

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost**  
**September 3, 2023**

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*\*\* 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: Learning a New Hymn - NCH 287**

Martha Jones and Congregation

**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 -- Based on Romans 12**

Michael Petri

Let your love be real. The heart sings when love is authentic.

**As we walk with Jesus, we can gather up goodness and let go of the burdens of hate.**

To walk the path of compassion takes effort, energy and a spirit of hope.

**Let us rejoice in the hope that lifts us through times of struggle and opens our hearts in prayer.**

Life is a gift to be shared so practice hospitality and help those in need.

**We celebrate when others share their joys and we awaken our hearts with compassion to those experiencing pain, loss or grief.**

To live a life of peace, let go of the need to get even with those who have added trouble to your life.

**Help us to find a path to true, full delightful peace. Amen**

**\*\*HYMN NCH #287**

*Come, Teach Us, Spirit of Our God*

All

Come, teach us, Spirit of our God, the language of your way,  
the lessons that we need to live, the faith for every day; the faith for every day.

Excite our minds to follow you, to trace new truths in store,  
new flight paths for our spirit space, new marvels to explore; new marvels to explore.

Engage our wits to dance with you, to leap from logic's base,  
to capture insight on the wing, to sense your cosmic grace; to sense your cosmic grace.

Inspire our spark to light from you to catch creation's flair,  
new artistry to celebrate, new harmonies to dare; new harmonies to dare.

Delight our hearts to worship you, to learn compassion's code,  
to live in context of your love, great teacher who is God! Great teacher who is God!

**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 Michael

OFFERTORY *Peace, Joel Raney* Martha

\*\*DOXOLOGY *Know That God is Good* All

**Know that God is good. Know that God is good.  
Know that God is good. God is good. God is good.**

**Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah.  
Hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le-lu-jah.**

\*\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Michael

**Holy One, guide us to the ways of love. Too often we are upset over small things. Too often we feel tired, numb or indifferent. Yet you pour light love and life into the cosmos to create beauty and sustain us. Through our heart, mind, spirit and body let us be givers of light, love and life. Amen**

SCRIPTURE Romans 12:9-18 Michael

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

MESSAGE *"When Love is Real You Can't Hide It"* Paul

\*\*HYMN Song Folder #27, vs 1-3 *Put Peace Into Each Other's Hands* All

Put peace into each other's hands and like a treasure hold it;  
protect it like a candle flame, with tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands with loving expectation;  
be gentle in your words and ways, in touch with God's creation.

Put peace into each other's hands, like bread we break for sharing;  
look people warmly in the eye: our life is meant for caring.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION Paul

*All are welcome who practice the way of compassion.*

HYMN Song Folder #76 *Let There Be Peace on Earth* All

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.  
With God our Creator, we are family.  
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.  
With ev'ry step I take, let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

\*\*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

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**Today's Worship Leaders**

preacher  
liturgist  
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby  
Michael Petri  
Martha Jones

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