



THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 30, 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.

PRELUDE

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

arr. John Carter

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP[†]

One: The God of our ancestors calls us to worship.

All: Let us praise the Lord!

One: Let us sing the praises of God who is faithful and just.

All: We come with thanksgiving!

One: Let the hearts of those who seek God rejoice!

All: Let us worship God!

OPENING HYMN

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

**Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!**

**Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,
from everlasting thou art God, to endless years the same.**

**Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears us all away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.**

**Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come:
Be thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.**

CENTERING AND OPENING PRAYER

READING FROM THE PSALMS

Psalm 26:1-8

Vindicate me, O God, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in God without wavering.

Prove me, O God, and try me; test my heart and mind.

For your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in faithfulness to you.

I do not sit with the worthless, nor do I consort with hypocrites;

I hate the company of evildoers, and will not sit with the wicked.

I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O God,

singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds.

O God, I love the house in which you dwell, and the place where your glory abides.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

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

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (please use the language most familiar to you)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

READING FROM THE EPISTLE

Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

SERMON

We Shall Overcome

SONG

Morningstar

You are the Morningstar, you are the Fountain, life breathing Spirit, hope from the mountain.

Refrain We sing for joy of you, while our souls cling to you. You are the Morningstar.

In dry and weary lands, you give us water, greeting each wanderer as son or daughter. *Refrain*

Liberate yesterday, free for tomorrow. Guide all who search for you, in stress or sorrow. *Refrain*

**In faith we seek your face, power and brilliance, strong and uplifting hands,
grace-filled resilience. *Refrain***

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERING

A Simple Song

Leonard Berstein

*Please visit www.akronfcc.org/donate to support
the vital and ongoing ministries and missions of First Church
or mail your donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308.*

OFFERING PRAYER

HYMN

Mountain Brook with Rushing Waters

**Mountain brook with rushing waters, eagle perched in lofty tree,
flowering hillside in the springtime, white-tailed deer alert and free!
Beauty, beauty all around us! Jubilate! Sing for joy!
Help us, God, preserve earth's splendor for tomorrow's world to see.**

**Pure the water freshly flowing toward its ocean destiny,
clean the air of God's creation, rich the soil, the mine, the sea.
"Earth is good!" God's word proclaimed it. Jubilate! Sing for joy!
Save us, God, from wasteful living, from pollution's tragedy.**

**Keep us faithful in the struggle to conserve earth's threatened store
as we fight to save the forest, clean the stream, protect the shore.
God and humans work together, Jubilate! Sing for joy!
Partners working till as stewards we can say, "Earth's good!" once more.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Old Church Choir

Zach Williams

*If you have joined the service live on zoom, either online or by phone, please consider
remaining on the call for a time of fellowship after worship.*

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister

Antigoné Lowery, Associate Minister

Rachel Gilliams, Reader

Julie Lehman, Choir Director and Organist

Dave Aberth, Celebrate Service Music Leader

Amanda-Joyce Abbott, Nicholas Campagna, Stephanie Corbin, Ben Hayes, Kellie Ramirez, Brian Randall, and Courtney Zimmerman, Instrumentalists and Vocalists

† Drawn from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion*

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