

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Transfiguration Sunday
March 2, 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

Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair arr Benjamin Culli

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

Debra Weller

God spoke to our spiritual ancestors from the clouds and lead them by pillars of fire at night.

We seek the light of God to shine upon us.

Today, we celebrate the light of God that was revealed in the transfiguration of Jesus.

We pray for that light of eternal love to shine upon us, within us and in our faces.

God's light shines to empower us to a life of love, kindness, mercy, justice and service.

Holy One, may Your light be radiant within our hearts, minds, spirits and faces.

**** HYMN NCH #1

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

All

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Not wanting, not wasting, but ruling in might;
Your justice like mountains high soaring above
Your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

Your life is lifegiving -- to both great and small;
In all life you're living, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves and as flowers,
Then wither and perish, but naught dims your powers.

So perfect your glory, so brilliant your light,
Your angels adore you, all veiling their sight;
All praise we now render as your angels do:
In awe at the splendor of light hiding you.

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

Debra

OFFERTORY

Bread of the World, Heber, Martin, Eliot

Choir

****DOXOLOGY (tune: *Old Hundredth*)

**Praise God who calls all humankind;
Praise Christ for loving ties that bind;
Praise Spirit making all things new;
One Love, One God, we honor you!**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Debra

God of transforming Light, help us to see the shadows in our lives that would dim our hopes. Let Your light bring awareness to see clearly and act faithfully. May Your light be a beacon of wisdom to help us see what is truly important and beyond the normal routines of daily life. May our offerings be a source of light that manifest the many gifts of love. AMEN

SCRIPTURE

Luke 9:28-36

Debra

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

MESSAGE

"It's OK to Stick Your Head in the Clouds"

Paul

****HYMN Song Folder #73

Holy Light

All

Holy light, still burning bright, presence of God that frees us,
lift the shadows from our soul.
Shine through our life, Lord Jesus. Shine through our life, Lord Jesus.

Holy fire, our heart's desire, dance of our life, pursue us.
Mend our frozen, broken hearts.
Spirit of God, renew us. Spirit of God, renew us.

Holy word, all who have heard Jesus walking beside us.
Did not our hearts then burn with love?
Word of our God, now guide us. Word of our God, now guide us.

Holy bread, our souls are fed, cup of love invite us.
All are welcome at the feast.
Bread of the world, unite us. Bread of the world, unite us.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

All are welcome who practice the way of compassion. Gluten free options are available.

Paul

****HYMN 182 *We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding*

All

We have come at Christ's own bidding to this high and holy place,
where we wait with hope and longing for some token of God's grace.
Here we pray for new assurance that our faith is not in vain,
Searching like those first disciples for a sign both clear and plain.

Light breaks through our clouds and shadows,
splendor bathes the flesh-joined Word,
Moses and Elijah marvel as the heavenly voice is heard.
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder how the Law and Prophets meet:
Christ with garments drenched in brightness, stands transfigured and complete.

Strengthened by this glimpse of glory, fearful lest our faith decline.
We, like Peter, find it tempting to remain and build a shrine.
But true worship gives us courage to proclaim what we profess,
That our daily lives may prove us people of the God we bless.

****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 *Oh, Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair*, arr. Aaron David Miller

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musicians

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Debra Weller
Karen Caton, Shannon Jones, Chancel Choir

Acknowledgements

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- ◇ The doxology words are by Rev. Dr. Mary Luti, published in *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow: Doxologies for the Church* by The God Is Still Speaking® Writers Group of the United Church of Christ © 2024, The Pilgrim Press.
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- ◇ Music during communion: *Prelude on "Slane" (Be Thou My Vision)*. Arr Gordon Young © 1961, Theodore Presser.
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- ◇ *Lead Us from Death to Life (World Peace Prayer)*. Words of refrain by Satish Kumar. Tune by Marty Haugen © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.