

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

February 19, 2023



Painting by Theophanes the Greek

## Transfiguration Sunday

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Linda Noble

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: Ann Russ

Liturgist:

**Gathering Music**

**Words of Welcome**

**Prelude**

## **Words to Enter Worship** (lyrics by Cyndi Lauper)

People who wear comfortable clothes: **If you're lost, you can look and you will find me, Time after time. If you fall, I will catch you, I'll be waiting Time after time**

People who like costumes: **But I see your true color Shining through, I see your true colors, And that's why I love you**

People who like to dress up: **So don't be afraid, to let them show, Your true colors, True colors are beautiful Like a rainbow**

People who don't pay attention to what is worn: **If you're lost, you can look and you will find me, Time after time. If you fall, I will catch you, oh, I'll be waiting Time after time**

**Opening Hymn** Nothing Can Separate Us by Amy Sens (See Insert)

Refrain:

Nothing can Separate us from the deep, deep love of God.

Not trials or temptations, from the deep, deep love of God.

1. In time of deepest sorrow, when all joy seems lost and gone  
Christ stays our true companion We are never left alone.
2. If God our judge is for us, then who can stand against?  
Christ Jesus laid his life down, our way to make amends.
3. God's love: the ground we walk on, God's love: the air we breathe,  
God's love: the simple sunshine, God's love; our own heartbeat.

## **Words of Lament**

**Merciful God, there have been more shootings, more war, and more people killed in earthquakes because shortcuts on construction were taken. Human life seems not to be valued; vulnerable people not cared about. When will the targeting and indiscriminate killing of people and harm to all life end? Rise up! Rise up and help all humanity see your light in us, in them, and the true colors of your love. We plead with you and with each other, let our common humanity and relations to all be found once again. Amen.**

**Time of Silence**

## **Words for Blessing the Earth**    The Peace of Wild Things by Wendell Berry

**One:** When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound

**Many:** in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake

**All:** rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things

**One:** who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

**Many:** And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light

**All:** For a time. I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

### **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.

**Poem: "Let Your Light Shine," by Marianne Williamson**

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Hymn #524**    This Little Light

(public domain)

1    This little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine;  
this little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

2 Everywhere I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine;  
everywhere I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Everywhere I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

3 All through the night,  
I'm gonna let it shine;  
all through the night,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
All through the night,  
I'm gonna let it shine;  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

(Public Domain)

## Scripture Readings

**1<sup>st</sup> Scripture** Exodus 24:12-28 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

<sup>12</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there; I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." <sup>13</sup> So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up onto the mountain of God. <sup>14</sup> To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come back to you. Look, Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them."

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. <sup>16</sup> The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. <sup>17</sup> Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the Israelites. <sup>18</sup> Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Scripture** Matthew 17:1-9 (Common English Bible)

**17** Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain. <sup>2</sup> He was transformed in front of them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. <sup>3</sup> Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. <sup>4</sup> Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, "Lord, it's good that we're here. If you want, I'll make three shrines: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." <sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud overshadowed them. A voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!" <sup>6</sup> Hearing this, the disciples fell on their faces, filled with awe. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be

afraid.”<sup>8</sup> When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don’t tell anybody about the vision until the Human One is raised from the dead.”

**Children’s Message** God Will Always Love You

**Choir Anthem** I still have joy!

**Message** Shining God’s Light

**Musical Reflections**

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

**Creator, who spoke the light into creation, holy is your being. Your radiance come, your light be shown, in this world as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily light, and forgiveness us our darkness, as we forgive those who bring darkness into the world. Lead us by your light, and shine on the dark places so we can fully see. For yours is the light, the energy, and the warmth until the end of time and beyond. Amen.**

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

**Our Time of Giving**

**Doxology** (Tune in Red Hymnal #357)

*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 #4** Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You (public domain)

1 Joyful, joyful, we adore You,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You,  
Op'ning to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day!

2 All Your works with joy surround You,  
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,  
Stars and angels sing around You,  
Center of unbroken praise;  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain  
Praising You eternally!

3 Always giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Well-spring of the joy of living,  
Ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Loving Father, Christ our Brother,  
Let Your light upon us shine;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
Lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals, join the mighty chorus,  
Which the morning stars began;  
God's own love is reigning o'er us,  
Joining people hand in hand.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife;  
Joyful music leads us sunward  
In the triumph song of life.

African American Heritage Hymnal, (2001)  
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## **Benediction**

## **Sending Music**