

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

April 30, 2023



Photo by Mohamad Babayan

## 4th Sunday of Easter

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Karina Roth

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter:

Liturgist: Bruce Tyler

**Gathering Music**

**Words of Welcome**

**Prelude**

## **Words to Enter Worship (Based on 1 Corinthians 13)**

People who like green meadows: **Love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious, boastful, arrogant, or rude.**

People who like still waters: **Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.**

People who like righteous paths: **Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.**

People who like feasts: **Love never ends. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part, but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. And now, faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.**

### **Opening Hymn #327 Yes Jesus Loves Me**

1. Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so,  
Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.

#### Chorus

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

2. Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago,  
Taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."

3. Jesus loves me! Still today, walking with me on my way,  
Wanting as a friend to give, light and love to all who live.

### **Words of Lament**

**Merciful God, we are too often like sheep that are easily startled and scared, running towards a group that doesn't always give us safety. We seek abundant life, but don't always understand the abundance you are offering. Rise up, God of Wisdom and Justice, clear our eyes and minds, and lead us on the right paths for loves name's sake. Amen.**

### **Time of Silence**

### **Blessing of the Earth (Liturgy from Episcopal 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention)**

Blessed God, whose love calls the whole creation into covenant with you, and who puts in our hands responsibility for the care of the earth and its creatures: we pray for all to whom you have given life and being, saying:

**Many: Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace**

For the well-being of the earth; for its resources of water, air, light, and soil, that they may be tended for the good of all creatures, we pray:

**Many: Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the waters of the earth; for their careful use and conservation, that we may have the will and the ability to keep them clean and pure, we pray:

**Many: Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the animals of the earth, wild and domestic, large and very small, that they may know the harmony of relationship that sustains all life, we pray:

**Many: Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

**Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace**

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.

The Lamb BY WILLIAM BLAKE

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing wooly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice!

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!

He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb:  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child:  
I am child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.

Little Lamb God bless thee.

Little Lamb God bless thee.

**Passing of the Peace**

## Hymn #247 My Shepherd is the Living God

1. My shepherd is the living, God I therefore nothing need;  
In pastures fair, near pleasant streams you settle me to feed.  
You bring my wandering spirit back when I forsake your ways.  
And lead me for your mercy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.
2. When I walk through the shades of death, your presence is my stay.  
A word of your supporting breath drives all my fears away.  
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my table spread,  
My cup with blessings overflows, your oil anoints my head.
3. The sure provisions of my God attend to all my days.  
O may your house be my abode, and all my work be praise.  
There would I find a settled rest, while others come and go—  
No more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.

### Scripture Readings

**1<sup>st</sup> Scripture** - Psalm 23 (New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition)

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> God makes me lie down in green pastures; God leads me beside still waters;

<sup>3</sup> They restore my soul. They lead me in right paths for their name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Scripture** John 10:1-10 (Common English Bible)

<sup>1</sup> I assure you that whoever doesn't enter into the sheep pen through the gate but climbs over the wall is a thief and an outlaw. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The guard at the gate opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> Whenever he has gathered all of his sheep, he goes before them and they follow him, because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They won't follow a stranger but will run away because they don't know the stranger's voice." <sup>6</sup> Those who heard Jesus use this analogy didn't understand what he was saying.

<sup>7</sup> So Jesus spoke again, “I assure you that I am the gate of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me were thieves and outlaws, but the sheep didn’t listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief enters only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.

**Children’s Message**                      Live Life to the Fullest

**Message**                                      Pester the Pastor

## **Musical Reflections**

### **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**

### **News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community**

### **Our Time of Giving**

### **Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;*

*Praise God, all creatures here below;*

*Alleluia, alleluia*

*Praise God for all that love has done;*

*Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.*

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*

## **Closing Hymn #17 To You, O God, All Creatures Sing**

1. To you, O God, all creatures sing, and all creation, everything  
Sings your praise, alleluia! Your burning sun with golden beam,  
Your silver moon with softer gleam, sing your praises,  
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, Al-le--lu-ia.
2. Your wind that blows the tempest by, you clouds that sail across the sky,  
Sing your praises, alleluia! Your morning rises with a song,  
and lights of evening sing along, sing your praises,  
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, Al-le--lu-ia.
3. Your flowing waters crystal clear, make melodies for you to hear,  
Sing your praises, alleluia! Your fire, bountiful and bright,  
Remembering your warmth and light, sing your praises,  
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, Al-le--lu-ia.
4. 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 your power, singing praises,  
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, Al-le--lu-ia.

## **Benediction**

## **Sending Music**