



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 21, 2024 ~ 10:00 a.m.

In Person & Live Streamed



*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The **light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ~John 1:1-5*

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~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

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

CHIMES

Karen Needham

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Brief announcements from the congregation are welcome. **Those wishing to make an announcement** are asked to be in the front pews at the start of the announcement period. **Prayer request cards** may be found on the tables at the back of the church.*

PRELUDE

Lead, Kindly Light

John Henry Newman arr. Steven C. Warner

CALL TO WORSHIP

Take a moment to quiet your thoughts, to leave the outside world behind. Let's settle in, quiet our minds, and focus on something bigger than ourselves. Before anything existed, before time even started ticking, there was the Word. Not like a word you read or say, but something deeper, something alive with God's own power. This Word wasn't just close to God, it was one with God, part of the same divine spark. And then, listen closely: the Word became real, a living person walking among us. That's the source of everything, the reason we're here. The Word brought life and hope into the world. Jesus, the Word, brought light into the darkness. This Word isn't just history, it's alive and present right now. Let's open our hearts and listen for its whisper within us.

We acknowledge this incredible truth, this amazing gift and welcome the light of this Word into our lives. Let's raise our voices in a chorus of thanks for the gift of the Word. Together, let's step into the light, guided by the Word, united in our praise and feel the connection, the community, the shared joy of knowing this truth. Come let us worship our God.

***HYMN**

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Pilgrim (red), #15

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

Divine Presence, we gather in this sacred space, hearts aglow with gratitude for this blessed time. In this hour, we come before You with our shared attention. Let our songs become soaring hymns of joy and transform our

written words into fountains of blessings that offer glory to Your Holy Presence. We are filled with gratitude that Jesus Christ embraced our humanness in its entirety. He knew rejection's sting, the bite of pain, and the crushing weight of suffering, culminating at the cross. Yet, even in the darkest depths, He knew He was not alone. We come seeking the same solace. May Your constant presence be a guiding light and that we are forever in Your everlasting keeping. In the name of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray, 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

Giving is more than a responsibility—it is a privilege; more than an act of obedience—it is evidence of our faith. ~William Arthur Ward. Let us now receive our Sunday morning offering.



OFFERTORY

Psalm 150
Senior Choir

Louis Lewandowski arr. James Allan Dash

*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**

Lord of all Creation, we ask that You guide us in our giving, that we may be good stewards of all that You have entrusted to us. We are grateful for the opportunity to give back to You and we ask these gifts be a source of hope to those in need bringing honor to Your name. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

(The youth are excused for Church school)

SCRIPTURE



John 1:1-5,14 Pew Bible pg. 862

Luke 15:11-24 Pew Bible pg. 850

SERMON

Unveiling the Invisible: Meeting God Through Jesus

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH



*Joys & Concerns
Moment of Silence
Pastoral Prayer*

***HYMN**

On Eagle's Wings

Chalice (Blue) #77

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Sevenfold Amen
Senior Choir

***POSTLUDE**

Glory to God in the Highest

G.B. Pergolesi arr. Charles F. Manney

The Worship is ended ~Our Service Now Begins~