



First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Shepherd or Sheep?
Fourth Sunday After Easter
April 25, 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

Lynn Hart, Preacher

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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• 517-627-2336 • office@grandledgeucc.org

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

“O, Lord Most Holy”

(Judy Nielsen)

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: With grace flowing, the poet sings the opening lines of the famous prayer, “The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.”

Many: We hear the Psalmist’s contentment and wonder about our own.

One: Settled on the ground, with grass tickling their toes, the psalmist rests, “God makes me lie down in green pastures. She leads me beside still waters. She restores my soul.”

Many: We hear their deep need for rest and wonder about our own.

One: With a deep sigh, the psalmist declares, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me. You prepare a table before me. You anoint me. My cup overflows.

Many: We recognize their bold courage and wonder about our own.

One: Remembering God’s faithfulness, the psalmist finds words to carry with them, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.”

Many: We hear their faithful trust and wonder about our own.

One: Holy Spirit of Rest and Renewal, in this time of worship inspire us with words both ancient and new so that we may find the words that connect us to You.

Many: Amen and amen.

OPENING HYMN #43

(please feel free to sing loud and strong from your place at home)

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

GATHERING PRAYER (in unison)

Many: Holy One, we hear the comforting ancient poetry of the psalmist but wonder, is it true? Will you really provide for what we need? Will you bring us to a place of rest? Will you protect us from enemies, even when they share our dinner table? We confess that rather than being only filled

with holy wonder, we are also filled with skepticism at the ancient words. We can quickly tally up the times we didn't feel provided for or protected from danger. We count the times we could not catch a break when we desperately needed it. So Holy One, shepherd our busy minds back to the here and now, help our spirits forgive the grudges we hold, and invite us to experience You as truly present. In these moments of quiet, offer us rest for a moment. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

ANTHEM

“When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder”

(Brandon Frost & Chuck Byam)

FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Lynn Hart

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Psalm 23 (MSG)

GOSPEL LESSON

1 John 3:16-24 NRSV (pg. 968)

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

Many: Thanks be to God.

SUNG RESPONSE #17

“To You, Oh God, All Creatures Sing”

**To you, O God, day after day,
Your planet earth in every way,
sings your praises, alleluia!
As savory fruit and fragrant flower
show forth your glory and power,
singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

HOMILY

“Shepherd or Sheep?”

(Lynn Hart)

MUSICAL REFLECTION

“Lead, Kindly Light”

(Chuck Byam)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER

(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

CLOSING HYMN #252

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

(please feel free to sing loud and strong from your place at home)

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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(Arranged by Chuck Byam, Jr.)
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SUNDAY ROSTER

Liturgist – Troy Arient

Fresh Perspective – Lynn Hart

Homily – Lynn Hart

Virtual Coordinator – Chad Frost

Music Coordinator – Brandon Frost

Pianist – Chuck Byam

Organist – Judy Nielsen

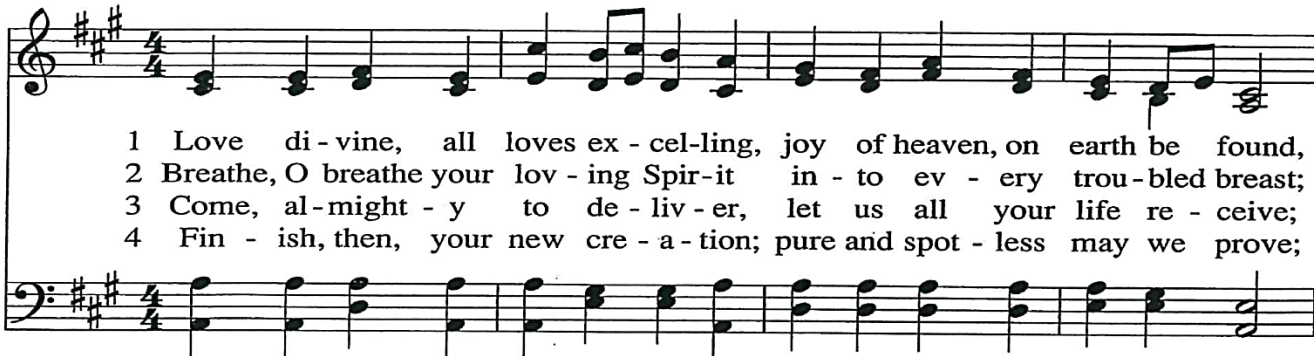
JESUS CHRIST

43

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Mal. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Eph. 5:27

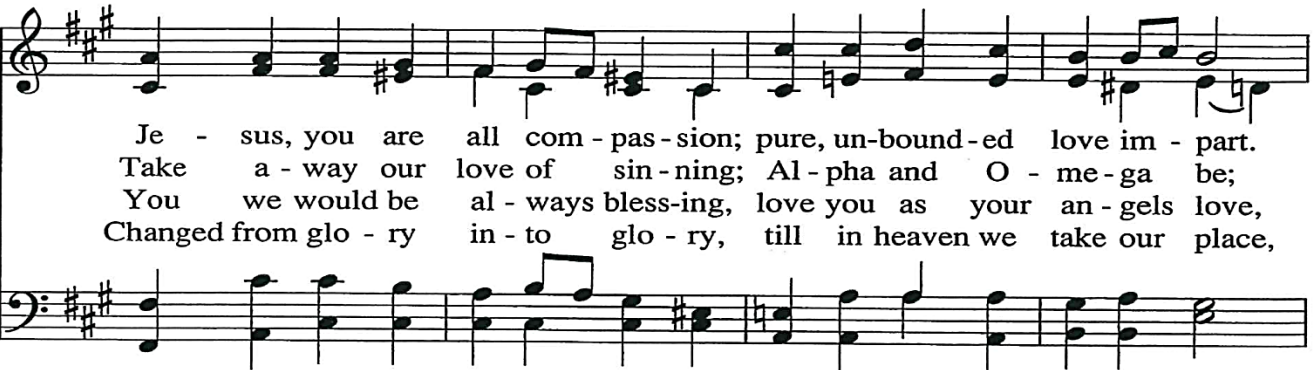
Charles Wesley, 1747; alt.



