



SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER  
MAY 24, 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.

WELCOME

CENTERING REFLECTION & PRAYER

TIME OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

*Come and Find the Quiet Center*

**Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,  
Find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed;  
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see  
All the things that really matter, be at peace and simply be.**

**Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, touches base,  
Making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,  
Raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.**

**In the Spirit, let us travel, open to each other's pain.  
Let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain.  
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,  
In the Spirit's lively scheming, there is always room to spare!**

*All Are Welcome*

**Let us build a house where love can dwell  
And all can safely live,  
A place where saints and children tell  
How hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
Rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where hands shall reach  
Beyond the wood and stone  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
And live in the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
Bear the image of God's face  
Let us bring an end to fear and danger:  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

**Let us build a house where all are named  
Their songs and visions heard  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
As words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
Prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
All are welcome in this place.**

*I Saw the Light*

**I wandered so aimless, life filled with sin  
I wouldn't let my dear savior in  
Then Jesus came like a stranger in the night  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light.**

*Refrain* I saw the light, I saw the light  
No more darkness, no more night  
Now I'm so happy, no sorrow in sight  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light.

Just like a blind man I wandered along  
Worries and fears I claimed for my own  
Then like the blind man that God gave back his sight  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light. *Refrain*

I was a fool to wander and stray  
Straight is the gate and narrow the way  
Now I have traded the wrong for the right  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light. *Refrain*

I saw the light, I saw the light  
No more darkness, no more night  
Now I'm so happy, no sorrow in sight  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light.  
Praise the Lord, I saw the light.

#### 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 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.

And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

MESSAGE: *In the World*

SENDING SONGS:

*Pass it On*

**It only takes a spark to get a fire going,  
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing;  
That's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it;  
You spread God's love to everyone, you want to pass it on.**

**What a wondrous time is spring when all the trees are budding.  
The birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming;  
That's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it;  
You want to sing, it's fresh like spring, you want to pass it on.**

**I wish for you, my friend, this happiness that I've found.  
On God you can depend, it matters not where you're bound;  
I'll shout it from the mountain top, I want my world to know,  
The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.**

**I'll shout it from the mountain top, I want my world to know,  
The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.**

*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: Kathy Johnson, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, & Mike Vincent

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**Pastor Nanette on Vacation.** Pastor Nanette has been away from the church since Tuesday, May 19. She will be returning on Thursday, May 28. If you need to reach someone in the meantime, please contact Kasey Kalchert and she will direct your inquiry 330.253.5109 x112, [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org)

**Give securely to First Church on our website!** Go to [www.akronfcc.org/donate](http://www.akronfcc.org/donate) to make a donation or to set up a recurring donation. We have a secure website to manage our online transactions, so you do not need to worry about electronic giving! If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Janis Worley at [janis.worley@akronfcc.org](mailto:janis.worley@akronfcc.org) You are also welcome to mail a donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308. Thank you!

**Join us for Week #3 of the weekly challenge!** Starting Sunday, May 24 we challenge families and children to showcase your musical talents in a family lip-sync! Whether you choose opera, funk, or a musical tune, we challenge you to lip-sync your hearts out! You might even want to introduce some family-friendly competition and have a lip-sync battle with someone else in your family! If you'd like to share your video, please send a 1-2 minute clip to Pastor Antigoné at [antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org](mailto:antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org) no later than Saturday, May 30. Are you up for the challenge?

**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](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by 5pm each week. We look forward to seeing you online!

**2020-21 Budget Informational Session.** On Thursday, May 28, the congregation is invited to join the Stewardship & Finance Board and other church leadership on Zoom for an informational session on the 2020-21 Budget, which will run from June 1, 2020-May 31, 2021. The meeting will begin at 5pm. If you would like to attend, please contact Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) for the meeting invite link.

**Governing Board Meeting.** The monthly Governing Board meetings are open to any members and friends of First Church. The May meeting will take place on Zoom on Thursday, May 28, at 6:30pm.

The agenda will include adopting our new budget (for our new fiscal year running June 1, 2020-May 31, 2021). Contact Moderator Larry Becker at [larrybecker2900@yahoo.com](mailto:larrybecker2900@yahoo.com) to RSVP and attend the meeting.

**Coming Out Christian.** In this group held on May 31, 6-7pm, members of the LGBTQ+ community can come together online to explore Christianity and the possibility of understanding faith in new ways as we reclaim and explore our faith journeys. Join us as we rethink God's love toward LGBTQ+ Christians! If you would like to join the discussion, please RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by 5pm on the meeting day. You will receive a Zoom link in your email to join the conversation.

**Calling All Graduates and Teachers!** June 7 is Graduate and Teacher Recognition Day. We recognize that this school year has been challenging in many ways for our students and teachers and that much has been taken away as a result of COVID-19. As such, First Church wants to recognize and celebrate all the hard work and accomplishments of our graduates and teachers! If your family has a high school or college student graduating this year, or if you are currently serving as a teacher and would like to be recognized, please send an email to Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) with the graduate or teacher name and school by Thursday, June 4 at 5pm.

**Time with Tots Breakfast Zoom.** Join Pastor Antigone on Saturday, June 13 from 8am-9:30am for another time of connection and fellowship. As we work towards and anticipate gathering again in person, we hope that this virtual opportunity for families with toddler age children proves to be just as valuable and fun! To RSVP, please send an email to Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by Friday, June 12 at 4pm. We look forward to seeing each of you bright and early with coffee in hand!

**Youth Night "What's in the Box?" Game on Zoom!** Join Pastor Antigone on Friday, June 19 from 6pm-7:30pm for another Zoom game night! This month, we will try our hands at playing a fun game called, "What's in the Box?" In this game, each person will choose the weirdest or most random object they can think of, keeping it out of sight in a box while each person takes turns trying to guess what the object is. The person who guesses right the most times will win a fun surprise! To join the fun, RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by Thursday, June 18 at 5pm.

**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](http://www.akronfcc.org/live) or via our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron](https://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.

**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](http://www.akronfcc.org/live) or on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron](http://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](http://www.akronfcc.org/donate) to offer whatever you are able. Donations in any amount are appreciated.

**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](http://www.akronfcc.org/summer-camp-scholarships) or contact Associate Minister Antigone at [antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org](mailto: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](http://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, Marilyn, Margaret, Jessica, Lola, Barbara, Carole, George, Madeline, Betty, Wanda, Art, and Doug.

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