

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ

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The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor

Jay Harragin, Director of Music

Joan Chandler, Liturgist

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

May 9, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

Sixth Sunday in Easter

Mother's Day

Preparation for Worship: "Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children." William Makepeace Thackeray



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Leader: God speaks to the heart,

People: Offering compassion and hope.

Leader: God enlivens the mind,

People: Inviting curiosity and wonder.

Leader: God awakens all spirits,

People: Fostering sacred connection.

Leader: God nurtures our strength,

People: Creating unimagined possibilities.

Leader: God calls the whole world,

People: Inspiring extravagant love. Let us worship God!

HYMN: “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (No. 506, NCH)

1) What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!

Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

2) Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged: take it to our God in prayer!

Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to our God in prayer!

**3) Are we weak and heavy laden, burdened with a load of care?
Precious Savior still our refuge, take it to our God in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to our God in prayer!
Jesus' arms will take and shield you; you will find a solace there.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

**Creating Spirit,
we join with the chorus of all of creation
to celebrate your wonderous deeds.
Fill us with your joy and train our ears for harmony,
so that we may contribute to the world You are already creating.
All this we pray in the name of Jesus,
who revealed what is possible through love. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS:

John 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

I John 5:1-6

Faith Conquers the World

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Testimony concerning the Son of God

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

NRSV

YOUTH MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC: “Alfie” Burt Bacharach

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)

Unwavering God, we keep asking what is it that you most want us to do with our lives in hope you might tell us something easier. Instead, You offer the same answer every time: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

We confess that our love for others is not always what we hope it would be. We are quick to judge and slow to offer grace. We are swift to anger and resistant to make amends. We are prone to suspicion and resistant to build trust. We hear the greatest commandment, and, if we are honest, we are filled with hesitation because it means we must change. Unwavering God, in these moments of stillness, hear our struggles with the love you call us to practice.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE: Pastor

Friends, hear the good news. God’s love is so extravagant and inclusive that it knows no bounds. It transcends borders and speaks a universal language. Abide in that love. Find joy in that love. Be renewed by that love. Replicate that love in the world. Amen

PRAYER SONG: *Led by Fay Gordon*

**“Hear, O Lord, the sound of my voice. Hear, O Lord, and have mercy.
My soul is longing for the glory of you. Hear, O Lord, and answer me.”**

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

It is one thing to memorize the words of Jesus. But it is another thing to let those words transform us and rearrange our priorities and our lives. In these moments for quiet and reflection, what is it that God is inviting you to rearrange about your priorities? What is it that you want to offer to the Church and to the world as a practice of God’s love?

MUSICAL OFFERING: “Stairway to Heaven” Page/Plant

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (*Unison*)

All good gifts come from you, O God. You have given us life, and new life in Christ. As we offer our gifts let us be gifts one to another. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

MESSAGE: “Labors of Love” Pastor Candy

**CLOSING HYMN: “I Sing the Praise of Love Almighty” (No. 50, NCH)
(verses)**

- 1) I sing the praise of Love almighty, which shines revealed in Jesus’ face.
I offer up all that delights me, all mean desires, each fond embrace,
Turn from myself, in pure devotion, and eager plunge in love’s vast
ocean.**

- 2) How loving kind you are, how gentle, how your heart reaches after
mine!
My heart responds in elemental sympathy, beating perfect time.
This mutual love, this strong attraction, I know no other satisfaction.**

- 3) May my heart bear the deep impression of love that Jesus shares with
me.
My life become a pure expression of all that Christian love can be;
Each word, each act, a bright reflection of joy in Love’s own
resurrection.**

COMMISSION

Friends, imagine what is possible. Imagine what our community would feel like if our own hearts embraced the unconditional love God has for us. Imagine what the nation would sound like if our words echoed the inclusive love God has for us. Imagine what the world would look like if our actions reflected the unwavering love God has for us.

Go forth from this place, to transform possibility into reality and to join alongside God in transforming the world through love.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The lovely altar flowers are given today in honor of all mothers by Judy and Wally Carlson.

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: March 28, 2021 9:00 a.m.)

<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 10th. 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. \

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL—Please look out for an email from Lorrie and Antonia in the next few days with details about how each of you can be part of our May newsletter. We are looking for your stories and pix of each of you **BEING THE CHURCH!** More info will be sent to you all soon (And maybe we’ll let some of the adults participate too?!)

TOY DRIVE FOR NICKLAUS CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL— Shaina Kim, a tutoring student of Jeanette Smith’s, is collecting new toys for the hospital as a project to gain community service hours. If you’d like to donate new, unwrapped toys, excluding stuffed animals or violent toys, you may bring them to church next Sunday. The church parking lot is also serving as a drop off spot that afternoon from 1-2:20 p.m. with Jeanette and Shaina present for community donations.

GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE? Please share the news with Pastor Candy. We will honor our graduates in worship on June 6th.

OUR MONTHLY ENEWSLETTER will be coming to you the last weekend of May. You will receive the worship bulletin and message from Pastor Candy each week.

MEN’S DINNER: There will be a men’s dinner on Wednesday, May 19th at the Outback Steakhouse across from the Falls at 6:30 p.m. The address is: 13145 SW 89 Pl. Please let Wally Carlson know that you are coming at carlsonwd@gmail.com. Church members and friends are cordially invited!

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH! This all-church special mission offering will be received on Pentecost, May 23rd. This year's theme is "Renew!"

PRAYER LIST

Maria Saunders, 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, Darius and Joy Reid, Jacquie Greene, and Duyen Le.

For Pastoral Care Needs, please call *Pastor Candy* at 925-640-9289 or you may call or leave a message at the Church Office, 305-235-9381, Monday-Friday, from 9:30 a.m. –2:30 p.m. When the office is closed you may call the Board of Deacons Chairperson, *Jim Ketzle*, at 305-495-4452 and he will be able to help you. For Use of Property Needs or if you identify 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 9, 2021 – May 16, 2021

Sun. 9	9:00 a.m.	Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
	10:30 a.m.	Worship in the Sanctuary & on Facebook
Mon. 10	6:00 p.m.	Bible Study via ZOOM
Sun. 16	9:00 a.m.	Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
	10:30 a.m.	Worship in the Sanctuary & on Facebook