

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**Transfiguration Sunday**  
**February 19, 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

*Improvisation on Transfiguration, Max Reilly*

Max Reilly

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

Pam Gregory

There are times when God feels distant and detached from our experience.

**There are struggles where the very notion of God feels like naïve nonsense.**

But then our busy brains stop and see the grandeur of the Grand Mesa at a distance.

**Or we silently gaze at the beauty of the Monument.**

Somehow God feels present, available and rooted in our very breath when we encounter the shock of sublime beauty in creation.

**Each time we taste awe and wonder the heart sings in joy. We sing to that unknown source of existence that is sometimes labeled "God."**

\*\*HYMN SF 1, vs. 1,2,4

*Gather Us In*

All

Here in this place new light is streaming, now is the darkness vanished away.  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken. Gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
Call to us now and we shall awaken. We shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery; We are the old who yearn for your face.  
We have been sung throughout all of hist'ry, called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty. Gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly. Give us the courage to enter the song.

Not in the dark of buildings confining, not in some heaven light years away,  
But here in this place the new light is shining. Now is the kingdom, now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever. Gather us in and make us your own;  
Gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bones.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

BAPTISM

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

Pam

OFFERTORY

*10,000 Reasons, Myrin/Redman/Larson*

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**

Pam

**Source of life, we offer our gifts as an expression of gratitude. On the spiritual journey called life we do not exist in a world that is ugly, flat, gray, empty and boring. We are surrounded by beauty and color, shapes and dimensions, that invite us to explore, share and appreciate this gift called life. Amen.**

**\*\*HYMN** Song Folder #66

*Open My Eyes, Lord*

All

Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.  
Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see.

Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.  
Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear.

Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.  
Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love.

And the first shall be last, and our eyes are opened,  
and we'll hear like never before.  
And we'll speak in new ways, and we'll see God's face  
in places we've never known.

I live within you, deep in your heart, O Love.  
I live within you. Rest now in me.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 17:1-8

Ken

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

MESSAGE

*"The Thin Places"*

Paul

**\*\*HYMN** NCH 164

*Arise, Your Light Is Come*

All

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;

Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today!

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;  
Proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,  
Bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing: God's power will make us strong.

**\*\*BENEDICTION**

**\*\*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!

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**Today's Worship Leaders**

preacher	Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
liturgist	Pam Gregory
musician	Max Reilly

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**FCUCC Staff**

senior pastor	revpaulashby@yahoo.com	Rev. Paul Ashby
office administrator	office@uccgj.org	Beth Rakestraw
music coordinator		Martha Jones
choir & bell director	topcatkc@aol.com	Karen Caton
custodian	custodian@uccgj.org	Matu Hedwall
volunteer financial clerks	finance@uccgj.org	Nancy Palubicki & Martha Jones

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**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](mailto:office@uccgj.org) or 970-242-0298 x 105. **Deadline for publishing in the Sunday bulletin is Thursday noon.**

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**This Week at FCUCC**  
**February 19 – February 26, 2023**

<b>Sunday 19</b>	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	music room
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	gathering space
	11:15	Church Council	chapel
<i>Congregants are welcome to attend council meetings.</i>			
<b>Monday 20</b>	<b>Church Office Closed for President's Day</b>		
<b>Tuesday 21</b>	10:00	Women's Coffee	gathering space
	10:00	Men's Coffee	library
	5:00	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	gathering space
	5:30	Cantabile Ringers	music room
<b>Wednesday 22</b>	4:00	Ash Wednesday	sanctuary
<b>Thursday 23</b>	11:30	Berna B's	Berna B's
	12:15	Health & Wellness	Chapel
<b>Friday 24</b>	10:00	Zoom Coffee Hour	zoom
<b>Sunday 26</b>	9:00	Choir Rehearsal	music room
	10:00	Worship	sanctuary/YouTube
	11:00	Happy Hour	gathering space
	11:00	Spiritual Journey Through 2023 Book Study	chapel

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

**Save the Dates:**

April 2 | Palm/Passion Sunday

April 9 | Easter

May 2 – 11 | GJHS AP Testing at Church, Various Rooms

June 15 – 17 | RMC Annual Celebration in Grand Junction

December 3 | First Sunday of Advent

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**Connections & Collections**

*Contact: Beth Rakestraw, Office Administrator, [office@uccgj.org](mailto:office@uccgj.org)*

*Want more information about church events? Contact Beth to sign up for church newsletters.*

**Connections ...**

**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.

**Tuesday Coffee Hours** | Enjoy a beverage, occasional snacks and good, not necessarily church-related conversation with lovely people, and make a new friend or two.

**Friday Coffee Hour** | Similar to Tuesday Coffee hours, except takes place via Zoom, so you don't have to leave your house and can attend in your PJs ... which the church admin shamelessly used to do ...

### **Collections ...**

**Catholic Outreach** | plain old white flour, and plain old white sugar.

**Solidarity, Not Charity** | hotel and personal size toiletries, water/milk jugs with their lids and plastic grocery bags (more bang for your dime!)

**Mission & Outreach First Quarter | Trail Lamp** | acrylic paint, acrylic brushes, watercolor paper, sets, and brushes.

**Helping Handbags** | Donate a purse, donate things you'd like to see in your purse (cosmetics, snacks, personal care items, spare change, etc), donate a handbag filled with things. Please leave things in the box on the shelves by the office.

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### **What's New?**

**FCC Begins Hosting WESHELTER Tonight!** Volunteers, please plan to arrive between 5:00 – 5:15 pm, today through Saturday, March 4.

**Coffee Hour Update** | Coffee/Happy Hour will take place in The Gathering Space through March 5 because of the WeShelter winter housing program.

**The Return of Shrove Tuesday Pancakes** | Join us Shrove Tuesday, February 21 for a Mardi Gras themed pancake supper! Watch future Church Chats for more details.

**Spiritual Journey Through 2023** | This book study group meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, beginning February 26, to read and reflect on a book of daily spiritual readings called *Sacred Seasons, A Year of Meditations* by Beverly Lanzetta. Contact Pastor Paul with questions.