



# First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**“Why Are We Still Talking About This”**

**Commitment to Inclusion**

**February 21, 2021**

**10:30 a.m. Facebook Live Service**

*Following Jesus, our mission is to serve God  
by building an inclusive community where uplifting worship  
and relevant messages deepen spirituality  
and inspire acts of justice, service, and compassion.*

***Our Church’s Mission Statement***

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage, Pastor  
Angela Spialek, Office Administrator  
Nicole Finney, Child Care  
Sue Sackett, Custodian  
Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus

Judy Nielsen, Organist  
Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director  
Brandon Frost, Choir Director  
Chuck Byam, Choir Accompanist

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## Welcome to First Congregational United Church of Christ!

*As you look over the bulletin, please notice that you are invited to read aloud **bold** text.*

### MOMENT FOR CENTERING

#### GREETING

One: The grace of Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Many: And also with you.**

### INTRODUCTIONS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### BELLS/CHIMES

#### INTROIT

“Larghetto”  
(Judy Nielsen)

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: To you, O GOD, we lift up the spirit of our whole selves.

**Many: O God, we trust unashamedly in you, seeking your guidance;**

One: May we begin our Lenten journey together in right relationships;

**Many: Teach us. Show us. Guide us in your paths. Grow us to know your ways more clearly.**

One: You are the God of our salvation and the Sustainer of good relations.

**Many: For you we wait.**

One: May integrity, a clean conscience, and upright living preserve us.

**Many: Amen.**

#### OPENING HYMN

“God's Love is Wide”

by Rev. Emily Ratering-Youngberg and her husband, Matt Ratering-Youngberg  
(*please feel free to sing loud and strong from your place at home*)

#### GATHERING PRAYER (Unison)

**All: Believing that every person is a child of God invested with worth and dignity, and believing that every person is a recipient of God's grace, we at First Congregational United Church of Christ, Grand Ledge, aspire to mirror God's unconditional love by declaring that we are an Open and Affirming congregation. We understand that we are called to love God and to love our neighbors, valuing all people. Seeking to be persons that reveal God's love as compassionate and unconditional, we celebrate the image of God in each person and embrace our diversity.**

**We joyfully welcome and affirm all persons of all identities—those of every age, gender, sexual orientation, personal ability, race, ethnic background or faith background—who wish to participate in the life and ministry of the church, including membership, spiritual growth, and leadership.**

#### ANTHEM

“One Faith, One Hope”  
(Brandon Frost & Chuck Byam)

### FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

PASSING OF THE PEACE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Genesis 9:8-17 NRSV (pg. 7)

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:9-15 NRSV (pg. 910)

One: Words from the past, made new for us today.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

SUNG RESPONSE # 173

“You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore”

**O Jesus, you have looked into my eyes;  
kindly smiling, you’ve called out my name.  
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;  
now with you I will seek other seas.**

HOMILY

“Why Are We Still Talking About This”  
*(Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage)*

MUSICAL REFLECTION

“No One (Man) Is an Island”  
*(Chuck Byam)*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*(Since our services are posted publicly on Facebook, we ask that you either leave people unnamed in your prayer requests [ex: prayers for a friend who is in his last stages of life] or that you obtain permission from anyone you wish to name in prayer.)*

OFFERING MOMENT

*Please give what you can by mail or through prayers.  
If you have any questions, please reach out to Lynn Hart [hartacre3@aol.com](mailto:hartacre3@aol.com)*

CLOSING HYMN

by Holly Near  
*(please feel free to sing loud and strong from your place at home)*

“Singing for Our Lives”

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

“In the Lord I’ll be Ever Thankful” (sung once)

**In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful  
In the Lord, I will rejoice!  
Look to God, do not be afraid.  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.**

POSTLUDE

“What A Friend We Have in Jesus - Adaptation”  
*(Chuck Byam)*

Please join us for a short fellowship time on Zoom at 12 noon

## CREDITS

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## SUNDAY ROSTER

**Liturgist** – Troy Arient

**Fresh Perspective** – Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

**Homily** – Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

**Virtual Coordinator** – Chad Frost

**Music Coordinator** – Brandon Frost

**Pianist** – Chuck Byam

**Organist** – Judy Nielsen

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# God's Love is Wide

Matthew and Rev. Emily Ratering-Youngberg

Voice

E B  
 God's love is wide. It is a home. Shel-tered in peace,  
 A B E E  
 we can be known. God's love is wide. It has no walls.  
 B A B E  
 So come in - side. There's room for all.  
 A E/G# B A E/G# B  
 1. We are all so dif - fer - ent. We are all the same.  
 2. By our - selves we're lost for su-re. By God's love we're found.  
 A E/G# B A B  
 We have all been gath - ered here to wor - ship in God's name.  
 We can try to dis - a - ppe ar but grace will chase us down  
 E  
 God's love is wide.

# **Singing For Our Lives**

**Holly Near**

lyrics

We are a gentle, angry people  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

We are a justice-seeking people  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

We are young and old together  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

We are a land of many colors  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

We are gay and straight together  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

We are a gentle, loving people  
and we are singing, singing for our lives

## **Genesis 9:8-17 NRSV**

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” <sup>12</sup> God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup> I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup> When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” <sup>17</sup> God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

## **Mark 1:9-15 NRSV**

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved with you I am well pleased.”

<sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.