



First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**“Come to Me”
Fifth Sunday After Easter
May 2, 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

Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Preacher	Judy Nielsen, Organist
Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage, Pastor	Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director
Angela Spialek, Office Administrator	Brandon Frost, Choir Director
Nicole Finney, Child Care	Chuck Byam, Choir Accompanist
Sue Sackett, Custodian	
Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus	

210 W. Saginaw Hwy • Grand Ledge, MI 48837 • grandledgeucc.org

• 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, I am Not Worthy”

(Judy Nielsen)

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, all who are weak, ill, weary, and in need of rest.

Many: We come with hope for renewal.

One: Come, all who are tired of quarantine, all who are anxious, depressed, or scared.

Many: We come with hope for a better tomorrow.

One: Come, all who are feeling better, those who are finding joy, those who are already feeling rejuvenated.

Many: We come, thanking God.

One: In our time of worship, may we be inspired by God’s wisdom.

Many: We come seeking to learn and to draw closer to God.

One: Come, let us worship, as the beloved children of God.

OPENING HYMN

“Gather Us In”

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

GATHERING PRAYER

One: Cultivating God, we come as your children to grow and learn, because you are our divine vine grower. God, we desire for you to abide within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily. As your branches, we ask you to nourish us for continued growth. May you transform our hearts and minds as we hear your Word, sing your praises, and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.

Many: May you help us to bear good fruit through the vine of Jesus Christ. In Whose name we pray, Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

ANTHEM

“Eagles Wings”
(Brandon Frost & Chuck Byam)

FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 11: 16-30 NRSV (pg. 887)

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!**

REFLECTION

“Come to Me”
(Karen Holcomb-Merrill)

MUSICAL REFLECTION

“Musical Reflection”
(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*

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYER

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

Many: It is good to give God thanks and praise.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

One: Please join me in the Prayer of Confession.

O God, giver of life, we confess that there are times when we doubt you or when we lose hope. Sometimes, the struggles of life can be so overwhelming or the injustices of our world so unbelievable that we feel lost. Sometimes, it just feels

like there's too much bad news, and we get so tired. It can feel impossible to live into your Kin-dom or actively act like your disciples at times like this. It can feel impossible to love. It can feel impossible to believe. Forgive us, oh God, for our inaction, doubt, and disbelief.

SILENT PRAYER

Pastor Laura

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Dear Ones, here's the thing: I'm not sure we need to ask forgiveness for these feelings. At difficult times, they can come naturally. But God knows us. God knows our struggles. So if you feel a need to be forgiven for doubt and disbelief, know that you are forgiven. God's grace is unbounded! Know, also, that God will make a way for you. Through your struggles, through your uncertainty, through anxiety, grief and worry, God will lift you on eagles' wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of Their hand. Amen.

Many: Thanks be to God.

SANCTUS

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Glory be to you, O Lord.
Blessed is the one who comes,
Who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest!**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION BLESSING AND LORD'S PRAYER

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: Let us pray.

Many: God, we thank you for inviting us to, and nurturing us at, this table. We ask that you bless us in our covenantal calling of seeking justice, walking humbly, and showing radical hospitality and grace to others. May we go forth from this table renewed, restored, and trusting always in your guiding spirit. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #476

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

"My Life Flows on in Endless Song"

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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- **O, Lord, I am Not Worthy**
(#84149, Text: 76 76; based on Matthew 8:8; O Herr, ich bin nicht würdig; Landshuter Gesangbuch, 1777; tr. anon. Music: Anon.; Catholic Youth Hymnal, 1871. Contributors: NON DIGNUS)
- **In the Lord I'll be Ever Thankful**
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- **What A Friend We Have in Jesus** - Adaptation
(Arranged by Chuck Byam, Jr.)
- **Gather Us In**
(#96369, One License, Contributors: Marty Haugen, Georgina Pando-Connolly, Tune: GATHER US IN, 10 9 10 10 D; Marty Haugen, b.1950 © 1982, GIA Publications, Inc., Text: Marty Haugen, b.1950; tr. by Georgina Pando-Connolly, b.1946 © 1982, tr. 2012, GIA Publications, Inc.)
- **To You, Oh God, All Creatures Sing**
(#88283, One License, Contributors: The New Century Hymnal, Tune: © 1993, Pilgrim Press, The)
- **My Life Flows On in Endless Song**
(#83422 List, One License, Text: 87 87 with refrain; attr. to Robert Lowry, 1826-1899, alt.; Verse 3, Doris Plenn. Music: Quaker Hymn; attr. to Robert Lowry)
- **Eagles Wings**
(#125617, One License, Contributors: Frank Andersen, Tune: Text based on Exodus 19:4. Music and text © 1979, Chevalier Music. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)
- **Musical Reflection**
(Arranged by Chuck Byam, Jr.)

SUNDAY ROSTER

Liturgist – Troy Arient

Fresh Perspective – Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

Homily – Karen Holcomb-Merrill

Virtual Coordinator – Chad Frost

Music Coordinator – Brandon Frost

Pianist – Chuck Byam

Organist – Judy Nielsen

GATHER US IN

Strongly (♩. = 56-58)

Melody

Keyboard

D A C G Gm/Bb Dm

1. Here in this place new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
 2. We are the young— our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old— who
 3. Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
 4. Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,

C G D A C G

1. van - ished a - way, See in this space our fears and our dream - ings,
 2. yearn for your face, We have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
 3. bread of new birth, Here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
 4. light years a - way, but here in this place the new light is shin - ing,

Gm/Bb Dm C Am7 D C/D Gm6/D D

1. brought here to you in the light of this day.
 2. called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
 3. call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
 4. now is the King - dom, now is the day.

MY LIFE FLOWS ON IN ENDLESS SONG

(How Can I Keep from Singing)

1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam - en -
 2 What though my joys and com - forts die? My Sav - ior still is
 3 When ty - rants trem - ble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells
 4 I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a -

ta - tion, I hear the sweet, though far - off hymn that
 liv - ing. What though the shad - ows gath - er 'round? A
 ring - ing; When friends re - joice both far and near, how
 bove it; And day by day this path - way smooths, since

hails a new cre - a - tion. Through all the tu - mult
 new song Christ is giv - ing. No storm can shake my
 can I keep from sing - ing? In pris - on cell and
 first I learned to love it. The peace of Christ makes

and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing; It
 in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing; Since
 dun - geon vile our thoughts to them are wing - ing; When
 fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring - ing; All

finds an ech - o in my soul— how can I keep from sing - ing?
 Love com - mands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?
 friends by shame are un - de - filed, how can I keep from sing - ing?
 things are mine since I am Christ's— how can I keep from sing - ing?

Matthew 11: 16-30 (NRSV)

16 “But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

17 ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; **19** the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”^[a]

Woes to Unrepentant Cities

20 Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. **21** “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. **22** But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. **23** And you, Capernaum,

will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades.

For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. **24** But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Jesus Thanks His Father

25 At that time Jesus said, “I thank^[a] you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; **26** yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.^[a] **27** All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

28 “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”