



TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 15, 2020
9:30 AM

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

OPEN & AFFIRMING WELCOME STATEMENT

First Congregational Church of Akron unconditionally affirms all people as we live out our call to follow Jesus Christ and his teaching of inclusive love.

We welcome people of every race, age, nationality, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, family circumstance, socio-economic status, physical and mental ability, or spiritual background.

We invite all who are seeking God's presence in their lives to participate fully in our church life, ministry, and leadership.

We strive to be a safe place, free from the fear of judgment, where wounds can heal, differences are cherished, and inclusivity is intentional.

We commit ourselves to the struggle against injustice, discrimination, violence, and hatred, in order to foster a world of peace and wholeness.

God loves you. Christ invites you. We embrace and celebrate you.

PRELUDE

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

arr. Hal Hopson

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

1 Corinthians 3

One: God's Spirit dwells in us,

All: for we are God's temple.

One: Let us not deceive ourselves,

All: for our wisdom is but foolishness.

One: Our true foundation is Christ

All: so let no one boast about human leaders.

One: We belong to Christ,

All: and Christ belongs to God.

HYMN

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.**

**Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,
From everlasting, thou art God, to endless years the same.**

**Time like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.**

**O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while life shall last, and eternal home.**

CENTERING AND OPENING PRAYER

THOUGHTS FOR THE YOUNG

LITANY FOR VETERANS

One: Loving God, we take time now to pause and remember all veterans.

All: May we never take for granted their sacrifice for country, stranger, and friend.

One: For their loyalty and commitment to the ideals of liberty and justice –

All: We thank you, Lord, that they were willing.

One: For their selflessness in leaving behind families so that others could live peacefully with their own –

All: We thank you, Lord, that they were willing.

One: For the stories that shaped them, filled with joy and with sorrow, so that others could make stories of their own –

All: We thank you, Lord, that they were willing.

One: As we honor our veterans, we also pray for peace.

All: May our veterans always stay in our care just as they are in yours, Gracious God, and may we strive for peace wrought not from violence but, instead, your will alive in our hearts and hands. Amen.

ANTHEM

Earth Song

Frank Ticheli

INVITATION TO PRAYER

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

SUNG MEDITATION

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

**Lord, listen to your children praying
Lord, send your spirit in this place;**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace! Repeat**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*please use the language most familiar to you*)

**Our Father, which 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

READING FROM THE PSALMS

Psalm 90:1-12

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.

The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

READING FROM THE EPISTLE

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God

has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

SERMON

Our Dwelling Place

HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

**Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.**

Refrain. Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.

Longing for warmth, many are cold.

**Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. Refrain**

**Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.**

**Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come. Refrain**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERING

God Leads Us Along

arr. Larry Shackley

*Please visit www.akronfcc.org/donate to support
the vital and ongoing ministries and missions of First Church
or mail your donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308*

OFFERING PRAYER

SONG

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

**God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
Nature's wonder and Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you offering up ourselves in praise;
Thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

**Skill and time are ours for pressing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
All at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;**

Born with talents, make us servants, fit to answer at your throne.

Treasure too you have entrusted, gain thru your powers your grace conferred;

Ours to use for home and kindred and to spread the gospel Word.

Open wide our hands, in sharing, as we heed Christ's ageless call,

Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Trust and Obey

Daniel Towner

*If you have joined the service live on zoom or on the phone, please consider
remaining on the call for a time of fellowship after worship.*

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister

Antigoné Lowery, Associate Minister

Cal Robertson, Lay Leader

Julie Lehman, Choir Director and Organist

Dave Aberth, Celebrate Service Music Leader

Amanda-Joyce Abbott, Tim Borham, Nicholas Campagna, Stephanie Corbin, Ben Hayes, Mickey

McGroarty, Dave Lehman, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, and Courtney Zimmerman, Instrumentalists
and Vocalists

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