



# First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Exploring Faith Class Celebration!**  
**April 24, 2022**  
**10:30 a.m. Service**

*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.*

**Taken from Our Church's Open and Affirming Statement**

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage, Pastor	Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director
Larry Patterson, Office Administrator	Chuck Byam, Organist & Accompanist
Sue Sackett & Ben Sackett, Custodian	Brandon Frost, Choir Director
Rev Demphna Krikorian, Christian Educator	Nicole Finney, Child Care
Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus	David Wee, 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, and an asterisk (\*) indicates to please stand, as you are able. As you enter the sanctuary, please share your offering in the offering plate by the door. We ask that you social distance from others not in your family or pod.*

*Our hymns are not announced, but are printed in the bulletin, so feel free to locate them ahead of time. Helpful worship notes and information on the church can be found in the brochure by the hymnals.*

*Guests and visitors – a special welcome! Please fill out a “Welcome” card (in the pew pocket) and put it in the offering plate so we may send you a small gift.*

### 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

Grand Ringers

#### INTROIT

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”  
*(Chancel choir)*

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Coming on the clouds or walking on the roads,

**Many: Jesus is in our midst.**

One: Inside of sanctuaries or outside of church buildings

**Many: Christ is in our midst**

One: In heaven’s realm or the cyber universe

**Many: Jesus is in our midst.**

#### \*OPENING HYMN #584

“I Am the Light of the World”

#### \*GATHERING PRAYER

One: Please join me in the Gathering Prayer

**Many: God of the visible and invisible,**

**We gaze upon roads ahead**

**Knowing that you are ahead of us.**

**We seek your presence when the fog is heavy**

**Or when our hearts are hurting.**

**In the moments of haze,**

**Clear the path before us.**

**In the moments of clarity,**

**Show your face to us.**

**Allow us to hear your voice in the depths of night**

**As we search for your presence and call. Amen.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

FAITH STATEMENTS

Jackson Lipsey & Jacob Proctor

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS

Karen Holcomb-Merrill  
Demphna Krikorian

ANTHEM

“Hymn of Promise (In the Bulb There is a Flower)”

*(Chancel Choir)*

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Micah 6:6-8 NRSV (850-851)

“With what shall I come before the Lord,  
and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”  
He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

GOSPEL READING

John 21:1-19 NRSV (989-990)

*(Dramatic Reading Adaptation)*

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

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

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

#### CHORAL RESPONSE

*(Children are dismissed for Sunday School)*

“Halleluja”

**Halle, halle, halleluja.**

**Halle, halle, halleluja.**

**Halle, halle, halleluja.**

**Halleluja, halleluja.**

#### HOMILY

“Feeding Sheep”

*(Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage)*

#### MUSICAL REFLECTION

“Micah 6:8”

*(Chuck Byam)*

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.]*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy Kin-dom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,**

**and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the Kin-dom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

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

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

DEDICATION PRAYER

One: Please join me in the prayer of dedication.

**Many: Beloved God, accept the gifts we offer, and bless them to the fulfillment of our calling. 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. May it be so. Amen**

\*CLOSING HYMN #526

“Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos”

*(First time in the original language, second in English, third in the original)*

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

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

*(Chancel Choir)*

**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.**

BELLS/CHIMES

Grand Ringers

POSTLUDE

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

*(Chuck Byam)*

## CREDITS

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## SUNDAY ROSTER

**Liturgist** – Mason Lipsey

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

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

**Exploring Faith Students** – Jackson Lipsey and Jacob Proctor

**Exploring Faith Mentors** – Charlene Avery and Ron Erskine

**Exploring Faith Teachers** – Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Rev. Demphna Krikorian, Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage

**Virtual Coordinator** – David Wee

**Sound Board** - Charlynn Walker

**Choir Director** - Brandon Frost

**Pianist/Organist** – Chuck Byam

**Crucifer** – Karen Walker

**Usher** – Cheryl Mattson

**Greeter** – Sandy Sipes

# I Am the Light of the World

John 8:12

Jim Strathdee, 1969; rev. 1981

In response to a Christmas poem by Howard Thurman

**F** *Unison Introduction*

**B♭** *Refrain* **C** **F**

"I am the light of the world!

**B♭** **C** **F** **Gm** **Dm** **C**

You peo-ple come and fol-low me!" If you fol-low and love you'll

**F** **Gm7** **C** **B♭** **F** **B♭** **F** *Last time, end.*

learn the mys-ter-y of what you were meant to do and be.

**F** **B♭/D** **C** **F**

1 When the song of the an-gels is stilled, when the  
 2 7 To find the lost and lone-ly one, 7 to  
 3 7 To free the pris-oner from all chains, 7 to  
 4 To bring hope to ev-ery task you do, 7 to

This text is based on a Christmas poem by Howard Thurman, a prolific twentieth-century writer, theologian, and teacher. The song grew out of Jim Strathdee's music ministry at an intercultural, bilingual congregation in Los Angeles.

Tune: LIGHT OF THE WORLD Irr.  
 Jim Strathdee, 1969



# JUSTICE AND PEACE

Gm Dm C

star in the sky is gone, When the  
 heal the bro - ken soul with love, 7 To  
 make the pow - er - ful care, To re -  
 dance at a ba - by's new birth, 7 To

F Bb C F

sag - es and the shep - herds have found their way home, the  
 feed the hun - gry chil - dren with warmth and good food, To  
 build the na - tions with strength of good will, to  
 make mu - sic in . . . . an old per - son's heart, and

Dm Bb Gm7 C *Return to §*

work of Christ-mas is be - gun:  
 feel the earth be - low, the sky a - bove!  
 see all God's chil - dren ev - ery - where!  
 sing to the col - ors of the earth!



# Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'

(We Are Marching in the Light of God)

Ps. 89:15

South African freedom song; transl. Freedom Is Coming, 1984

Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen-khos', si - ya -  
We are march - ing in the light of God, we are

hamb' e - ku - kha-nyen' kwen-khos'. Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha -  
march-ing in the light of God. We are march-ing in the

nyen' kwen - khos', Si - ya - ham - ba, ham - ba, si - ya -  
kha - nyen' kwen-khos', light of God. We are march-ing, march-ing, we are  
the light of God.

ham - ba, Oo, ham - ba, si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha-nyen' kwen-khos'.  
march-ing, Oo, march-ing, we are march-ing in the light of God.

This South African song and fourteen others were first recorded and published in 1980 by the Church of Sweden Mission and the singing group "Fjedur" after a visit they made to South Africa. The subsequent 1984 collection *Freedom Is Coming* brought the songs to a worldwide audience.

Tune: SIYAHAMBA Irr.  
South African song