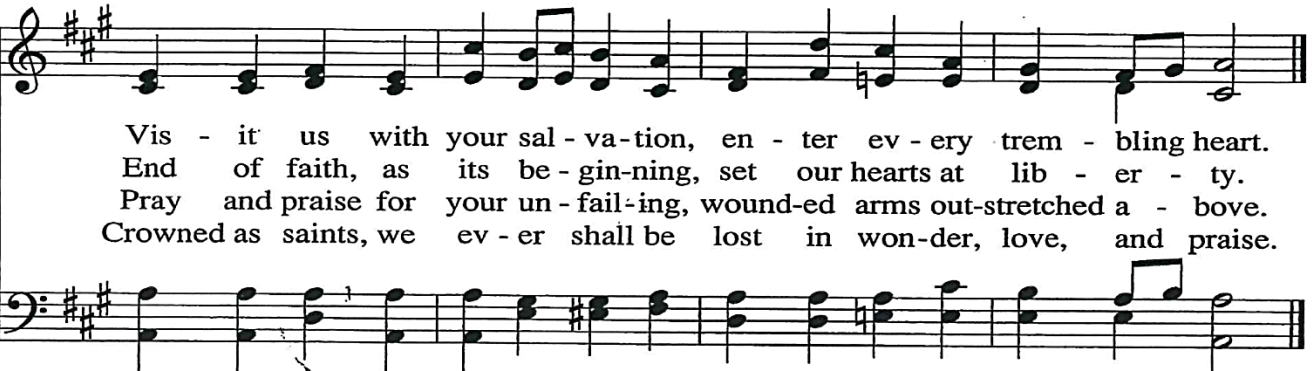
1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, joy of heaven, on earth be found,
2 Breathe, O breathe your lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery trou - bled breast;
3 Come, al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all your life re - ceive;
4 Fin - ish, then, your new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less may we prove;



Fix in us a hum - ble dwell - ing, all your faith - ful mer - cies crown;
Let us all in you in - her - it, let us find your prom - ised rest;
Sud - den - ly re - turn, and ne - ver, ne - ver - more your tem - ples leave.
Let us see your great sal - va - tion per - fect - ly re - stored in you;



Je - sus, you are all com - pas - sion; pure, un - bound - ed love im - part.
Take a - way our love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;
You we would be al - ways bless - ing, love you as your an - gels love,
Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, till in heaven we take our place,



Vis - it us with your sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
End of faith, as its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
Pray and praise for your un - fail - ing, wound - ed arms out - stretched a - bove.
Crowned as saints, we ev - er shall be lost in won - der, love, and praise.

This hymn is said to have been suggested by a "Song of Venus" from Dryden's King Arthur. It is one of 6,500 written by Charles

Tune: BEECHER 8.7.8.7.D.
John Zundel 1855

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

252

Attrib. to Dorothy A. Thrupp (1779–1847)

John 10:1–29

From Hymns for the Young, 1836; alt.

St. 1 transl. to Hawaiian by Laiana (1807–1886)

1 Sav-ior, like a shep-herd lead us, much we need your ten - der care;
1 Ie - su no ke Ka - hu - hi - pa, Ka - hu - hi - pa ma'i-ka'i e,
2 We are yours, in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;
3 Let us al - ways seek your fa - vor; let us al - ways do your will;

in your pleas - ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your folds pre-pare.
Ei - a ma - kou ka 'o - ha - na ke ho'o-lo - he a ha - hai:
keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
Je - sus Christ our on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us, yours we are;
E a - lo - ha, e a - lo - ha, a - la - ka'i a ha - nai mai,
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray;
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still;

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us, yours we are.
E a - lo - ha, e a - lo - ha, a - la - ka'i a ha - nai mai.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

The theme of Christ as shepherd is familiar and beloved to Christians. Emma Lyons Doyle, granddaughter of Laiana (translator Lorenzo Lyons), once said, "If you want to know the full beauty of this hymn, hear it sung in Hawaiian."

Tune: BRADBURY 8.7.8.7.D.
William B. Bradbury, 1859

Psalm 23 (MSG)

¹⁻³ GOD, my shepherd!
I don't need a thing.
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.
True to your word,
you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.
⁴ Even when the way goes through
Death Valley,
I'm not afraid
when you walk at my side.
Your trusty shepherd's crook
makes me feel secure.
⁵ You serve me a six-course dinner
right in front of my enemies.
You revive my drooping head;
my cup brims with blessing.
⁶ Your beauty and love chase after me
every day of my life.
I'm back home in the house of GOD
for the rest of my life.

1 John 3:16-24 (NRSV)

¹⁶ We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷ How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸ Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹ And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²² and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴ All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.