

**Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ**  
**Third Sunday of Lent**  
**March 12, 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

*Salley Gardens, arr. Larry Shackley*

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

Carolyn Holmgren

Come, children of God, discover who you are in the heartbeat of compassion.

**We come to seek a deeper meaning to our life and to the living of our days.**

Jesus shows us a path to life that is one that calls us to awaken to love.

**Jesus tells about being born anew.**

Each time we open our hearts, each time we fully listen, each time we share compassion, we become a new person. Every act of love is being born again as a more compassionate soul.

**Let us know the joy and hope of many new births.**

\*\*HYMN

*Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness (tune: Nettleton)*

All

Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light.

Praise the One who frees the prisoners, turning blindness into sight.

Praise the One who preached the gospel, healing every dread disease,  
calming storms and feeding thousands with the very bread of peace.

Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong yet gentle word.

Praise the One who drove our demons with a piercing two-edged sword.

Praise the One who brings cool water to the desert's burning sand.

From this well comes living water quenching thirst in every land.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

BAPTISM

Beau Conway Alexander Koontz

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

Carolyn

OFFERTORY

*Always Loving Him, Leech/Tabell*

Choir

**\*\*DOXOLOGY** (tune: *Old Hundredth*) All  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**  
**Praise God, all creatures here below.**  
**Praise God for all that love has done;**  
**Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

**\*\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Carolyn  
**God of abundance, we look at the vast cosmos with awe and amazement. We live on a tiny speck of dust in a distant corner of the universe yet You love us and call us to share love. May we find new ways to share the abundance in our life. Use these gifts to sow new seeds of love, light and life. Amen**

**\*\*HYMN NCH 489** *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* (tune: *Kingsfold*) All

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast."  
I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn, and sad,  
and there I found a resting place, where Jesus made me glad!

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give  
the living water, thirsty one, draw near, and drink, and live."  
I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I am redeemed.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am the lost world's Light,  
look unto me; your morn shall rise and all your day be bright."  
I looked to Jesus, and I found my guiding Star, my Sun;  
and in that light of life I'll go till traveling days are done.

**SCRIPTURE** John 4:7-21 Carolyn

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

**MESSAGE** *"Why Should We Help Those People - Those Awful Samaritans?"* Paul

**\*\*HYMN NCH 417, vs 1, 3, 4** *This is a Day of New Beginnings* All

This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on,  
time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone.

Then let us, with the Spirit's daring, step from the past and leave behind our disappointment, guilt, and grieving, seeking new paths, and sure to find.

Christ is alive and goes before us to show and share what love can do. This is a day of new beginnings, our God is making all things new.

**\*\*BENEDICTION**

Paul

**\*\*SUNG BENEDICTION**

*Beyond the Days*, refrain

All

Beyond the days of hope and mystery we see a light of faith renewed, and in our longing we thirst for guidance to walk with you day by day, to walk with you day by day.

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### **Today's Worship Leaders**

preacher  
liturgist  
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby  
Carolyn Holmgren  
Martha Jones

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### **FCUCC Staff**

senior pastor                      revpaulashby@yahoo.com  
office administrator              office@uccgj.org  
music coordinator  
choir & bell director              topcatkc@aol.com  
custodian                          custodian@uccgj.org  
volunteer financial clerks        finance@uccgj.org

Rev. Paul Ashby  
Beth Rakestraw  
Martha Jones  
Karen Caton  
Matu Hedwall  
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 or 970-242-0298 x 105. **Deadline for publishing in the Sunday bulletin is Thursday noon.**

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**This Week at FCUCC**  
**March 12 – March 19, 2023**

|                     |       |                               |                   |
|---------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Sunday 12</b>    | 8:45  | Choir Rehearsal               | sanctuary         |
|                     | 10:00 | Worship                       | sanctuary/YouTube |
|                     | 11:00 | Happy Hour                    | pilgrim hall      |
|                     | 11:15 | Worship & Celebration Team    | library           |
| <b>Monday 13</b>    | 1:00  | Property Team                 | chapel            |
|                     | 5:00  | Make Mondays Fun Again        | pilgrim           |
|                     | 7:30  | Youth Event: <i>King Kong</i> | Avalon Theater    |
| <b>Tuesday 14</b>   | 10:00 | Women's Coffee                | pilgrim hall      |
|                     | 10:00 | Men's Coffee                  | mayflower         |
|                     | 5:30  | Cantabile Ringers             | music room        |
| <b>Wednesday 15</b> | 1:00  | The Story of God              | chapel            |
| <b>Thursday 16</b>  | 11:30 | Berna B's                     | Berna B's         |
|                     | 12:15 | Health & Wellness             | mayflower         |
| <b>Friday 17</b>    | 10:00 | Zoom Coffee Hour              | zoom              |
| <b>Sunday 19</b>    | 8:45  | Choir Rehearsal               | sanctuary         |
|                     | 10:00 | Worship                       | sanctuary/YouTube |
|                     | 11:00 | Happy Hour                    | pilgrim hall      |
|                     | 11:15 | Council Meeting               | chapel            |

*Congregants are welcome to attend council meetings.*

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

**Save the Dates:**

April 2 | Palm/Passion Sunday | New Members and Inquirers Class

April 9 | Easter

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

May 21 | Annual Congregational Meeting

May 28 | Pentecost

May 29 | Church Office Closed for Memorial Day

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.

**Make Mondays Fun** | People gather together to work on individual and group art projects in a friendly atmosphere. The sunflower display in the church hallway was one of their projects; so were the acrylic pours that are on the other side of the hall way.

**Berna B's** | This is a group of women who meet once a month on the third Thursday at 11:30 for lunch out at Berna B's Café near the Safeway at the corner of 29<sup>th</sup> and Patterson. All are welcome.  
**Collections ...**

**Catholic Outreach** | Bottled salad dressings!

**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** | multimedia paper, painter's tape, watercolor markers, and art markers.

**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?**

**Prepare the Way of the Lord: Palm Sunday Worship | April 2** | This year folks are invited to bring drums and noisemakers once again to worship for a Palm Sunday processional! New for this year: remembering that people lay their garments on the road before Jesus, people are invited to wear colorful garments and to bring colorful scarves, bandannas/kerchiefs or pieces of fabric to wave.

**Also on Palm Sunday ... New Members/Inquirers Class** | Pastor Paul will teach a class after worship for those interested in learning more about our church and our UCC denomination, regardless of whether attendees intend to become members of the church or not. Questions? Contact Pastor Paul.