

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

U N I T E D C H U R C H O F C H R I S T

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REV. BRUCE MULDER + INTERIM MINISTER

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT ● March 1, 2026
Communion Sunday

WELCOME & COMMUNITY NEWS

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Prelude II in G Major, by Felix Mendelssohn

GATHERING PRAYER

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

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**O God, in creation you fashion us in your image,
in Christ you reveal to us your love,
through the Holy Spirit you welcome
us into the fellowship of believers;
we bow in gratitude before you.**

We constantly distort your image, but still you restore it.

We daily betray your love, but still you extend it.

We often disrupt fellowship, but still you bless it.

Come unto us at this time and in this place, O Lord,

that your image in us might be revealed,

your love for us returned,

and our fellowship in Christ renewed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Lift High the Cross

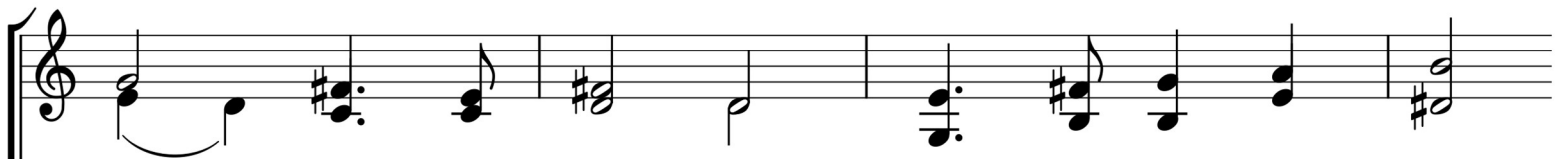
Those who wish may stand



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim;



Let all a - dore and praise that sa - cred name.



1. Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Sav - ior trod,
2. O Christ, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
3. Set up your throne, that earth's de - spair may cease,



the Lamb vic - to - rious, Christ the Child of God.
your death has brought us life e - ter - nal - ly.
be - neath the shad - ow of its heal - ing peace.



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

John 3:1-7

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'

CHORAL ANTHEM

"He Watching Over Israel," from *Elijah*, by Felix Mendelssohn

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps
Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish, He will quicken thee.

MESSAGE

SOMETHING GOOD AFTER MIDNIGHT

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF REFLECTION

Those who wish may stand

Womb of Life, and Source of Being



Womb of life, and source of be - ing, home of
Word of flesh, our bro - ther Je - sus, born to
Brood - ing Spir - it, move a - mong us; be our
Moth - er, Broth - er, ho - ly Part - ner; Fa - ther,



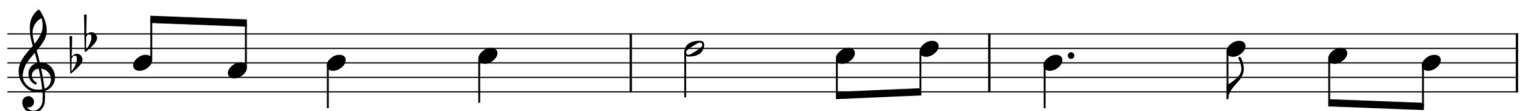
ev - ery rest - less heart, in your arms the worlds a -
bring us sec - ond birth, you have come to stand be -
part - ner, be our friend. When our mem - 'ry fails, re -
Spir - it, On - ly Son: we would praise your name for -



wak - ened; you have loved us from the start.
side us, know - ing weak - ness, know - ing earth.
mind us whose we are, what we in - tend.
ev - er, one - in - three, and three - in - one.



