

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 14, 2023

*** 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

Gift of Love, Hopson/Kim

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

Andrea Bartlett

Love is more than a feeling. Love flows from the creative depths of the heart creating mercy, connection and kindness.

Love opens the door to the fullness and heart of life.

Holy One, Your love heals us and connects our hearts to others.

We invite love into our hearts, we invite love into our friendships, we invite love into our strained relationships, we invite love into broken places where there is division and conflict.

The heart of Christ is the energy of lovingkindness.

May our hearts flow with lovingkindness.

**HYMN NCH 43, vs 1 & 2

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

All

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven, on earth be found.
Fix in us an humble dwelling, all your faithful mercies crown;
Jesus, you are all compassion; pure, unbounded love impart,
Visit us with your salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe your loving Spirit into every troubled breast;
let us all in you inherit, let us find your promised rest;
take away our love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Jean Yale

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

The Gift of Love, Hal Hopson

Choir

**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

Andrea

**Holy One, Your love draws us together in joy and peace. Enable us to embody the energy of lovingkindness. Let love flow within us and through us to bless and heal our world.
Amen**

**HYMN NCH 520

Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ

All

Eternal Spirit of the living Christ,
I know not how to ask or what to say;
I only know my need, as deep as life,
and only you can teach me how to pray.

Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day;
help me to see your purpose and your will.
Where I have failed, what I have done amiss;
held in forgiving love, let me be still.

Come with the vision and the strength I need
to serve my God, and all humanity;
fulfillment of my life in love outpoured—
my life in you, O Christ, your love in me.

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 3:12-16, Mark 5:21-34

Andrea

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live."

So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her,

came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

MESSAGE

"The Exercise of Metta"

Paul

**HYMN (see insert) choir vs 1; everyone vs 1, 2, 3 *May I Be Filled*

All

This song, adapted from the Buddhist meditation Paul presented in his sermon, asks that kindness, peace, well-being, and joy be poured over all creation. The prayer moves outward, like ripples on a pond, with the successive verses "May I...May you...May we..." The music is meant to evoke introspection, mystery, and gratitude. The choir will introduce the song by singing the first verse. Then we will sing all three verses together.

MAY I BE FILLED

Based on a Buddhist blessing,
adapt. Lindy Thompson

KATH'S TUNE
Mark A. Miller



1. May I be filled with joy-ful lov-ing - kind - ness,
2. May you be filled with joy-ful lov-ing - kind - ness,
3. May we be filled with joy-ful lov-ing - kind - ness,



may I be calm and at peace.
may you be calm and at peace.
may we be calm and at peace.



May I be safe, may hap - pi-ness sur -
May you be safe, may hap - pi-ness sur -
May we be safe, may hap - pi-ness sur -



prise me, may I be a - wake and free.
prise you, may you be a - wake and free.
prise us, may we be a - wake and free.

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**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!

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Andrea Bartlett
Martha Jones

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