



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 10 2020

9:30 AM

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.

WELCOME

CENTERING REFLECTION & PRAYER

TIME OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

We Welcome You

**We welcome you here. Holy Spirit come in.
Come heal us. Come feed us.**

**Lord, we call on your name, show your power again.
Come heal us. Come feed us.**

It's all for you;

be glorified, we seek your presence, we seek your nearness.

Be lifted high, hear our praises

we have in this place with your love. *Repeat from beginning*

It's all for you. It's all for you.

Be glorified, we seek your presence, we seek your nearness.

Be lifted high. Hear our praises we have in this place.

Be glorified, we seek your presence, we seek you nearness.

Be lifted high. Hear our praises we have in this place with your love.

Old Church Choir

There's revival, and it's spreading like a wildfire in my heart.

Sunday morning, Hallelujah, and it's lasting all week long.

Can you hear it? Can you feel it?

It's the rhythm of a gospel song.

Oh, once you choose it, you can't lose it.

There ain't nothing, there ain't nothing gonna steal my joy.

Refrain

I got an old church choir singing in my soul.

I've got a sweet salvation and it's beautiful.

I've got a heart overflowing 'cause I've been restored.

There ain't nothing gonna steal my joy,

no, there ain't nothing gonna steal my joy.

When the valleys that I wander turn to mountains that I can't climb.

Oh, you are with me, never leave me,

oh, 'cause there ain't nothing,

there ain't nothing gonna steal my joy. *Refrain*

Clap your hands and stomp your feet

'til you find that gospel beat

'cause he's all you'll ever need. All you'll ever need.

I've got an old church choir singing in my soul.

I've got a sweet salvation and it's beautiful. *Refrain*

No, there ain't nothing gonna steal my joy.

Oh, there ain't nothing gonna steal my joy.

The Rising

From the rising of the sun till the sun goes down

let the name of the Lord be praised. *Repeat*

We gather to worship, becoming a choir to sing your praise.

Lifting our voices; joining our hearts in this house today.

People of God...

And the power of God...

For the kingdom of God, we sing.

**From the rising of the sun till the sun goes down
let the name of the Lord be praised. *Repeat***

From the sky to the depths, from the east to the west. We give you praise.

**We gather to go out to cities and towns we take your name,
into the nations, shining the light in the darkest place.**

People of God...

And the power of God...

For the kingdom of God, we live.

**From the rising of the sun till the sun goes down
let the name of the Lord be praised. *Repeat***

From the sky to the depths, from the east to the west. We give you praise.

**From the rising of the sun till the sun goes down
let the name of the Lord be praised. *Repeat***

From the sky to the depths, from the east to the west. We give you praise.

We give you praise. Lord, we give you praise. We give you praise.

**From the rising of the sun till the sun goes down
let the name of the Lord be praised.**

TIME OF PRAYER

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*

MUSIC REFLECTION

SCRIPTURE: John 14:1-14

Jesus said "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."

"And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my

Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

“Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

MESSAGE: *Show Us!*

MOTHERING SUNDAY RECOGNITION

During or following this service, please visit www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron and, in the comments below this morning’s worship service videos, add a message and even a picture, honoring those who have offered you mothering.

One: Mothers come in many different forms,
and today we celebrate them all!

**All: Mothering God,
we draw on the image of you as one who nurtures,
who gathers, who protects.**

One: We pray for those women who have nurtured us as mothers
who are no longer with us and whom we miss dearly.

**All: We reflect upon those women who have influenced our own lives
in so many ways, and we give thanks.**

One: We pray for the women around the world
who are working long days and nights to raise their children right now.

All: We pray for mothers around the world.

One: We pray for mothers who have fled violence and difficult situations,
including refugees, and who have been separated from their children,
or experienced the tragedy of the death of a child.

All: We pray for mothers living in uncertainty and facing the unknown.

