

Welcome to First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

August 30, 2020

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE Carillon Fantasia (Adele)

SETTING OUR INTENTIONS FOR WORSHIP

OPENING PRAISE & CALL TO WORSHIP:

Come, let us worship in song, a joyful offering to the Eternal. Shout! Shout with joy to the rock of our liberation. (Psalm 95:1)

When we are filled with the Spirit, we are empowered to speak to each other in the soulful words of pious songs, hymns, and spiritual songs; to sing and make music with your hearts attuned to God; (Ephesians 5:16)

I will shout for joy as I sing Your praises; my soul will celebrate because You have rescued me. (Psalm 71:23)

Sing songs of praise to God; tell stories of all God's miracles. And in its place, O God, give us more of You. (Psalm 105:2)

I will sing of God's unsparing love and justice; to You, O Eternal One, I will sing praises. (Psalm 101:1)

Praise the Eternal! Praise the True God inside God's temple.

Praise God beneath massive skies, under moonlit stars and rising sun.

Praise God for God's powerful acts, redeeming God's people.

Praise God for God's greatness that surpasses our time and understanding.

Praise God with the blast of trumpets high into the heavens, and praise with harps and lyres, and the rhythm of the tambourines skillfully played by those who love and fear the Eternal.

Praise God with singing and dancing;

Praise God with flutes and strings of all kinds!

Praise God with crashing cymbals, loud clashing cymbals! (Psalm 150:1-5)

SONG: #236 Halle, Halle, Halle – Halleluja (Sung 3 times through)

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

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

AGAPE FEAST

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Colossians 3:16 (The Voice)

¹⁶ Let the word of the Anointed One richly inhabit your lives. With all wisdom teach, *counsel*, and instruct one another. Sing the psalms, *compose* hymns and songs inspired by the Spirit, and keep on singing—*sing to God* from hearts *full and spilling over* with thankfulness.

CALL TO THE FEAST

PRAYER OF ADORATION:

Living God, you are present in our midst and we praise you. You are tearing down walls of alienation and exclusion. For this, we praise you because, in Jesus, you have shown us a way of hospitality, simplicity, prayer, peacemaking, and resistance. Because your Spirit makes a new path for us, as we struggle to live in the shadow of doubt and fear. Weak as we are, you fill us with hope. Lover of our souls, you give us joy and we praise you. Amen.

SIGNS & SYMBOLS

SHARING THE FEAST "East Meets West" Yamma Ensemble (Y.T.)

PSALTER LESSON Psalm 98: 1-7 (NRSV)

O sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
have gotten him victory.
2 The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.
4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.
5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.
7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.

In Christ there is no East or West,
in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In Christ shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
God's service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek,
and neither slave nor free;
for men and women live in God,
and all are kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West,
in Christ meet South and North;
one joyous true community
throughout the whole wide earth.

MUSICAL SERMON "Evolution of Worship Music" David Wesley (Y.T.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(You are invited to unmute yourself and share your prayer of joy or sorrow and the gathered body, led by Pastor Emilia will reply "God, hear our prayer.")

PASTORAL PRAYER

Lord's Prayer: (Translation by Neil Douglas-Klotz in Prayers of the Cosmos)

O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos, focus your light within us - make it useful. Create your reign of unity now-through our fiery hearts and willing hands. Help us love beyond our ideals and sprout acts of compassion for all creatures. Animate the earth within us: we then feel the Wisdom underneath supporting all. Untangle the knots within so that we can mend our hearts' simple ties to each other. Don't let surface things delude us, but free us from what holds us back from our true purpose. Out of you, the astonishing fire, returning light and sound to the cosmos. Amen.

ANOINTING AND HEALING RITUAL

THANKSGIVING OVER THE OIL:

Eternal God, you are the Sun of Righteousness who rises with healing in your wings. We thank you for oil, used by prophets and apostles as a sign of your grace and favor. Send your Holy Spirit on us and on this medicine of mercy that, through this anointing, your servants may again know the wholeness that comes from you; through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

ACT OF SELF-ANOINTING

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

We give praise and thanks to you, O God!

In Jesus the Christ you have given us life; brought ministry, forgiveness, healing, and peace;

commanded the disciples to heal the sick; and continued the healing ministry among us to this day.

Keep us mindful of your love and mercy that we may be faithful throughout all our days, in the name of Christ. Amen.

SETTING OUR INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

CLOSING SONG: #476 My Life Flows on in Endless Song

My life flows on in endless song; above Earth's lamentation,
I hear the sweet, though far off hymn that hails the new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul--how can I keep from singing?

What through my joys and comforts die? My Savior still is living,
What through the shadows gather 'round? A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that Rock I'm clinging;
Since love commands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells ringing;
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile our thoughts to them are winging;
When friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway smooths, since first I learned to live it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing;
All things are mine since I am Christ's--how can I keep from singing?

BENEDICTION

"The Lord Bless You & Keep You" by John Rutter (Y.T.)

SENDING

"Now Let Us All, in Hymns of Praise" by Fred Pratt Green (1982)

Now let us all, in hymns of praise, bear witness with one voice to God's redeeming work in Christ, and bid the world rejoice.

Today we call to mind the things that time cannot erode: what God, Creator of the world, is doing for our good.

What changes, challenges, and tests the church of Christ survives!

How rich the records left to us of dedicated lives!

Still must the church proclaim to all that now, and evermore, the house of God is open house, and Christ the Open Door.

Of all our labors, who can say what harvest there shall be, when time, that limits and distorts, becomes eternity?

Then shall our hymns, rehearsed below, be perfect praise above as, face to face, we fully know that this means: God is love!

POSTLUDE

My Hope is Built

(Adele)

SONG LIST from "Evolution of Worship Music" by David Wesley

560 (Original Old Irish poem) – Be Thou My Vision (Dallan Forgaill)

1225 (original poem) All Creatures of Our God and King (St. Francis of Assisi)

1529 – A Mighty Fortress Is Our God (Martin Luther)

1668 – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (Joachim Neander)

1779 – Amazing Grace (John Newton, Edwin Excell)

1863 – The Solid Rock (Edward Mote / William Bradbury)

1922 – Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (Helen Lemmel)

1939 – Victory in Jesus (E.M. Bartlett)

1952 – Burdens are Lifted at Calvary (John M. Moore)

1969 – Pass It On (Kurt Kaiser)

1978 – Soon and Very Soon (Andraé Crouch)

1988 – Awesome God (Rich Mullins)

1993 – Shout to the Lord (Darlene Zschech)

1998 – Trading My Sorrows (Darrell Evans)

2000 – God of Wonders (Marc Byrd & Steve Hindalong)

2004 – Revelation Song (Jennie Lee Riddle)

2010 – One Thing Remains (Brian Johnson, Christa Black, Jeremy Riddle)

2012 – Oceans (Joel Houston, Matt Crocker, Salomon Lighthelm)

2014 – Good Good Father (Anthony Brown, Pat Barrett)

2015 – Lion and the Lamb (Brenton Brown, Brian Johnson, Leeland Mooring)

2017 – Do It Again (Chris Brown, Mack Brock, Matt Redman, St