

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ

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Web site: www.christcongregationalucc.org

The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor

Jay Harrigan, Director of Music

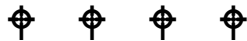
Zoe and Lia Smith, Liturgists

Our Vision: A church that listens, praises God, inspires, and serves others.

May 2, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

Fifth Sunday in Easter

Preparation for Worship: #Do stuff. be clenched, curious. Not waiting for inspiration's shove or society's kiss on your forehead. Pay attention. It's all about paying attention. attention is vitality. It connects you with others. It makes you eager. stay eager." — Susan Sontag



PRAISE BAND

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)**

One: As we gather, may we open our hearts to receive newness of life.

All: We come celebrating and grateful to be back in God's house!

One: We enter God's house, praising the One who has led us safely through pandemic times.

All: In our time of worship, may our faith be strengthened as we draw near to the true vine. All: To God be the glory on this happy day!

HYMN: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You" (No. 4, NCH)

**Joyful, joyful, we adore you, God of glory God of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the storms of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.**

**All your works with joy surround you, earth and heaven reflect your
rays.
Stars and angels sing around you, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, teach us what our praise should be.**

**You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed,
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother, all who love belong to you;
Teach us how to love each other, by that love our joy renew.**

**Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began;
Boundless love is reigning o'er us, reconciling race and clan.
Ever singing, move we forward, faithful in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us onward in the triumph song of life.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

**Cultivating God, we come as your children to grow and learn,
because you are our divine vine grower. God, we desire for you to abide
within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily.
As your branches, we ask you to nourish us for continued growth.
May you transform our hearts and minds as we hear your Word, sing
your praises, and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.
May you help us to bear good fruit
through the vine of Jesus Christ.
In Whose name we pray, Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS:

Psalm 100
A Psalm of thanksgiving.

**Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.**

**Know that the Lord is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.**

**For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.**

John 15:1-8
Jesus the True Vine

NRSV

‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.’

YOUTH MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC: “Clair de Lune”

Claude Debussy

RECEPTION OF LISA CHAMBERLIN INTO MEMBERSHIP

Words of Welcome from the Congregation (Unison)

Lisa, we welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God’s knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)

**O God, giver of life,
We confess the times when we fail to
love our neighbors as we love ourselves.
God, forgive us when we ignore or
we fail to see our neighbors in need.
Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love
from others, and shut down completely.
As we confess the times when we did not
tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves
of your forgiveness and grace.
In our failures, we have refused
your invitation to grow closer to you.**

In our confession, O God, we pray your abiding love be shown through the ways we love more fully. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE: Pastor
O God, hear your beloved community
as we repent and pray for your forgiveness.
Give to us your grace and restore to us
your love that is forgiven and fearless.
God, we desire for your loving Spirit
to renew and strengthen us daily. Amen.

PRAYER SONG: “Hear our prayer, O God” (No. 769, NCH”

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God;
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*Unison*)

We join our hearts together as we pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For
the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.
Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

Today we are invited to become deeply attached, close,
and loyal as branches who are connected with Jesus Christ, our vine.
In other words, we are to bear fruit with a spirit of love by helping each
other, reaching out to each other, and encouraging each other in our

daily faith pilgrimage. Now, let us offer ourselves in gratitude and with generosity, as fruits representing the abiding goodness of God.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (*Unison*)

Generous God,

We offer you the fruits of our time, talents and resources in celebration of all that we have been given.

Loving God, we give you thanks for all that we have and ask a special blessing on the fruits we have given back to help meet the needs of your beloved community.

May the gifts nourish and strengthen the community to grow spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING: “Hallelujah”

Leonard Cohan

MESSAGE: “Much Fruit”

Pastor Candy

COMMUNION HYMN “Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ” (No. 347, NCH)

Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy: bread is broken, the wine is poured, Christ is spoken and seen and heard. Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one, at his table he set the tone, teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express. Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt, teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express. Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

One: Christ is Risen!

All: Christ is risen indeed!

