



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

CELEBRATE WORSHIP
JUNE 28, 2020
9:30 AM

WELCOME

CENTERING REFLECTION & PRAYER

TIME OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Perpetual Praise

**Your many blessings are new each morning
and with each dawning we sing your praise!
From early morning to restful evening
our grateful hearts sing praises!**

**Your love and mercy, shining bright,
bring hope and joy
as we follow in your Light.**

**You breathe within us.
You sing within us.
You move our hearts to perpetual praise!
Through all of our days.
Perpetual praise! *Repeat from beginning***

The Grace of God is Yours

**Reach out your hands, accept the gift.
Reach out your hands, accept the gift.
Reach out your hands, embrace the gift,
the grace of God is yours.**

**Reach out your hands, receive the gift.
Reach out your hands, receive the gift.
Reach out your hands, embrace the gift,
the grace of God is yours.**

**And it is free, free, free. And it is free, free, free.
And it is free, free, free. The grace of God is yours.**

**Reach out your hands, accept the gift.
Reach out your hands, accept the gift.
Reach out your hands, embrace the gift,
the grace of God is yours.**

**Reach out your hands, and share the gift.
Reach out your hands, and share the gift.
Reach out your hands, embrace the gift,
the grace of God is yours.**

**And it is free, free, free. And it is free, free, free.
And it is free, free, free. The grace of God is yours. Repeat**

Spirit, Fill Me

**Spirit come and fill me, fill me with your peace, fill me with your joy and your love.
Spirit come and show me, show me how to care, show me how to share your light.**

**Help me give my hand to those in need. Let my heart be open to receive.
When we share your love, we can work together to heal this broken world. Repeat all**

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: Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: 'I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.'"

Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance; they exult in your name all day long, and extol your righteousness.

For you are the glory of their strength; by your favor our horn is exalted.

For our shield belongs to the Lord, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 10:40-42

“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

“Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple — truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

MESSAGE: *What’s in a Welcome*

UNISON READING: 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.

SENDING SONGS: *We’ll Build a Land*

We’ll build a land where we bind up the broken.

**We’ll build a land where the captives go free,
where the oil of gladness dis-solves all mourning.**

Oh, we’ll build a prom-ised land that can be.

**Come build a land where sis-ters and broth-ers,
filled with the Spi-rit, may then create peace:
where jus-tice shall roll down like wa-ters,
and peace like and ev-er flow-ing stream.**

**We'll build a land where we bring the good tidings to all
the af-flict-ed and all those who mourn.
And we'll give them garlands instead of ashes.
Oh, we'll build a land where peace is born.**

**Come build a land where sis-ters and broth-ers,
filled with the Spi-rit, may then create peace:
where jus-tice shall roll down like wa-ters,
and peace like and ev-er flow-ing stream.**

**We'll build a land where the forests are fer-tile,
where the waters and wind run clean and clear
and com-mun-ity matters more than possessions.
Come share this land, let's build it right here.**

**Come build a land where sis-ters and broth-ers,
filled with the Spi-rit, may then create peace:
where jus-tice shall roll down like wa-ters,
and peace like and ev-er flow-ing stream.**

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
Elizabeth Wilson, Reader

Music and vocals: Marge Adler, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, & Mike Vincent

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Give securely to First Church on our website! Give securely to First Church on our website! Go to 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 You are also welcome to mail a donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308. Thank you!

Coming Out Christian. TONIGHT, from 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 by 5pm TODAY. You will receive a Zoom link in your email 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.

First Church Reads – White Fragility. In collaboration with members of First Christian Church, Cuyahoga Falls and Rev. Debbie Saxe, this July we will read and discuss Robin J. DiAngelo's work [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#). Zoom discussions facilitated by Pastor Nanette and Pastor Debbie, will be held on Wednesdays in July from 7-8:30pm as we read through the book. To RSVP, please email Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org no later than 5pm each Wednesday in July. In *White Fragility*, antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and "allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to 'bad people' (Claudia Rankine)." Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-

racial dialogue. Books are available on [Amazon](#) and Kindle e-Readers, or can be sourced from your favorite bookseller.

Online Bible Study for Men* You are warmly invited to join Rev. Steven Savides online for an exploration of the scriptures on Saturday, July 4, 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.*

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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