



# The Church Gathers

First Congregational  
United Church of Christ

April 28, 2024

## Gathering

### Greeting and Announcements

### Transition to Worship

### Prelude

#### **\*\*Call to Worship (responsive)**

One: We live at mystery's edge, watching for a hint of something we can hold onto as we step into the presence of God in this place.

**Many: We bring the colors of our lives and offer them to God.**

One: We bring the colors of joy and give thanks to God.

**Many: We bring the colors of sorrow and seek God's comfort.**

One: We bring the colors of anger and seek God's understanding.

**Many: We bring the colors of wonder and ask God to open new doors of knowledge and wisdom.**

One: We bring the colors of loneliness and seek community in the love of God.

**Many: We bring the colors of hope and open our lives to what God would have in store for us.**

One: We bring the colors of worship and offer it all to God!

#### **\*\*Hymn of Praise**

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”

*NCH #4*

### **Prayer of Invocation**

Living God, we offer thanks and praise for the vitality and abundance of your presence in our midst. For the opportunity to come together to celebrate our common hope, our shared vision, our mutual need.

We also give thanks for this occasion where we can bring the differences of thought and lifestyle together, knowing that your creation is full of diversity and you have called it all good.

As your spirit moves among us this day, may our faith be stirred, may our diversity be honored, may our unity be empowering, may we come alive in your love. We pray in the spirit of the Risen Christ. Amen.

### Children's Message

### Sending Song

Jesus Loves You

*NCH #327*

Jesus loves you! This we know, for the Bible tells us so.  
Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves you! Yes, Jesus loves you!  
Yes, Jesus loves you! The Bible tells us so!

### Choral Anthem

"Music in the Morning"

*by J. M. Martin*

### Scripture Reading

*Acts 8:26-39*

### Sermon

### \*\*Hymn of Reflection

"My Life Flows on in Endless Song"

*NCH #476*

### Joys and Concerns

### Prayer Song

"Pray"

*by Stephen Nix*

Pray, pray, pray, for peace within our world.  
Pray, pray, pray, for peace within our souls.  
Pray, pray, pray, for love and unity;  
Quiet our busy hearts. Pray, pray, pray.  
Pray, pray, pray.

### Spoken Prayer and 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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

### Prayer Song

"Pray"

*by Stephen Nix*

### Invitation to the Offering

### Offertory

*"From the First Alleluia to the Last Amen"*

### \*\*Presentation and Doxology

*UMH #94*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!**

**Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**\*\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Celebrating Cindy's Presence and Retirement**

**Choral Response**

“Living Praise”

*by S. Pethel*

**Sending Prayer**

**\*\*Congregation's Blessing Hymn**

“Thank our God for Sisters, Brothers”

*NCH #397*

**\*\*Benediction**

**Postlude**