

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1201 JEFFERSON STREET
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN 49441

231-726-3254

fccmuskegon.org

REV. DR. BECKY EMERSON + SENIOR MINISTER

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

**WELCOME & COMMUNITY NEWS
SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

PRELUDE

A Rejoicing, by Alfred Fedak

GATHERING PRAYER

The grace of the 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:

**Our God, we gather before You, and each other here,
and with so many others in different places of our world.
We are one in the Spirit! We come from challenging weeks,
knowing You walk with us!**

**We come celebrating joys, knowing that You walk with us.
Even when we are unaware of Your presence, you are walking with
us. We are thankful for the gift of music and songs of worship that
centers us in this sacred space.**

**Our God, we lift up our hearts to You, may you refresh us,
challenge us, and continue to open the eyes of our heart.**

Amen.

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

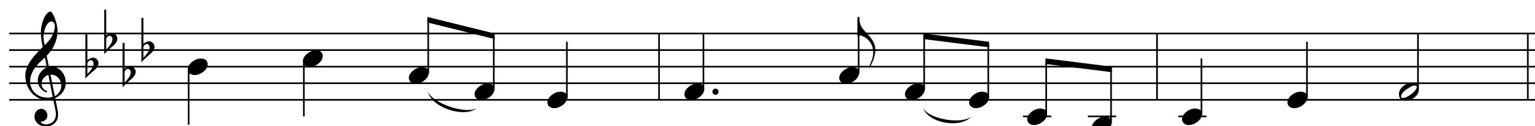
Come You Sinners, Poor and Needy



1. Come, you sin - ners, poor and need - y,
2. Come, you thirst - y, come, and wel - come,
3. Come, you wea - ry, heav - y lad - en,



Weak and wound - ed, sick and sore, Je - sus, Son of
God's free boun - ty glo - ri - fy: True be - lief and
Lost and ru - ined by the fall; If you tar - ry



God, will save you, Full of pit - y, love, and pow'r.
true re - pen - tance, Ev - 'ry grace that brings you nigh.
till you're bet - ter, You will nev - er come at all.



I will a-rise and go to Je - sus, He will em-brace me



in his arms; In the arms of my dear



Sav - ior, Oh, there are ten thou - sand charms.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1 Kings 19:1-10

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you." He got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

CHORAL ANTHEM

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy, by Calvin Hampton, arr. by John Ferguson
Caitlin Kramer, *Oboist*

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.

There is welcome for the sinner, and a promised grace made good;
There is mercy with the savior; there is healing in his blood.
There is grace enough for thousands of new worlds as great as this;
There is room for fresh creations in that upper home of bliss.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind;
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
Make our love, O God, more faithful; let us take you at your word,
And our lives would be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord.

Text by Jeanette Lindholm/Frederick Faber, © 2002 Augsburg Fortress, Tune © 1977, Arrangement © 2015 by GIA Publications, Inc.

MESSAGE

Self-connection

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF REFLECTION

Those who wish may stand

Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
3 O for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

you and for me; see, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain
watch - ing for you and for me. Come home, come home,
mer - cies for you and for me? Come home, come home,
par - don for you and for me.

ye who are wea - ry, come home; ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,

Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, O sin - ner, come home!

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 INVITATION

OFFERTORY MUSIC

The Servant Song, by David Schwoebel

Caitlin Kramer, Oboist

If anyone would be first, they shall be the last of all; be the servant of all.

We are trav'lers on a journey, Fellow pilgrims on the road;
We are here to help each other Walk the mile and bear the load.
I will hold the Christ-light for you In the nighttime of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, Speak the peace you long to hear.
Sister, let me be your servant, Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to Let you be my servant too.
Brother, let me be your servant, Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to Let you be my servant, too.

If anyone would be first, they shall be the last of all; be the servant of all.

I will weep when you are weeping, When you laugh, I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow, Till we've seen this journey through.
When we sing to God in heaven, We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together Of Christ's love and agony.

If anyone would be first, they shall be the last of all; be the servant of all.