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

COMMUNION PRAYER

**Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Spirit;
Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love:
We praise you for Jesus Christ,
who reminds us that even in fear-filled days,
cloaked with the powers of death,
your eternal love arises, and never leaves us.
For we rejoice with all your people
and with the angels,
because life is stronger than death!
As we proclaim the glory of your name:**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

**In this meal, we remember Jesus, his promises,
and the price he paid for who he was, what he said,
and what he did for our benefit.**

**On the night before Jesus died,
He took a loaf of bread,
Gave thanks, broke it, and said,**

**“Take and eat, this is my body, given for you.
Do this, in remembrance of me.”**

After supper, Jesus took the cup and poured, saying,

**“This is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.”**

In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:

**All: We remember Christ’s life of love, and friendship, and teaching,
We remember Christ’s dying, and rising to life again.**

**One: Bless this bread and this cup,
the wheat and the grape,
the farmer and the harvest,
the seed and the sower.
These simple elements are shared in community,
so that we may taste and see your goodness
and become one body in Christ.**

**All: For it is through Christ, in Christ, and with Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
that all glory is yours, God most holy,
now and forevermore. Amen.**

**One: The gifts of God for the people of God.
All: Thanks be to God.**

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

**O Christ, we thank you for this feast of life.
Fed by your love and strengthened by your life;
we humbly accept your call to go into this world to live with hope,
and to share your joy. You commission us to feed as we have been fed,
forgive as we have been forgiven, and love as we have been loved.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: “Blessed Be the Tie That Binds” (No. 393 , NCH)

**Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
The sharing of a common life is like to that above.**

**Before our God we come and pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.**

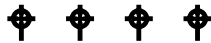
**We share each other’s woes, each other’s burdens bear,
And often for each other flows a sympathizing tear.**

**When we are called to part it gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.**

COMMISSION

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



Welcome to Everyone!

Whoever or whatever brought you to our Garden Chapel or our Facebook on-line worship service this morning, we believe that the Spirit of God had a hand in you joining us. We hope that you feel the Holy Spirit in our service of prayer and praise. At Christ Congregational Church we strive to love one another as God has loved us and welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us. Therefore, we are an Open and Affirming church, loving and welcoming all people in all of God’s variety; including racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, gender diversity and expression, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities.

JOYS AND CONCERNS – Please let Pastor Candy know of any joys or concerns you would like lifted up in worship by notifying her by Sunday morning at 10 a.m. via phone, text or email.

TODAY WE SHARE IN THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION. ALL WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ARE WELCOME AT HIS TABLE. YOU WILL EACH HAVE INDIVIDUAL, PREPACKAGED, DISPOSABLE JUICE AND WAFER CONTAINERS FOR YOUR USE.

LISA CHAMBERLIN IS BEING WELCOMED INTO MEMBERSHIP TODAY. PLEASE LET HER KNOW HOW HAPPY WE ARE TO HAVE HER JOIN WITH US IN MINISTRY!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRIME TIME, EVERY Sunday, from 9:00-9:45 a.m.

Our book selection for Prime Time is Caste by Isabel Wilkerson.

Dr. Don Olson is leading the discussion. All are welcome to join

Topic: Donald Olson's Zoom Meeting Time:

<https://zoom.us/j/99918456708?pwd=RWg0TUpsK0ZaUkJsRnN4bDNSZ1BMUT09Meeting> ID: 999 1845 6708 Passcode: 706854

BIBLE STUDY

We will meet on Zoom at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 3rd. To Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82547685992>

Meeting ID: 825 4768 5992

ONLINE GIVING - We invite you to use our online giving option as a quick, simple and secure method to make your pledges and any ancillary contributions. Clicking on the “Give Online Today” button at the bottom of this newsletter or going to our church website at

christcongregationalucc.org and clicking “online giving” will bring you to the secured Moon Clerk site which will allow you to enter your credit card information.

GRADUATING? Please let Pastor Candy know if you or a family member is graduating from high school or higher education this year.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS TO KAELEN KRUMICH who was graduated from the University of Michigan’s Ross Business School on April 30th!

PRAYER LIST:

Maria Saunders, Jacquie Greene, Mirta Oramas, Michelle Simone, Joan Hansen, Margie Diaz, Magnus, Anita Smith, Barbara Parker, Linda Dalrymple, Barrett family, Sheryl Mattos, Maggie McDowell, Sonia Nunez, Amelia Canali, Wendy Olson, Roland Sibrie, Sonya Williams, Ava, Jeffrey Gordon, Jen Wood, Joy and Darius Reid, and Duyen Le.

For Pastoral Care Needs or to arrange rental of CCC property, please call *Pastor Candy* at 925-640-9289. For a Maintenance Concern call the Board of Trustees Chairperson, *Julio Balcells*, 305-282-7882. For other general Questions or needs call the Church President/Moderator, *Lorrie LeGrand*, 305-978-3801

CALENDAR May 2, 2021 – May 9, 2021

**Sun. 2 9:00 a.m. Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
 10:30 a.m. Worship with**

***Holy Communion in the Sanctuary
in person & on Facebook***

Mon. 3	6:00 p.m.	Bible Study via ZOOM
Sun. 11	9:00 a.m.	Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
	10:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship in person in the Sanctuary & on Facebook