



First Congregational United Church of Christ

September 17, 2023



Photo by Sandeep Damre

2nd Sunday of Season of Creation

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Linda Noble

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Nancy Starr

Liturgist: Carol Winter

Gathering Music
Words of Welcome
Prelude

Words to Enter Worship (Based on Psalm 96)

People who like dogs: **O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless their name, tell of their salvation from day to day.**

People who like cats: **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; to be revered above all gods, for all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.**

People who like fish: **Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it.**

People who like birds: **Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD; for God is coming, coming to judge the earth. God will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with their truth.**

Opening Hymn #31 All Things Bright and Beautiful

Refrain: All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
our dear God made them all.

1. Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
God mad their glowing colors,
and made their tiny wings.

2. The purple-headed mountain,
the river running by,
The sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky.

3. The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
God made them every one.

*Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.
English melody, Adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915.
One-License No. A-738474*

Time of Silence

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 peacemakers as a Just Peace Church.

A Butterfly Life

by Sarah Zylstra

As the caterpillar sleeps inside its cocoon
Like a baby wrapped in her blanket
She waits and waits until she blooms
Into a beautiful new life
With wings of deep sapphire blue
She takes her first flight, soaring high
Into the clear cornflower sky
She flutters over to perch on the pink flowers
To sip the sweet nectar of pure gold
But this butterfly is daintier than a ballerina
Like a leaf in the wind, but controlled
So delicate and fragile
But so free, so free this butterfly will always be.

Passing of the Peace

Blessing of the Animals

PRAYER

God created us and placed us on the earth
to be stewards of all living things,
therefore let us proclaim the glory of our Creator, saying:

Response: O God, how wonderful are the works of your hands.

Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you create the animals
and give us the ability to train them to help us in our work. **Response.**

Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe;
you give us food from animals to replenish our energies. **Response.**

Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; for the sake of our comfort
you give us domestic animals as companions. **Response.**

Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; you care for us
even as you care for the birds of the air. **Response:**

Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe;
you offered your Son to us as the Passover lamb
and in him willed that we should be called your children. **Response.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Bless, O Lord, this creature,
and fill our hearts with thanksgiving for its being.

Hymn All God's Critters

Chorus: All God's critters got a place in the choir,
some sing low and some sing higher,
some sing out loud on a telephone wire,
and some just clap their hands, or paws, or anything they got now.

1. Listen to the bass it's the one on the bottom,
Where the bullfrog croaks, and the hippopotamus,
moans and groans with a big t'do, and the old cow just goes mow.

2. The dogs and cats they take up the middle,
While the honeybee hums and the cricket fiddles,
The donkey brays and the pony neighs and the old coyote howls.

3. Listen to the top where the little birds sing
on the melodies with the high notes ringing
The hoot owl howls over everything, and the jaybird disagrees.

4. Singing in the nighttime, singin' in the day,
The little duck quacks and he's on his way,
The 'possum ain't got much to say, and the porcupine talks to himself.

5. It's a simple song, a livin' song everywhere,
By the ox and fox and grizzly bear,
The grumpy alligator and the hawk above, the sly raccoon and the turtle dove.

Scripture Readings

1st Scripture Genesis 1:20-25 (Shocken Bible: Volume 1)

20 And God said, "Let the waters swarm with a swarm of living beings, and let fowl fly above the earth across the dome of the heavens!" 21 God created the great sea-serpents and every living creature that crawl about, with which the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged fowl, after their kind. God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the fowl be many on the earth!" 23 There was setting, there was dawning, fifth day.

24 God said, "Let the earth bring forth living beings after their kind: herd-animals and crawling things and wildlife of the earth after their kind." It was so. 25 God made the wildlife of the earth after their kind, and the herd-animals after their kind, and all crawling things of the soil after their kind. And God saw that it was good.

2nd Scripture Matthew 6:25-33 (Common English Bible)

25 “Therefore, I say to you, don’t worry about your life, what you’ll eat or what you’ll drink, or about your body, what you’ll wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds in the sky. They don’t sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth much more than they are? 27 Who among you by worrying can add a single moment to your life? 28 And why do you worry about clothes? Notice how the lilies in the field grow. They don’t wear themselves out with work, and they don’t spin cloth. 29 But I say to you that even Solomon in all of his splendor wasn’t dressed like one of these. 30 If God dresses grass in the field so beautifully, even though it’s alive today and tomorrow it’s thrown into the furnace, won’t God do much more for you, you people of weak faith? 31 Therefore, don’t worry and say, ‘What are we going to eat?’ or ‘What are we going to drink?’ or ‘What are we going to wear?’ 32 Gentiles long for all these things. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 Instead, desire first and foremost God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Children’s Message Swarming, Flying, Crawling

Choir Anthem

Message Look at the birds of the air

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;
Praise God, for all that love has done.
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

continued on next page

Closing Hymn #17 To You, O God, All Creatures Sing (verses 1 - 4)

1. To you, O God, all creatures sing,
and all creation, everything sings your praises, alleluia!
Your burning sun with golden beam,
your silver moon with softer gleam sing your praises,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

2. Your wind that blows the tempest by,
your 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,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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, sings your praises,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

St. Francis of Assisi, 1225, Adapt. Miriam Therese Winter, 1993
Geistliche Kirchesang, Cologne, 1623, Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams 1906
Descant, The New Century Hymnal, copyright 1993
Word adapt. copyright 1993 Medical Mission Sisters.
Harmonization copyright Oxford University Press, 1906
One-License No. A-738474

Benediction
Sending Music



ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER LIST: The Family of Denny Pechacek, Rhonda Silence, Meredith Eliot (Church-Davison), Vicki Biggs-Anderson, Paulette Anholm, Mike Carlson, Gwen Dornfeld, Sally Dunn, The Family of Pat Backlund, All Victims of Gun Violence, Immigrants and Refugees, Countries of Ukraine, Sudan, Morocco, Libya, and Planet Earth.

