

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

*"No matter who you are,
or where you are
on life's journey,
you are welcome here."*

Senior Minister
Rev. Tim Vander Haar

Sunday, February 25, 2024

1201 Jefferson Street
Muskegon, Michigan 49441
231-726-3254

www.fccmuskegon.org

**SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
FEBRUARY 25, 2024**

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

Sharing the Peace of Christ

PRELUDE

Psalm XVIII, by Benedetto Marcello

GATHERING PRAYER

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**O God, open our hearts to the truth
of your limitless love, that
we may see you with the clarity
that Jesus did and seek to
shape our lives accordingly.
This we ask in Christ's name.
Amen.**

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

The God of Abraham Praise

1 The God of A-braham praise, all prais - es to God's name, who
 2 God's Spir - it free - ly flows, high surg - ing where it will; God
 3 God has e - ter - nal life im - plant - ed in the soul; God's
 4 The God of Sar - ah praise, all prais - es to God's name, who

Fm Eb Ab Db Ab Eb Fm Db Ab Eb Ab

was and is and is to be, for - e'er the same! The
 spoke of old in proph - et's word; that word speaks still. Es -
 love shall be our strength and stay, while a - ges roll. All
 was and is and is to be, for - e'er the same! The

Ab C7 Fm Ab Eb C Fm Db Fm Bbm Fm C

one e - ter - nal God, be - fore what now ap - pears; the
 tab - lished is God's law, and change - less it shall stand, deep
 praise the liv - ing God! Ex - tol that hal - lowed name, who
 one e - ter - nal God, be - fore what now ap - pears; the

Fm C Fm Eb Ab Bbm Gdim Fm C Fm

First, the Last: be - yond all thought through time - less years!
 writ - ten on the hu - man heart, in ev - ery land.
 was, and is, and ev - er shall be still the same!
 First, the Last: be - yond all thought through time - less years!

Words: Moses Maimonides, 1130–1205; versification attr. Daniel ben Judah, c. 1400;

Eng. tr. Max Landsberg, 1845–1928, and Newton Mann, 1836–1926

Music: Hebrew melody; arr. Mever Lyon, 1751–1797

Germany
12.12.12.

LEONI

For lower setting see 354

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 4:13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Still, Small Voice, by Karen Marolli

O turn my ear, that I might hear the still, small voice of heaven.
Burst forth in me, that I might be the grace that God has given.
Reveal in me the Spirit of God that once you breathed in peace.
Disrupt my soul, that I might seek the outcast and the least.
Release my heart from comforts that the world, beguiling, gives.
Be born in me, that I might help your people grow and live.
Creator God! I'll follow 'til the seas of time have run
To show the Light of Love to all, from dusk to rising sun!
I'll go with you, that I might hear the still, small voice of heaven.

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MESSAGE

HANDED OVER FOR OUR MISTAKES

Those who wish may stand

HYMN

Those who wish may stand

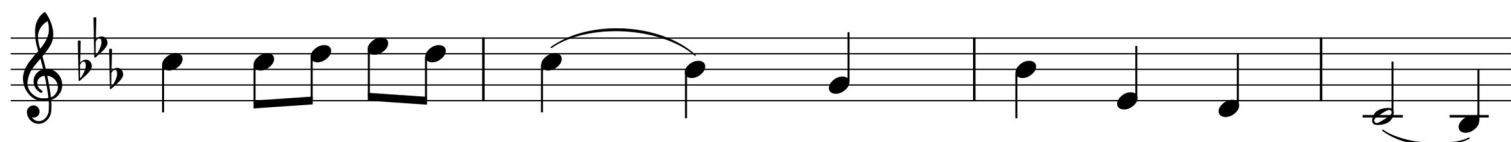
Be Now My Vision



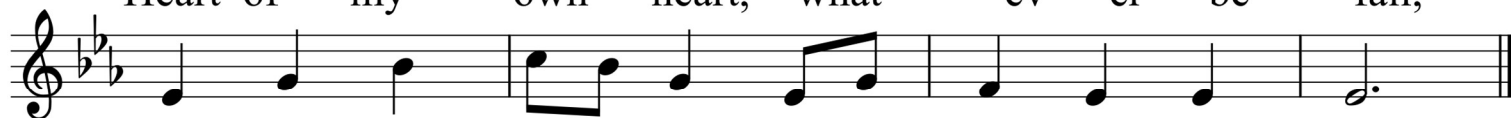
1. Be now my vi - sion, O God of my heart;
2. Be now my wis - dom, and be my true word;
3. Rich - es I need not nor life's emp - ty praise,
4. Sov - ereign of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,



