



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

November 19, 2023 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

In Person & Live Streamed

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ~1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*



*God says to give thanks in everything. That doesn't mean you need to give thanks FOR everything. You don't need to give thanks FOR that bad day. Or FOR that bad relationship. Or being passed over at work. Financial hardship. Whatever it is — you are not to give thanks FOR the difficulties, but rather IN the difficulties. That is a very important distinction, and one I think we often miss. Giving thanks IN everything shows a heart of faith that God is bigger than the difficulties and that He can use them, if you approach Him with the right heart and spirit, for your good and His glory. ~Tony Evans*

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~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

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*\*Please stand if able. **Bold** denotes unison response.*

**CHIMES**

Karen Needham

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Brief announcements are welcome, please be in the front pews at the start of the announcements.*

*Offerings and prayer request on the yellow prayer cards found in the pews may be placed in the offering plate at the time of the offering or in the designated boxes on the back table.*

**PRELUDE**

*Abbot's Leigh*

Anna Laura Page

Cherry Brook Chimes Handbell Choir

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

God of justice, peace, and righteousness, come into our midst this morning.

**Breathe Your breath, Your Spirit of prophecy, Your energy, Your imagination in us.**

Wake us up. Open our eyes. Unblock our ears.

**That we might hear; that we might see; that we might dream; that we might follow the ways of Your extraordinary grace.**

Guide us now to focus on You with gratitude in our hearts

**Breathe life into our singing, our praying, our speaking, and our listening, that all these activities might become more real to us.**

**In our worship we reach out to You, O God, knowing that You have already enfolded us in Your arms. In Jesus, we pray.**

**\*HYMN**

*Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*

*Chalice (blue) 718*

**\*GATHERING PRAYER & \*THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Loving and gracious God, Your blessings are immeasurable, and Your love endless. As we celebrate this Thanksgiving, we pray our hearts will be open to You and to one another, sharing the gifts You have given us in loving service to all people. We celebrate with gratitude, with joy in our hearts and pray for peace to envelop each of us, the peace that only Christ can provide. May we be channels of Your peace. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.

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.

**\*Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end, Amen, Amen.*

**OFFERING**

We read in Proverbs 3:9-10: *Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.* Let us now receive our Sunday morning offering.

**OFFERTORY**

*Hymn of Grateful Praise*

Pierpont/Fettke

Senior Choir

**\*Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below,  
Praise God for all that love has done,  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Dear Lord, Creator of all things, everything on earth is Yours. What we have we bring with gratitude and thanksgiving dedicating our gifts to the work of this congregation. Bless, we pray, these gifts for Your holy work. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.



**RECOGNITION OF LONG-TIME MEMBERS**



*(The youth are excused for Church school)*

## READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE



Psalm 95:1-7    Pew Bible page 479  
2 Corinthians 9:10-15    Pew Bible page 942

### SERMON

*Are You Brimming with Thanksgiving?*

### \*ANTHEM

*In Flanders Fields*  
Paul Stansel

Charles Ives

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH



*Joys & Concerns*  
*Moment of Silence*  
*Pastoral Prayer*

### \*HYMN

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

Chalice (blue) 56

### \*BENEDICTION

May the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit strengthen and encourage you as you go out from here to live lives of gratitude and service. Amen.

### \*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*From Whose Abundant Stores from Seasons* by F. J. Haydn  
Senior Choir

### \*POSTLUDE

*With a Heart of Thanksgiving*

Howard Helvey

*The Worship is ended... ~Our Service Now Begins~*