At home and Care Center: Jean Ljungkull, Nona Smith, Lou Goodell, Bev Denyes, Nancy Cihlar and Tom Hedstrom.

MEASURE OF OUR FAITHFULNESS

The First Congregational UCC adopted a 2023 Budget at the Annual Meeting on 28 January 2023, showing a need for a yearly income of \$164,110.00.

After thirty-seven weeks, the Budget Donations and Income should be \$114,104.83. The Actual Donations so far this year have been \$111,072.08.

-Kevin LeVoor, Treasurer

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY, September 14

10:00 AM – Tai Chi
12:00 PM – Women's AA
2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons
4:00 PM - Pastor Relations Committee

FRIDAY, September 15

7:00 AM – AA
8:00 AM – Harbor Watch
2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons

SATURDAY, September 16

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM – Piano Lessons

SUNDAY, September 17

9:30 AM – Pick-up Choir Practice
10:30 AM Worship Service – OUTSIDE
AND ON ZOOM 2nd Sunday of the Season of Creation (Blessing of the Animals), Jesus in the 'Sermon on the Mount' tells us not worry and asks to consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Let us take time to appreciate all life around us, especially the animals and pets who are family. This worship will be outside, and everyone is invited to bring all their family.

MONDAY September 18

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons
5:00 PM - Rooted and Rising
7:00 PM – Al-Anon

TUESDAY, September 19

12:00 Clergy Cluster
NO Heal the Planet This Week
2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons
5:00 PM – Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM – Zen Buddhist Meditation

WEDNESDAY, September 20

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons
3:00 PM – Exploring Process Theology
6:00 PM - Confirmation
6:00 PM – Sing-Along

THURSDAY, September 21

10:00 AM Tai Chi
12:00 PM – Women's AA
12:00 PM – Eco Preacher Cohort
2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons
3:30 PM – Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting Planning

FRIDAY, September 22

7:00 AM – AA
8:00 AM – Harbor Watch
2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons

SATURDAY, September 23

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM – Piano Lessons

SUNDAY, September 24

9:30 AM – Choir Practice
10:30 AM Worship Service – Inside AND ON ZOOM 3rd Sunday of the Season of Creation (Wilderness Sunday), in the Gospels we have two messages of the wilderness. One centers on John the Baptist who baptizes and all people flock to him to get out of their regular lives to someplace different and find a great experience. The second is Jesus who goes into the wilderness to fast and finds a tempter who tries to lead him away from God. What is it about the wilderness that can be so affirming and dangerous at the same time?

4:00 PM - Journey Discipleship Group

September 17, 2023
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Exodus 14:19-31
Road to Freedom
Just Peace Sunday

Even if you have not spent much time in church or in Bible study, the story of the crossing of the Red Sea is probably a little familiar. Take a look at the story with new eyes today, reading it through a lens that is new to you. What new message or insight do you get from this story by reading it in this new way?

A literary reading considers the story from the point of view of literature. How does the plot arc and flow keep you, as the reader or listener, engaged? What are some of the literary devices, such as use of language? Who are the characters and how are they developed? What is your point of view as a reader or listener? How does the story change if you consider it from another point of view?

A historical reading considers the story from the point of view of its place in history. Take into account the place and time that the story takes place. What is the culture of God's people and of Pharaoh's people at the time? What are other forces at work in these societies?

Another way to read a Bible story is as a story of God's work in the world. In reading this way, pay attention to where God is and what God is doing. What is God like in this story and how does this compare to God's presence in other stories? How does God look and sound? In what ways does God circumvent expected or natural law in order to accomplish Divine goals?

You may also want to read a scripture story devotionally, as a way to intentionally deepen your walk with God. In reading this way, read the story slowly three times. The first time, pay attention to any words or phrases that jump out at you and make note of them. The second time, read while asking God to show you God's purpose in the world. The third time, read asking God to reveal something that you need for your own particular faith walk.

Yet another way to read the Bible, and perhaps a particularly helpful one on this Just Peace Sunday (<https://www.ucc.org/just-peace/>), is through a liberation theology lens. Liberation theology is based on the fundamental value that God's preference is always for the marginalized and oppressed. As you read this way, look for clues that God is working for freedom for the enslaved, and disruption of systems of oppression.



First Congregational United Church of Christ

300 West 2nd Street

P.O. Box 95

Grand Marais, Minnesota 55604

grandmaraisucc.org // (218) 387-2113 // office@grandmaraisucc.org
