

First Congregational United Church of Christ
January 1, 2023



Painting by Father George Saget

1st Sunday after Epiphany – Baptism of Christ

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Chandler Litterest

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Ann Russ

Liturgist: Bruce Tyler

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Words to Enter Worship

WORDS TO ENTER WORSHIP

People who drink their water: The living water flows over us, through us, and around us; the living water flows in us.

People who like ice cubes in their drinks: The living water nourishes life, cleanses our bodies and the world, and brings the seed to life.

People who like hot baths: The living water comes to us through rain and snow, creates rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans, and holds fast in glaciers.

People who sit beside a river or lake: The living water can change form and purpose; can be contained and yet unstoppable; and is sacred as God's gift to the world.

Opening Hymn : #8 Praise to the Living God

1. Praise to the living God, the God of love and light,
Whose word brought forth the myriad suns and set the worlds in flight,
Whose infinite design, which we but dimly see,
Pervades all nature, making all a cosmic unity.

2. Praise to the living God, from whom all things derive,
Whose Spirit formed upon this sphere the first faint seeds of life;
Who cause them to evolve, unwitting, towards God's goal,
Till humankind stood on the earth, as living thinking souls.

3. Praise to the living God, who knows our joy and pain
Who shares with us our common life, the sacred and profane.
God toils where'er we toil, in home and mart and mill;
And deep within the human heart God leads us forward still.

4. Praise to the living God, around, within, above,
Beyond the grasp of human mind, but whom we know as love,
In these tumultuous days, so full of hop and strife,
May we bear witness to the Way, O Source of Goal of life.

Type: Music Contributors: Rosemary Hadler; Curtis Beach

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WORDS OF LAMENT

Almighty and Merciful God, our leaders are often too worried about appearance and power rather than doing what is right. Most of us are only concerned about the soundbite and image and not digging into heart of the leader or the issue. Too many are concerned only about their family, their community, or their country. We need leaders who are concerned about the common good and people who are working towards justice for all. Wash over us, Merciful God, and submerge us into your waters of baptism that changes hearts and minds; that changes communities and nations. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

TIME OF SILENCE

WORDS OF POETRY AND LIGHTING OF PEACE CANDLE

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.

Blessed Be by Prttybrd

*hold your breath
as I hold you under
cleansing your soul
forgiving all the mistakes you believe you made
there is no punishment for the past
there is no pain in the future
baptized in fluid love
that holds strong
in times you cannot hold your head above*

Passing of the Peace

Hymn #169 What Ruler Wades Through Murky Streams

1. What ruler wades through murky streams and bows beneath the wave
Ignoring how the world esteems the powerful and brave?

Refrain:

Water, River, Spirit, Grace, sweep over me, sweep over me!

Re-carve the depths your fingers traced in sculpting me.

2. Christ gleams with water brown with clay from land the prophets trod.
Above while heaven's clouds give way descends the dove of God

((Refrain))

3. Come bow beneath the flowing wave. Christ stands here at your side.
And raises you from the grave. God raised the crucified.

(Refrain)

Contributors: Thomas H. Troeger; Text: Thomas H. Troeger, © 1986, OxfordUniversity Press, Inc.

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Matthew 3:13-17 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved,^[a] with whom I am well pleased."

Choir Anthem

Message Let It Be So

Musical Reflections

Communion Hymn: #342 Be Known to Us

1. Be known to us in breaking bread, but do not then depart;
O Savior, stay with us and spread your table in our heart
2. Here share with us in love divine, your body and your blood;
That living bread, that heavenly wine, be our immortal food.

Public domain

Communion

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

Our Father, Mother God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom 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 kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Closing Hymn: #325 Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

1. Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign;
With this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.
2. Child of love, our love's expression, love's creation, loved in-deed!
Fresh from God., refresh our spirits, into joy and laughter lead.
3. Child of joy, our dearest treasure, God's you are, from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you; live as one who bears Christ's name.

4. Child of God you loving Parent, learn to know whose child you are.
Grow to laugh and sing and worship, trust and love God More than all.

Contributors: Ronald Cole-Turner; Text: Ronald S. Cole-Turner, Everflowing Streams, alt., © 1981 Ronald S. Cole-Turner

Benediction

Sending Music

The Mission Statement of the First Congregational United Church of Christ :

**We welcome all,
We explore the mysteries of faith,
We celebrate and honor Creation,
We work for justice and peace.**

Please consider: Does this represent who we are currently? Is anything missing? Is anything untrue? Does it complete the sentence: Our mission is to....?