One: We pray for all the women who are expecting, but aren’t quite mothers yet!
And we give thanks for all the women who carry babies to help other families have a child.

All: Thank you, God, for the soon-to-be-mothers and those who bear children.

One: We pray for families where others have stepped in to help care for and nurture children;
extended family, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, foster and adoptive parents, school
teachers, pastors, elders, and friends who share wisdom.

All: We give thanks for these mothers with hearts so big.

One: We pray for those women who have lost a child to death and must carry on.
All: We pray for strength and courage for the mothers who have faced grief and loss.

One: We pray for women whose children have grown and whom they now seldom see.
All: We pray for mothers who are at a distance from their children.

One: We pray for all the women who have desperately wanted to have children of their own,
but find instead they are a mother to others.
All: We thank God for the mothers in spirit.

One: We pray for mothers whose children are at risk as they work to protect and defend others.
**All: Grant them confidence in your presence with their children
in life, in death, in life beyond death.**

One: Mothering God, we offer these prayers to you this day.
All: Hear the prayers of our own hearts. *Brief time of silent prayer.*

All: Amen.

SENDING SONGS:

Here I Am, Lord

**I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?**

Refrain **Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.**

**I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain***

**I, the Lord of wind and flame. I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain***

May the Blessing of God

**May the blessing of God go before you,
May her grace and peace abound.
May her spirit live within you,
May her love wrap you 'round.
May her blessing remain with you always,
May you walk on holy ground.**

BLESSING

NEWS & NOTES

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister
Antigoné Lowery, Associate Minister

Music and vocals: Dave Aberth, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, & Mike Vincent

CCLI License #11234842 and CCS License #8399

Support First Church's Ministry. Visit www.akronfcc.org/donate to support the vital and ongoing ministries and missions of this congregation. You are also welcome to mail a donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308. Thank you!

Win a Pizza – Youth Night Scavenger Hunt Online. If you enjoy participating in scavenger hunts outside, then you will surely enjoy a scavenger hunt in your own home! We invite all middle school and high school aged students to join Pastor Antigone for a Zoom scavenger hunt on Friday, May 15, from 6pm-7:30pm. Each student will be given a list of items to find around their home and the first student to find all the items on the list will win a free pizza which will be delivered to you! This scavenger hunt will be unlike any you have ever played before, so we hope you are ready for lots of fun, laughter, and thrills! Please RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by Friday, May 15, at 5pm to join!

Weekly Video Challenges for the Family. We invite children and youth, along with their families, to participate each week in a fun and interactive challenge! Whether you are an introvert or extrovert, silly or serious, these challenges can be enjoyable for everyone and are a great way for families to get creative. There are only 2 rules: 1) videos must be between 1-2 minutes or shorter and 2) have fun! Please email your video submissions to Pastor Antigone at antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org no later than Sunday at 5pm. **Week 1 Challenge:** Embrace your inner performer and act out a scene from your favorite Bible story! Stories like Daniel and the Lion, David and Goliath, or the Parables of Jesus are great options! Are you up for the challenge?

Online Bible Study for Men* You are warmly invited to join Rev. Steven Savides online for an exploration of the scriptures on Saturday, May 16, 8-9am. Participants are encouraged to have a bible with them (any translation) and to be prepared to journey through scripture with thought-provoking conversation. Steven is a Ph.D.

candidate at the University of Notre Dame and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Please RSVP to Kasey: kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by 4pm the Friday before. **The designation "men" is meant to create a space in which all who identify as male or who embrace a masculine identity can feel welcome and find fellowship.*

Online Wednesday Bible Study. Join us on zoom on Wednesday evenings in May for our bible study, *Great Themes of the Bible*. It's led by First Church member Brenda Waddell, who is a Member in Discernment for ordained Christian ministry with the United Church of Christ. Brenda will be graduating from Methodist Theological School in Ohio next month and looks forward to serving God and others through ministry. If you would like to join us for

this thought-provoking study, please RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by 5pm each week. We look forward to seeing you online!

