



# First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**“Gifts in the Wilderness”**

**March 6, 2022**

**10:30 a.m. 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  
Larry Patterson, Office Administrator  
Sue Sackett & Ben Sackett, Custodian  
Rev Demphna Krikorian, Christian Educator  
Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus

Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director  
Chuck Byam, Organist  
Brandon Frost, Choir Director  
Nicole Finney, Child Care  
David Wu, Video Operator

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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.  
As you enter the sanctuary, please share your offering in the offering plate by the door.  
We ask that you wear a mask and social distance from others not in your family or pod.*

*If you are new to our church or do not receive email updates from us, please share your name and contact information with us by contacting us: [office@grandledgeucc.org](mailto:office@grandledgeucc.org)*

### 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

“Holy is the Lord”  
(chancel choir)

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We may be entering this season arid, dry from pain and injustices.

**Many: And yet, God is still hydrating our spirits.**

One: We may be wandering, feeling as if we have no direction.

**Many: And yet, God is guiding us in the wilderness.**

One: We may be fearful, wondering what comes next.

**Many: And yet, God is surrounding us with peace.**

One: We may begin our Lenten journey spiritually arid, aimless, and anxious.

**Many: But the Spirit of Strength will never leave our side.**

#### OPENING HYMN

“On Eagle’s Wings”

*(We will remain seated during the hymns and you are encouraged to quietly follow along and reflect on the verses printed in this bulletin while enjoying the music as it is being played.)*

#### GATHERING PRAYER

Divine Sojourner, as we saunter far into the wilderness, may your light sustain us. May the questions that fill our minds with doubt drift away into the sands of the journey. May we dig within our souls to remove the prejudices deep within us. However we wander in this season, may your Holy Glow refocus our attention on our relationship with you and the ways we connect with our siblings. Amen.

#### PASSING OF THE PEACE

#### ANTHEM

“Communion Anthem”  
(Chancel Choir)

## OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 NRSV (180)

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us." When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me." You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

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

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

## CHORAL RESPONSE

"Here, I am Lord"

**Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.**

## HOMILY

"Gifts in the Wilderness"  
(Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage)

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

"Pray for the Wilderness"  
(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

*(For those of us meeting in person, you are invited to place your offering in the offering plate in the back of the sanctuary. For those of you worshipping at home, 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))*

## DOXOLOGY

## DEDICATION PRAYER

One: Please join me in prayer:

**Many: God who calls us to participate in your vision of justice for our world,  
Let these offerings become our response:  
all your people fed,  
all your people safe,  
all your people housed,  
all your people educated. Amen.**

## 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 Call to Confession:

**Many: God of the Road, we journey together into the wilderness again. In this time filled with new spiritual practices and studies, our minds will be “tested.” Doubts will creep in as we seek your presence. At times, we will slide away from our responsibilities to care for our neighbors. “Keep awake,” you call to us. In the past, hurtful words from others have taunted us, and inhibited our growth with you. Negative images in our minds have drawn us away from our practices. Substances, pleasures, overwork, and other escapes have tempted and tormented our bodies, pulling them away from wholeness. We have snoozed through the needs of this world and ignored the pain in our communities. Forgive us, oh God, and deliver us from the temptations of this world and the tests that we impose upon ourselves. Amen.**

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: My Beloved Ones, when we aimlessly wander throughout this Lenten journey, God follows us – even into the depths of the wilderness and offers us gifts to support us and to remind us that Canaan lies on the other side. May we see God’s presence, knowing we are never alone on arid days and in barren lands and that we are always loved and forgiven. Amen!

**Many: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## 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

## COMMUNION SONG

And We Remember Him  
(Linda Gooley & Mary Prevost)

## THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: Let us pray.

**Many: We thank you, God, for inviting us to, and nurturing us at, this table.  
Strengthen our faith and hope, and increase our love for one another, that  
we may leave this place better able to serve you, through Jesus Christ our  
Savior. Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN #602

"I'm Surrounded"

*(We will remain seated during the hymns and you are encouraged to quietly follow along and reflect on the verses printed in this bulletin while enjoying the music as it is being played.)*

## BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

## 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

"Sing to the Lord"  
(Chuck Byam)

## CREDITS

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## SUNDAY ROSTER

**Liturgist** – Mary Lou Prevost

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

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

**Virtual Coordinator** – David Wee

**Sound Board** - Mae Clark

**Choir Director** - Brandon Frost

**Pianist/Organist** – Chuck Byam

**Hymn Singer** – Choir

**Usher** – Kathy Burt

**Greeter** – Gary Burt

1 You who . . . dwell in the shel - ter of the Lord, who a -  
 2 Snare of the fowl - er will nev - er cap - ture you, and  
 3 For to the an - gels God's giv - en a com - mand to

bide in this shad - ow for life, say to the Lord: "My . . .  
 fam - ine will bring you no fear; un - der God's wings your . . .  
 guard you in all of your ways; up - on their hands they will

ref - uge, . . . my . . . rock . . . in whom I . . . trust!"  
 ref - uge . . . with . . . faith - ful - ness . . . your . . . shield.  
 bear you up, lest you dash . . . your foot a - gainst a stone.

*Refrain*  
 "And I will raise you up on ea - gle's wings,  
 bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the  
 sun, and hold you in the palm of my hand."

*Chords:* G, DM<sup>7</sup>, Bm, F, B<sup>b</sup>, Dm, C, Gm, Asus4

