

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Mothers' Day | Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2026

**** *Some rise to their feet, some rise in their hearts—please rise as you are able.*

OPENING BELL

At the sound of the bell please silence yourselves and prepare for worship.

PRELUDE

Morning Has Broken, arr Lani Smith

Ellen Bradley

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

Kim Sutherland

We have many names that point to creation and the Creator: God of Creation, Source of Life, Mothering Spirit, The Energy of Evolution.

We know God is not a literal Father or Mother hanging out in some cosmic cluster of stars.

Yet how do we explain a vast Mystery of Life beyond all measurements?

We stumble forward using names and labels. We sense there is some connection to God in loving parents, caring grandparents, wonderful friends, and helpful neighbors.

A loving mother or grandmother is often the starting point of the birth of love within us.

All across the world in various faiths, the symbol of a loving mother has pointed people toward God.

**HYMN NCH 11

Bring Many Names

All

Bring many names, beautiful and good, celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory, living, loving God. Hail and Hosanna! Bring many names!

Strong mother God, working night and day, planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation, genius at play: Hail and Hosanna, strong mother God!

Warm father God, hugging every child, feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving till we're reconciled: Hail and Hosanna, warm father God!

Old, aching God, grey with endless care, calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises, wiser than despair: Hail and Hosanna, old, aching God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move, saying no to falsehood and unkindness,
crying out for justice, giving all you have: Hail and Hosanna, young, growing God!

Great, living God, never fully known, joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer than our breathing, everlasting home: Hail and Hosanna, great living God!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Paul

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.

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/SILENT CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Kim

OFFERTORY

On Eagle's Wings, Michael Joncas

Choir

****DOXOLOGY

Hal-le, hal-le hal-le-lu-ja.

All

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Kim

Source of Life, we dedicate these gifts to the work of love in action. We practice our faith when we love, we listen and we help. May these gifts sow new seeds that generate love, listening and helping. Amen

****HYMN NCH #583

Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us

All

Like a mother who has borne us, held us close in her delight,
Fed us freely from her body,
God has called us into life.

Like a father who has taught us, grasped our hand and been our guide,
lifted us and healed our sorrows,
God has walked with us in life.

Though as children we have wandered, placed our trust in power and might,
left behind our brothers, sisters,
God still calls us into life.

When we offer food and comfort, grasp our neighbor's hand in love,
tread the path of peace and justice,
God still walks with us in life.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 66:9-13 (NRSVUE)

Kim

Shall I open the womb and not deliver? says the Lord;
Shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb? says your God.
Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her;
Rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her—
that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast,
that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom.
For thus says the Lord: I will extend prosperity to her like a river
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream,
and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm and bounced on her knees.
As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

MESSAGE

"Who Describes God as a Loving Mother?"

****HYMN NCH 16

Let Us With a Joyful Mind

All

Let us with a joyful mind praise our God forever kind,
Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

New-made earth was filled with light through God's all commanding might,
Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

Dazzling bright the sun obeys God who shines with brighter rays,
Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

Stars and moon that spangle night all depend on heaven's light,
Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

Creatures of the sea and land all are fed by God's own hand,
Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

****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

Alleluia from *Exsultate, Jubilate*, W.A. Mozart

Ellen

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musicians

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Kim Sutherland
Ellen Bradley

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