

**First Congregational United Church of Christ
March 27, 2022**



Photo by Elena Mozhvilo

Sunday in Lent

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Karina Roth

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Carol Winter

Liturgist: Ann Russ

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Words to Enter Worship (based on 2 Corinthians 5:16-21)

People who love music: From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view, even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we now judge no one by human standards.

People who love movies: So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old has passed away for there is new growth.

People who love plays: All this is from God, who reconciles all through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, not counting their trespasses against them.

People who love reading: We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making an appeal through us, we are asked to be reconciled with God and with the world so all may live in righteousness.

Words of Lament

Creator God, too many don't walk on right paths, too many don't work on right relationships, and, too often, we go with what is easy rather than what is right. We don't trust in your love for us and we don't believe in your love for them. We live in a world where the bad triumphs over the good way too much. Wake up, O LORD! Wake us up! Awaken us to your love, your justice, and the path of walking humbly with you that calls us to love the neighbor, the stranger, and the enemy. Let your goodness and mercy lead us and the world into a better way. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Words of Blessing (Based on Psalm 32)

One: Happy are they who trespasses are forgiven, who sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the LORD tells no stories against and in whose spirit, there is no deceit.

Many: Therefore, let all who are faithful offer prayer to You; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.

All: You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.

One: The LORD says, "I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Do not be like a mule without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you."

Many: Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.

All: Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

Peace Poem and Introduction

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peace-makers as a Just Peace Church.

Be Brave and Touch the Sky

(by Alexandra Androne from Romania)

Be brave and touch the sky, pure soul

You have in your hand flowers instead of guns

The peace is around the corner

Have faith in yourself and God

You'll bloom again and you'll shine

The sky will be conquered with love

You'll be free as a dove

Your deep inner power is your brightest light

Self-love comes from fighting a war inside

Your soul will bloom without rush

And when the sky is under pressure

You'll draw love on the land you live

Because on your land, the doves sing again

Passing of Peace

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 (New Revised Standard Version)

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable:

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with ^{lbj} the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I

have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Children’s Message The Loving Parent

Message The Wayward Child

Musical Reflections

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

**Our Loving Parent,
reveal who you are
Set the world right.**

Keep us alive with three square meals.

Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.

Keep us safe from ourselves and all temptations.

For everything is yours: love, power, & kingdom. Amen

(Based on Luke 11:2b-4, The Message)

Our Time of Giving

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Sending Music

Benediction