



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

**January 28, 2024 ~ 10:00 a.m.**

**In Person & Live Streamed**



*The root of the matter, if we want a stable world, is a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet my words. The thing I mean is love, Christian love, or compassion. If you feel this, you have a motive for existence, a reason for courage, an imperative necessity for intellectual honesty. ~Bertrand Russell*

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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 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**

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

Karen Lakey Buckwalter

Cherry Brook Chimes Handbell Choir

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Each week, we gather in this beautiful sanctuary. We treasure the comfort in our choir and singing together our hymns, discover wisdom in conversation, and connection in prayer. We pause from the demands of life, allowing our bodies and minds to find peace. Now, let's set aside our worries and open ourselves to the presence of God. Let's experience the embrace of grace and love.

**Together, each week we come to worship dedicated to serving God and each other. We offer not grand gestures, but simple acts of care and kindness. May this be a safe and special space where compassion flows freely, lighting the way for both our faith and our world. As we take our places in the pews may we be ready to experience a sense of renewal, restoration, and connection. Let's begin our worship to the Creator of all life sensing God's Spirit within.**

**\*HYMN**

*Every Time I Feel the Spirit*

Chalice (blue) #592

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

**O God, You are the One who calls us into community to love, to work, to support and enjoy fellowship with each other. You are the One who calls us into community with all people; to bring justice and hope, freedom, and truth. You are the One who calls us into partnership with all**

creation; to live in harmony, to cherish and renew. May our souls embrace the mystery of Your magnificent love! May our hearts rejoice over the unexpected! May we be overjoyed with the sheer AWE of it all. 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.*

**MOMENT FOR MISSIONS**

Martha Stansel

**OFFERING**

Mary Magdalene poured out her costliest treasure of perfume (Luke 7:38) over the feet of Jesus, an extravagant gift of love. Let us give extravagantly with thankful hearts as we now receive our Sunday morning offering.



**OFFERTORY**

*Speak, O Lord*  
Senior Choir



Keith Getty/Stuart Townend  
arr. Mary McDonald

**\*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**

*(The youth are excused for Church school)*

### **SCRIPTURE**



Acts 2:42-47    Pew Bible pg. 862  
Philippians 1:1-11    Pew Bible pg. 850

## **SERMON**

*A Collage of Faith: Woven Together with Love and Unity*

### **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**



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

## **\*HYMN**

*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

Chalice (blue) #433

**\*BENEDICTION**    Be graceful in spirit, hopeful in word, faithful in deed.  
Live for Christ as Christ lives in you. Amen

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**    *Amen*

**\*POSTLUDE**    *Glory to God in the Highest*    G.B. Pergolesi arr. Charles F. Manney

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