noth - ing sur - pass - es the love you im - part;
ev - er with - in me, my soul is as - sured;
you, my in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways;
may I reach heav'n's joys, O bright heav - en's Sun!



You my best thought, by day or by night,
Moth - er and Fa - ther, you are both to me,
You and you on - ly are first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, your pres - ence my light.
now and for - ev - er your child I will be.
great God, my trea - sure, may we nev - er part.
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: *Ancient Irish text, c. 8th century*; transl. Mary E. Byrne, 1905, Versified by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912, Tune: SLANE, *Traditional Irish Melody*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

. . . ending with the Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

OFFERTORY REFLECTION

February Mission of the Month: Love INC

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Chant for Lent II, by Steven Van Wye

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father (*Creator*), Son (*Christ*), and Holy Ghost.
Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

Standing on the Promises



1. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail.
2. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ, the Lord,



When the howl - ing storms of doubt and fear as - sail,
Bound to Christ e - ter - nal - ly by love's strong cord,



By the liv - ing word of God I shall pre - vail,
O - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,



Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Stand - ing, stand - ing,

Stand - ing on the prom - is - es, Stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

stand - ing,

Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God my Sav - ior; Stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

stand - ing

Stand - ing on the prom - is - es, I'm Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Text: R. Kelso Carter, 1849-1928, Tune: PROMISES, R. Kelso Carter

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

Postlude in D Major, by Healey Willan

Today's Service

Rev. Tim Vander Haar
Dr. Michael Match
John Mattson
The Motet Choir
Jane Clingman-Scott
Steve Haines

Pastor
Music Director
Organist
Song Leaders
Liturgist/Prayers of the People
Audio and Video

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Westshore GSA Youth Group will be meeting on Monday, from 7 to 8 pm.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship - Those whose last names begin with the letters T through Z please bring cookies or treats during the month of March. Gluten free and/or sugar free cookies are also appreciated as are homemade cookies or bars.

Craig Cramblet, Love INC, will be available February 25 to speak to the congregation during the Sunday Service for 5-10 minutes. Craig is a West Michigan native and was in pastoral ministry for 44 years in churches from Muskegon to Southern California. He took a step of faith and decided to get as close to the hearts and needs of Muskegon as possible as the first-ever Director of Operations at Love INC

Single Women's Group will meet on Tue. March 5 at 1:00 pm at Egg Roll House. Call Judy Dewall 734-478-3716 for reservations or sign up at the Welcome Center.

The women of FCC are hosting a celebration honoring Women's History Month, on Sunday, March 10, 2024 in Fellowship Hall following our regular church service. Please join us for a brief presentation by Shirley Albers entitled "Sorority, Equality, and LiberTea

Come One! Come All to the "Roamin in the Gloamin" St. Patrick's Day Talent Show on March 17 in the Fellowship Hall following worship service. Interested in sharing a talent with us? If so please fill out a Talent Show Registration Form (minors welcome with parent permission), @ Welcome Center and return form by March 10. Please contact Sue Vander Haar with questions. 231-557-7714-Congregational Life Dept.

"Let's Make A Mess" Acrylic paint class on March 20th at 1 PM

If you would be interested in ordering altar flowers, please contact Ann in the office. Cost of the arrangement is \$35.

First Congregational Church, UCC is an Open and Affirming Community

"We, the people of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Muskegon, care for the welfare of our community and welcome everyone, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. We welcome into our community people of every age, race, nationality, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing, family structure, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation. We also invite you to share in the life, leadership, worship, fellowship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love." Adopted by congregational vote 10/17/21