COVID-19 Cancellations. We continue to be the church and to live out our mission while supporting the efforts of local and state officials to protect our neighbors and ourselves from the spread of COVID-19 by ceasing to hold in-person gatherings. Sunday worship services are only available remotely via livestream at www.akronfcc.org/live or via our Facebook page www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron and we continue to operate our other essential ministries (more information below).

Pastoral Care and our Care Team. Our pastors are here to support and speak with members remotely. Our staff members are also on hand to assist with administrative needs. Please feel free to reach out. Our Care Team is actively reaching out to our homebound and senior members extending care and comfort during this time. Pastor Antigone is hosting a Care Team next Sunday, May 17. Please email her at antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org if you would like to attend.

Midweek Time of Reflection. Join our pastors each Wednesday at noon for a livestream time of prayer and inspiring readings and ideas at www.akronfcc.org/live or on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron. If you miss them live, you can always find the posts on Facebook and on our website blog afterwards to watch at your leisure.

Thoughts for the Young. One of our pastors offers an inspiring and age-appropriate message each Sunday and the video is posted to both Facebook and our website between services. Encourage your kids to watch this weekly video message with you!

Feeding Hope Food Pantry. In keeping with our Food Justice vision priority and to provide a source of healthy food in this difficult time for families in need, the pantry remains open as scheduled on Tuesday mornings from 9:30am-11:30am and the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 6:30-7:30pm. Operating with a skeleton crew of volunteers, the process for distribution is vastly different from usual. Patrons are asked to stay in their vehicles if they drive or to stand outside in a line, 6 feet apart, if they arrive on foot. We encourage your continued support of this vital ministry. However, in light of the shelter in place order, we can only accept monetary donations (no donated items at this time), please visit www.akronfcc.org/donate to offer whatever you are able. Donations in any amount are appreciated.

Spring Plant Sale. First Church and Let's Grow Akron are hosting our Second Annual Spring Plant Sale fundraiser on May 16 & 17. Proceeds will benefit the Feed My Sheep Garden and Let's Grow Akron. Offerings will include heirloom varieties of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, greens, herbs, and flowers all grown with organic practices right here at the Feed My Sheep Garden. You can browse the [online store](#) between now and May 14. Don't forget to [schedule a pick-up time](#) between 9am and 3pm on May 16 and 17. We are seeking a small crew of volunteers to run the socially distanced plant sale this year. If you might have some time to help, please contact Garden Manager, [Sam Phillips](#).

Summer Camp Applications. We are still accepting applications for scholarships for children and youth to attend summer camp. Please download an application at www.akronfcc.org/summer-camp-scholarships or contact Associate Minister Antigone at antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org.

South Street Ministries is the May Mission of the Month. South Street Ministries upholds its mission of “unlikely partners taking shared risks to renew our community for Christ’s sake” through youth programs, recovery services and the Front Porch Café. Programs include programs for youth, Faithful Servants Urgent Care Center and South Street Recovery Services. Funds raised from Mission of the Month will be used for summer youth programs including, RICH Kids and Bike Shop, to empower these programs to minister to youth more regularly. If you like to make a contribution, please make your check out the First Congregational Church of Akron with “South Street Ministries” in the memo line or donate online at www.akronfcc.org/donate

IN OUR DAILY PRAYERS

We offer daily prayers of thanksgiving for all who are struggling in body, mind, or spirit each day. We pray especially for all those around the world who are affected by the coronavirus; those who are sick and those who care for them, those who work tirelessly to provide treatment and vaccine. We give thanks for our public officials and leaders, those who staff hospitals and work in grocery stores, for first responders and emergency service providers. Within our community we pray for Chris, Larry, Marilyn, Margaret, Jessica, Richard, Lola, Barbara, Carole, George, Madeline, Betty, Wanda, Art, and Doug.

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