



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 19, 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

*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*

*Breathe on Me*

Breathe on me, O breath of God.  
Grant your life to me.  
Make of me a rushing wind,  
come and breathe on me, come and breathe on me.

Shine on me, O light of God.  
Grant that I may see.  
Make of me a living light,  
come and breathe on me, come and breathe on me.

*Can't Nobody Do Me Like Jesus*

Can't nobody do me like Jesus.  
Can't nobody do me like the Lord.  
Can't nobody do me like Jesus.  
He's my friend!

Healed my body, told to run on.  
Healed my body, told to run.  
Healed my body, told me to run on.  
He's my friend!

Picked me up and turned me around,  
Oh, picked me up and turned me around.  
Picked me up and turned me around.  
Oh, He's my friend! He's my friend!

## 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: Romans 8:12-19

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.

### SCRIPTURE: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. When the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

MESSAGE: *Nettle, Goosegrass, Cleavers Faith*

SENDING SONGS: *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me*

**I'm gonna live so God can use me  
anytime and anywhere.**

**I'm gonna live so God can use me  
anytime and anywhere.**

**I'm gonna pray...**

**I'm gonna love...**

**I'm gonna sing...**

**I'm gonna live...**

*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, Matt Dudack, Kellie Ramirez, & Mike Vincent

CCLI License #11234842 and CCS License #8399

**Support First Church's Ministry.** Visit [www.akronfcc.org/donate](http://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!

**Festival Service Jazz Sunday.** Next Sunday, July 26, is Jazz Sunday at our 11am Festival worship service online. We'll be joined by local jazz artists Theron Brown, Chris Coles, Jordan McBride, Cameron Bickley, and Tom Lehman. Join us at [www.akronfcc.org/live](http://www.akronfcc.org/live) or [www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron](https://www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron)

**PUBLIC Theology on Zoom.** Next Thursday, July 23, at 6:30pm, you're invited to join us for PUBLIC Theology, via zoom, to talk about life, faith, the multiverse, and anything else that may be on your mind at the moment. Feel free to bring a drink or cocktail to the conversation! This will be a joint event between First Christian Cuyahoga Falls, and the First Church. Please RSVP for the event to Kasey Kalchert at [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by 5pm on July 23.

**Breakfast with Families and Tots on zoom.** We invite families with toddler aged children to join Pastor Antigone on Saturday, July 25, from 8-9am for a breakfast zoom gathering! This will be a time to catch up, discuss some of the joys and challenges of parenting at home during COVID-19, while enjoying your favorite breakfast. Please RSVP to Kasey: [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org) by 4pm on July 24.

**Worship services on zoom.** Beginning on Sunday, August 2 and until September 13, our worship format will shift to one combined service at 9:30am each Sunday on zoom. The service will also stream to [www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron](https://www.facebook.com/FCCofAkron). Weekly registration to join us live on zoom will be necessary. Please visit <https://bit.ly/AkronFirstChurch> to register. If you would like to participate and don't have a computer, there is an option to dial in and listen. For more information,

please contact [kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org](mailto:kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org). Recordings of the services will be posted on our website.

**First Church Reads – The Cross and the Lynching Tree.** Author James H. Cone wrote: "I offer my reflections because I believe that the cross placed alongside the lynching tree can help us to see Jesus in America in a new light, and thereby empower people who claim to follow him to take a stand against white supremacy and every kind of injustice." Join us and members of First Christian Church, Cuyahoga Falls, for conversations facilitated by Bishop John L. Selders, Jr., Organizing Pastor of Amistad United Church of Christ and Assistant Dean of Students, Trinity College, Hartford, CT. Bishop Selders is one of the leaders of [Moral Monday CT](https://www.moralmondayct.org/) and is a committed educator and advocate in the

areas of race, oppression, and reproductive justice. We will meet each Wednesday in August at 7pm on zoom. Please pre-register at <https://bit.ly/ConeBook>. Copies of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* can be sourced [Amazon](#) from your favorite bookseller.

**Patio Pollinator Garden Project.** The church patio at the Chapel entrance has a new concrete foundation and a bike rack. This summer and fall we hope to take the next step and add a pollinator garden that will benefit our Feed My Sheep Garden and the environment. If you are interested in donating plants or helping with the planting, please contact Sarah Vradenburg.

**Nominating is Happening.** Church ministries remain as vital during the pandemic and current boards and committees are meeting online to adapt and continue their ministries. In anticipation of our Congregational Meeting on September 13, 2020, the Nominating Board will begin recruiting members for our boards. Are you interested to learn more about the activities of a particular board? Would you like to be more involved in church leadership? Please visit [www.akronfcc.org/nominating](http://www.akronfcc.org/nominating) to volunteer to contact the Nominating Board chairperson, Kellie Ramirez.

**Seeking Garden Volunteers.** Are you looking for a way to stay busy during these uncertain pandemic times? Consider volunteering in the Feed My Sheep Garden! This opportunity gives you the chance to support our essential Food Justice ministry, while staying active, and maintaining all social distancing and safety guidelines set forward by the Ohio Department of Health. Contact Sam Phillips, Feed My Sheep Garden Manager, for more information at [sam@letsgrowakron.org](mailto:sam@letsgrowakron.org).

**Asian Services in Action, Inc. is the July Mission of the Month!** [Asian Services in Action, Inc. \(ASIA\)](#) strives to empower and advocate for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI); and to provide AAPIs and other communities access to quality cultural and linguistically appropriate information, health and social services. ASIA has taken on the challenging tasks to help the underserved, low-income, and immigrant communities across the state. Funds raised from the Mission of the Month will be used to support the "Lucky Seniors" program, specifically for the congregate meals. The goal of the program is to improve the physical and mental health of Asians seniors living in Northeast Ohio. You can watch [this video](#) to learn more. If you like to make a contribution, please make your check out the First Congregational Church of Akron with "ASIA, Inc." 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. Within our community we pray for Chris, Marilyn, Margaret, Jessica, Lola, Barbara, Carole, George, Madeline, Betty, Wanda, Art, and Doug.

**First Congregational Church of Akron**

292 East Market Street

Akron, OH 44308

[www.akronfcc.org](http://www.akronfcc.org)

330.253.5109 [church@akronfcc.org](mailto:church@akronfcc.org)