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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

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say



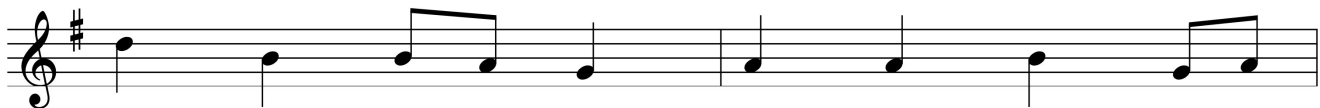
1. I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Come
2. I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Be -
3. I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "I



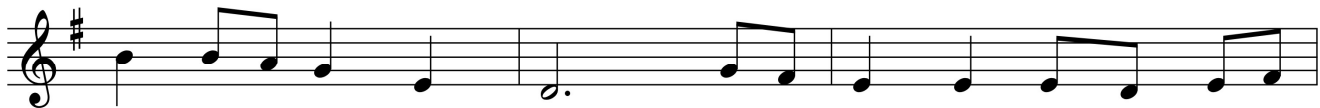
un - to me and rest; Lay down, O wea - ry
hold, I free - ly give The liv - ing wa - ter;
am this dark world's light; Look un - to me, your



one, lay down Your head up - on my breast." I
thirst - y one, Stoop down and drink and live." I
morn shall rise, And all your day be bright." I



came to Je - sus as I was, So
came to Je - sus, and I drank Of
looked to Je - sus, and I found In



wea - ry, worn, and sad; I found in him a
that life - giv - ing stream; My thirst was quenched, my
him my star, my sun; And in that light of



rest - ing place, And he has made me glad.
soul re - vived, And now I live in him.
life I'll walk Till trav - 'ling days are done.

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

The Kingsfold Trumpet, by Alfred Fedak

Today's Service

Rev. Dr. Becky Emerson	Senior Minister
Dr. Michael Match	Director of Music
John Mattson	Organist
Caitlin Kramer	Oboist
Motet Choir	Leaders of Song
Joe Singerling	Liturgist/Prayer
Blake Filius	Audio and Video

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Flowers are sponsored by Judy Tierney in memory of her husband Jack Tierney.

Child Care is available on the second floor for infants & toddlers.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship: Last names beginning with K-N are asked to donate during the Sundays in September. Please provide descriptions to safely avoid any allergies. Thank you!

No Life-long Learning session this Sunday. We will start next week, 9/27.

Choir Camp will be held Sunday, September 27th from 2:30-4:30 PM.

Come, be a part of our choir or just to see what we are about!

Saturday Breakfast will be September 26 (last Saturday of each month) from 9-10:30 AM and is a free community breakfast-buffet style. Volunteers are encouraged to help.

Tom "Cowboy" Hardy offers a Chapel Service following the breakfast. All are welcome.

The Saturday Breakfast Garden needs volunteers every Tuesday: 1-3pm, and every Saturday 10am to noon, through October for harvesting. Tools are provided. Bring the family! (Weather permitting). We are across the street from the church.

September Mission of the Month: CROPWALK Riva will be at the table in the lobby for anyone who would like to walk on Oct. 4 and to pick up sponsor sheets, or just donate.

The Crop Hunger Walk takes place Sunday, October 4.

Genders And Sexualities Alliance (GSA) meet Mondays at 7 PM here.

Single Women's Luncheon will be on Tuesday, October 6 at 1:00 PM and will be at Mr. B's at 1910 E. Apple Ave. in Muskegon. Please sign up or call Judy at 734-478-3716.

A new and clean used coat drive has begun in September. New or gently used coats children through adult sizes are being collected. Drop them off in the basket in the Lobby. We will distribute at the Saturday Breakfast in November. Sponsored by Congregational Life Dept.

FCC's 3rd Annual Heartfelt Hand Made Craft Fair will be held Saturday, October 24 from 10 AM – 3 PM. We are also looking for vendors. Please help us spread the word! Interested vendors may contact the church office: 231-726-3254.

We are collecting candy for our annual Trunk or Treat night (Oct. 27). It can be dropped off at the Welcome Center. Thank you!
Congregational Life and Christian Ed.

Questions may be directed to members of that department, contact the church office (231) 726.3254, or in the calendar event on the website at www.fccmuskegon.org, go to the event and click on it for details.

When The Rabbis Came To Town

A play by Roger Rapoport and Leslye Witt starring Adam Bell.

September 26, 2026 – 4:00 PM at First Congregational Church, U.C.C.,

All First Congregational member families are welcome to attend this performance at no charge. (Our suggested donation is \$10). Fliers are at the Welcome Center for detailed information. It is also on our website in the calendar section.

Just click on the line for the event on that date and information will come up.

May also contact Roger at rogerdrapoport@me.com or call 231-720-0930.

The Soul Box Project. Central United Methodist Church invites you to experience a powerful memorial to lives lost to gun violence from September 22 through October 8. Please help yourself to a flier at the Welcome Center for more information.

FCC 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