

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Penultimate Sunday Before Advent
November 16, 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

How Can I Keep From Singing, arr John Carter

Martha Jones

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

Kristen Seiff

God is present in the beauty of creation.

Beauty whispers that life is a gift, not an accident.

God is present in the awakened conscience that cares for the poor, the hungry, the persecuted and the sick.

Our conscience connects us to the compassion of Christ.

God is present in every act of loving our neighbor.

Help to see our neighbors in all people and break down the structures that support racism, sexism and the many faces of hate.

God is present when we see our own flaws and self-centered obsessions.

Open our hearts to grasp the lessons of love You plant within our consciousness.

******HYMN**

All of Life is Filled With Wonder (tune: *Hymn to Joy*)

All

All of life is filled with wonder, so we thank you, God of love —
For the crash of evening thunder, clearing clouds, then stars above;
For the night that turns to glowing as we feel the morning mist,
God, we praise and thank you, knowing every day we're truly blessed.

For the joy of daily waking, for the gift of each new day,
For the smell of fresh bread baking, for the sound of children's play,
For the ways we seek to serve you as we work and volunteer,
God we humbly praise and thank you for your presence with us here.

For the ways we're blessed with plenty — love and laughter, neighbors, friends,
Nature's wonders, seasons' bounty, life in you that never ends,
For the ones who've gone before us, giving witness to your way —
We rejoice in all you give us every moment, every day.

For your love in times of trouble, for your peace when things are tough,
For your help when hardships double, for your grace that is enough,
For a stranger's gentle kindness, for a doctor's healing skill —
God, we thank you that you bless us, and you bless your world as well.

For your presence in our neighbors, for your love that claims and frees.
For our talents and our labors, for our faith communities.
For your daily great surprises — poor ones lifted, lost ones found —
God, we thank you! Hope still rises, as your gifts of grace abound.

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 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

Kristen

OFFERTORY

Unseen Blessings, Tomlinson/Hayes

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

Kristen

God beyond all words, symbols and definitions, how can we understand Your ways? We see Your love in the wonders of creation. We celebrate the good works of compassion done by the church. We offer these gifts as expressions of gratitude for this gift called life. We offer our faith, hope and love as we seek to embody the heart of Jesus. Amen

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 6:1-8; 65:17-24

Kristen

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said,

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory."

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said, "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

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 who lives but a few days
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime,