We, your chil - dren, gath - er 'round you, at the
Priest who shares our hu - man strug - gles, Life of
La - bor with us, aid the birth - ing of the
We would share your life, your pas - sion, share your



ta - ble you pre - pare. Shar - ing stor - ies, tears and
Life and Death of Death, Ris - en Christ, come stand a -
new world yet to be, Free of ser - vant, lord, and
word of world made new, Ev - er sing - ing, ev - er



laugh - ter, we are nur - tured by your care.
mong us, send the Spir - it by your breath.
mas - ter, free for love and u - ni - ty.
prais - ing, one with all, and one in you.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY INVITATION

OFFERTORY MUSIC


Chant for Lent, by Steven Van Wye

*Choir first, then **ALL***



The first line of musical notation is on a single staff in G minor (one flat) and 2/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F4 (quarter). The lyrics "We a - dore you, O Christ, and we bless you." are written below the staff.

We a - dore you, O Christ, and we bless you.



The second line of musical notation is on a single staff in G minor (one flat) and 2/4 time. It continues the melody from the first line. The notes are: F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F4 (quarter). The lyrics "You have re - deemed the world!" are written below the staff.

You have re - deemed the world!

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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

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Meaning of the Sacrament

Communion Prayer

...It is truly fitting and right...

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly God, Ru-ler Al - migh - ty;
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Glo-ry be to you, O God.
Bless-ed is the one who comes, who comes in the name of God.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Music © 1991 Martha McMane

...And now as Christ our Savior taught us, we are bold to say,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, they will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as 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.**

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

Lord Jesus, Who Through Forty Days

Lord Je - sus, who through for - ty days for
As you with Sa - tan did con - tend, and
And through these days of pen - i - tence, and
A - bide with us, till when this life of

us did fast and pray, Teach us with you to
did the vic - tory win, O give us strength to
through this Pas - sion - tide, Yes, ev - er - more, in
suf - fering shall be past, An Eas - ter of un -

mourn our sins, and close by you to stay.
per - se - vere, in you to con - quer sin.
life and death, O Christ, with us a - bide.
end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

Text: Claudia Hernaman, 1873; alt., Tune: ST. FLAVIAN, Day's *The Whole Booke of Psalms*, 1562

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

Movement III from *Sonata II*, by Felix Mendelssohn

Today's Service

Rev. Bruce D. Mulder

Interim Pastor

Dr. Michael Match

Music Director

John Mattson

Organist

The Motet Choir

Song Leaders

Tom Hardy

Liturgist/Prayer

Blake Filius

Audio and Video

Beth Carrozza, Deb Collett, Pat Johnson-Communion Servers

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Flowers are sponsored by Barb Lahnala. Happy 90th Birthday Jerry! (March 3)

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship: Last names E - J are asked to donate during March
Please provide descriptions to safely avoid any allergies. Thank you!

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

Womens Single Group will meet at Pints And Quarts, Tuesday March 3 at 1:00 pm. Newcomers are welcome. Please sign up at Welcome Center or contact Judy Dewall.

Join us in the Life-long Learning room after church for our final discussion of the book, If the Church Were Christian. Next week Shirley Albers will present a session about "History's Hidden Heroines."

Just a reminder to check out the Welcome Center - last chance to sign up to decorate a table for our March 8 special session about "History's Hidden Heroines". See Sue Rummery Hicks or Sue VanderHaar for questions.

Many thanks to those who attended the last week's Volunteer Job Fair. We had several new volunteer signups. And kudos to Scott Peterson, who handily won first place in the Great Brownie Bake-Off. A big thank you to our judges!

We invite you to join us Wednesday mornings for outside and inside projects around the church. We meet from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. followed with coffee and donuts.

Reminder Paint Class is Wednesday, March 18 at 1 pm in the Art Room (downstairs).

North Muskegon Meijer will match Simply Give donations through March.
They will double match March 7 & 21.

Members pictures for picture directory will continue today. Member Care is asking members to consider wearing their Name Tags on Sunday mornings.

Muskegon County Cooperating Churches is celebrating its 85th year as an ecumenical and inner faith ministry of Muskegon County. As a founding member, FCC has always played an integral part of this important ministry. MCCC seeks to address the many needs of our neighbors, showing the unconditional love of Christ in our community.

Your gift today will go to the Peace and Justice ministries of MCCC.

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*