right, be all right.

The Spirit has confirmed it, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ the Spirit has confirmed it, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ the Spirit has confirmed it, everything is gonna be all right.

O _____ the Spirit has confirmed it, everything is gonna be all right.

be all right, be all right, be all right.

**BENEDICTION

**UNISON 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!

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher

Rev Paul Ashby

liturgist

Betsy McLoughlin

musician

Martha Jones

Acknowledgements

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◇ *I've Got a Feeling*, NCH 458. Music: *African-American traditional*, arr. Jeffrey Radford © 1993, The Pilgrim Press. Text: African-American traditional.

◇ *Lead Us from Death to Life (World Peace Prayer)*. Words of refrain by Satish Kumar. Tune by Marty Haugen © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

FCUCC Staff

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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.

Fall Book Study | 11:15 | The book study, *Christians Against Christianity* by Obery Hendricks Jr, continues in the library after worship.

Divine Desserts Auction A Success | Thanks to some wonderful makers who provided 20+ desserts and generous people with a passion for sweets, \$1000 in seed money was raised for the St. Francis Pet Fund.

Thanks to everyone who came out for the Fall Clean Up. Our grounds have been prepared for wintry weather and our building better prepared for the holiday season.

Annual Thanksgiving Potluck | Thursday, November 24 | 2:00 to 5:00 pm | Pilgrim Hall | Turkeys will be provided, but a sign up sheet is available in Pilgrim Hall for people to sign up to bring side dishes and desserts, and/or help with clean up. Your house guests are welcome too!

Liturgists Needed | A new sign up sheet for the end of 2022 through the first half of 2023 is available for people who are willing to read during services. Instruction/training is available. Questions? Contact Michael Petri.

Mission & Outreach November Collection | The Mission and Outreach team continues to focus on Mutual Aid Partners for the last quarter of 2022. **During the month of November, we will be collecting feminine hygiene products as well as adult diapers.** You may place your contributions in the designated bin near the church office or leave them in the Gathering Space on Sundays. Thank you!

November Collection for Catholic Outreach | We will be collecting something a little different from before: kitchen basics, such as salt, pepper, canned cream of mushroom soup. Watch Tower Chimes and Church Chat for more detail.

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. **Please stop bringing in grocery bags for right now! Thanks.**

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.***

This Week at FCUCC
November 13 - 20, 2022

Sunday 13	9:00	Choir Practice	music room
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	pilgrim
	11:15	Fall Book Study	chapel
Monday 14	5:00	Make Mondays Fun	pilgrim
Tuesday 15	10:00	Women's Coffee	pilgrim
	10:00	Men's Coffee	mayflower
	5:30	Cantabile Ringers	music room
Wednesday 16	1:00	Through the Bible Study	chapel
Thursday 17	11:30	Berna B's	Berna B's
	12:15	Health & Wellness	mayflower
Friday 18	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
Sunday 20	9:00	Choir Practice	music room
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	pilgrim
	11:15	Fall Book Study	library
	12:00	Church Council Meeting	chapel
	6:00	Transgender Day of Remembrance	gathering space

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

Save the Dates:

November 24 | Thanksgiving Day Potluck

November 27 | Advent Begins

December 18 | Annual Congregational Budget Meeting

Christmas Eve is on Saturday this year; Christmas Day on Sunday.

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.*