



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JUNE 21, 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

You are Welcome Here

**Refrain: You are welcome here, no matter who you are,
no matter where you are on life's journey.**

**You are welcome here, no matter who you are,
come and join with us, we're united in the church of Christ.**

**Come now all people, join in the song,
come be a part of the family of God.**

**We are God's people and you belong,
share in the joy of Christ. Refrain**

Refrain: You are welcome here, no matter who you are,
no matter where you are on life's journey.
You are welcome here, no matter who you are,
come and join with us, we're united in the church of Christ.

We pray for justice; we pray for peace;
we hear the word of the Savior of all.
We find God's mercy; we find release,
sharing the joy of Christ. *Refrain*

Lifting each other; doing what's right;
standing together, whatever may come;
praising our Savior, shining our light,
sharing the joy of Christ. *Refrain*

Shine Jesus Shine

Lord, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me

Refrain: Shine, Jesus, shine; fill this land with the Father's glory.
Blaze, Spirit, blaze; set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow; flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story
Shine on me, shine on me *Refrain*

The Potter's Hand

Beautiful Lord, wonderful Savior,
I know for sure
All of my days are held in your hand;
Crafted into your perfect plan.

You gently call me into your presence,
Guiding me by your Holy Spirit;
Teach me, dear Lord to live all of my life
Through your eyes.

I'm captured by your holy calling,
Set me apart,
I know you're drawing me to yourself;
Lead me, Lord, I pray.

Take me, mold me, use me, fill me.
I give my life to the Potter's hand.
Call me, you guide me,
Lead me, walk beside me;
I give my life to the Potter's hand.

You gently call me into your presence,
Guiding me by your Holy Spirit;
Teach me, dear Lord to live all of my life
Through your eyes.

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Take me, mold me, use me, fill me.
I give my life to the Potter's hand.
Call me, you guide me,
Lead me, walk beside me;
I give my life to the Potter's hand.

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: Matthew 10:24-39

“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

MESSAGE: *The Cost of Discipleship*

FATHERING 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 fathering.

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

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

One: Today we ask you to bless our earthly fathers

**All: for the many times they reflected the love, strength,
generosity, wisdom and mercy
you show us.**

One: We honor our fathers:

**All: For putting our needs above their own convenience and comfort.
For teaching us to show courage and determination in the face of adversity.
For challenging us to move beyond self-limiting boundaries.
For modeling the qualities that would turn us
into responsible, principled, caring adults.**

One: Not all our fathers lived up to these ideals.

All: Give them the grace to acknowledge and learn from their mistakes.

Give us the grace to extend to them

the same forgiveness you offer us all.

**Help us to resist the urge to stay stuck in past bitterness,
instead, moving forward with humility and peace of heart.**

One: We ask your blessing on those men who served as father figures in our lives especially when our biological fathers weren't able to do so.

All: Help them to know that their influence has changed us for the better.

One: Give new and future fathers the guidance they need

All: to raise happy and holy children,

grounded in a love for God and other people.

and remind these fathers that treating their wives

with dignity, compassion and respect is

one of the greatest gifts they can give their children.

One: We pray for all who embrace a masculine identity, that they not be confined, boxed, or limited in their manhood.

All: Let them embrace the fullness of life you give,

sharing their laughter and tears, their joys and fears,

living with kindness and compassion.

One: We pray that our fathers who have passed into the next life have been welcomed into Your loving embrace,

All: and that our family will one day be reunited

in your heavenly kingdom.

One: Heavenly Father, 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: *You're Worthy of My Praise*

I will worship with all of my heart;

I will praise you with all of my strength.

I will seek you all of my days;

I will follow all of your ways.

Refrain: **I will give you all my worship, I will give you all my praise.**

You alone I long to worship, you alone are worthy of my praise.

I will bow down, and hail you as king:

I will serve you, give you everything.

I will lift up my eyes in your throne,

I will trust you, trust you alone. *Refrain x2*

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
Brenda Waddell, Guest Preacher
Music and vocals: Dave Aberth, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, & Mike Vincent

† Drawn from a prayer written by Tony Rossi.

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To Infinity and Beyond! Bible Study. Join Pastor Nanette on Wednesdays for the second part of a study of the Acts of the Apostles describing the spread of the Christian faith to the gentiles beyond Jerusalem and Samaria. The groups meets online from 7-8:15pm each week. To attend, please RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by 5pm on the meeting day. You will receive a Zoom link in your email to join the conversation.

Church Chat! Fellowship Online. Are you missing Coffee Hour after church? Missing the chance to see and catch up with other members and friends? Join our pastors and others from church online for fellowship on Thursday, June 25, from 8:30-9:30am, RSVP to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by 5pm the day before and you'll receive a Zoom link in your email to join the conversation. We look forward to seeing you online with coffee in hand!

Movie Discussion on Zoom: Just Mercy. Join for us for a Zoom discussion on the film *Just Mercy* this Thursday, June 25, 7—9pm. Based on the bestselling book of the same name by Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy* presents the stunning true story of

Walter McMillian, a black man convicted and sentenced to death in Alabama in 1988 for a crime he did not commit. The film illustrates the structural racism endemic to our capital punishment system, and lays bare how this system devalues and cheapens all human life. *Just Mercy* is [currently available online for free](#). Visit the [Catholic Mobilizing Network](#) for reflection and discussion questions that will guide our conversation. To join the meeting, please contact to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org by 5pm on the day and you'll receive an email with a link to join the conversation.

July Teen Bible Study. Calling all teens! We invite you to join Pastor Antigone on Zoom each Wednesday in July from 7pm-8:30pm for a 5-week study on the book of Lamentations. Each week, we will discuss a theme in Lamentations and what it can teach us about our ability to create social change in our society. Many young people are at the center of important social movements in our society, reminding us that anyone can create positive change. As Mahatma Gandhi reminds us, we are to “*be the change that [we] wish to see in the world.*” For this reason, we hope that you will join us in this safe and exciting space to share and connect with other like-minded teens! To RSVP, please email Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org no later than 5pm each Tuesday in July.

The Akron-Area YMCA is the June Mission of the Month. The mission at the Y is “to put Christian principles into practices through the programs that build a healthy, spirit, mind, and body for all.” The core values of the Y are caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and faith with the areas of focus including youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Watch this [video](#) to hear more about the Akron-Area YMCA programs! If you like to make a contribution, please make your check out the First Congregational Church of Akron with “Akron-Area YMCA” 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, Marilyn, Margaret, Jessica, Lola, Barbara, Carole, George, Madeline, Betty, Wanda, Art, and Doug.

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