



# First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## EASTER SERIES: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

May 3, 2020

Anniversary Sunday

**Prelude**

Adagio

*Beethoven*

**Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Katie Miller

**\*Greeting and Passing of the Peace**

*"The Peace of God be with you."*

*In Unison:* **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

*\* Let us rise in body or spirit.*

**Call to Worship**

Bethany Lowndes, liturgist

Jesus came to offer us abundant life.

**We claim that gift.**

Praise God for all the signs of new life.

**Glory to God for all of our blessings.**

We join together in the name of Jesus.

**Let us celebrate.**

**\*Processional Hymn**

Speak, O God

*Bouma*

## Speak, O God.

W 138 Sophee Rooms

Piano

1. "Speak O God, your ser - vant listens!" We like Sam - u - el of  
 2. Speak to us, as to E - li - jah, still - ing with your si - lent  
 3. Show us how to sing with Miriam, Greet - ing with a grate - ful  
 4. Meet us where we try to bu - ry emp - ti - ness des - pair or  
 5. If im - pelled like Saul, we tra - vel fired by love of truth and

old, child - like, ask for dreams and visions, hopes to nur - ture  
 voice, gods that charm, se - duce or clamor - rest - less need and  
 dance, ev - ery large or lit - tie freedom, new beg - in - ning  
 shame, Speak as once you spoke to Ma - ry, Ris - on Christ and  
 right, faith - ful but with faith too narrow, halt us and sus -

and up - hold, hearts that to - pen in com - pas - sion,  
 sense - less choice, fear that needs an e - vil Oth - er,  
 sec - ond chance, life re - leased from do - min - a - tion,  
 call our name. Make us by your love's ar - trac - tion,  
 pend our sight. Tune our words, our ways, our wel - come

minds that seek to un - der - stand, lives res - ist - ing fad and  
 fer - vor, sniff - ing blood and gore, force un - leash - ing pride and  
 fear, cap - ti - vi - ty and scorn - fore - tastes of a new cre -  
 free - ly one with - out ta - boos, cat - a - lysts of lov - ing  
 to your all - in - clu - sive will, so that we can say for

fish - ion. ne - ver false or sec - ond - hand.  
 un - ger. greed that smiles and wins - pers. "More!"  
 a - tion. all ut - last re - deemed re - born.  
 ac - tion. treas - ur - ing our var - ied views.  
 cer - tain. "Tru - ly (God is speak - ing still!"

Lyrics by Brian Wren. Commissioned for the 150th Anniversary of First Central Congregational UCC, Omaha, Nebraska. Copyright © 2005 by Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission. First Central Congregational Church, UCC, Omaha has permission in perpetuity to use this hymn without fee in its worship and programs.

## \*Invocation

Empower us today, Holy Spirit, for we are your people. Comfort those suffering pain and loss. Assure all who are afraid. Restore our souls and lead us in right paths. We have known your goodness and mercy and are open to receiving those gifts again. May we be attuned to your love surrounding us. Amen.

## \*Gloria

*Black Hymnal, No. 759*

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

## Conversation with the Children

## Fifty Year Member Recognition

## Church Covenant

(4-12-1981)

We are thankful for life, for Jesus Our Lord, for the courage and vision of our church founders. In gratitude, we covenant with God and with one another, seeking as a church and as

individuals to be faithful to God's will. We pray for hearts that open, minds that understand, and lives that serve.

## Word in Music

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring  
*Bethany Lowndes, trumpet*

*J.S. Bach*

## New Testament Lesson

Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-35

*Pew Bible, Pages 112, 114*

For the Word of God in scripture,  
For the Word of God within us,  
For the Word of God among us,  
Thanks be to God.

## Sermon

Wonders and Signs

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

## \* Hymn

Come, We Who Love God's Name

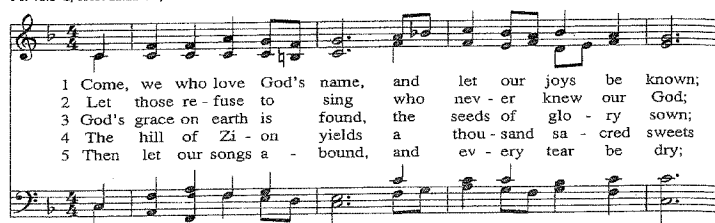
COMMUNION OF SAINTS

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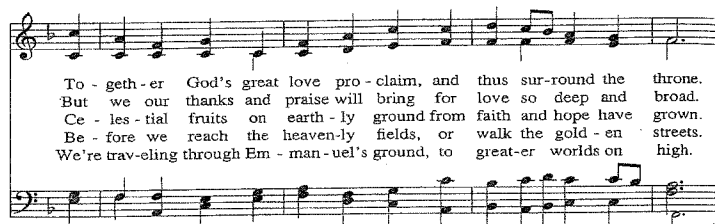
Come, We Who Love God's Name

*Ps. 48:1-2; Heb. 12:22-24; Rev. 4:2-11*

*Isaac Watts, 1707; alt.*



1 Come, we who love God's name, and let our joys be known;  
2 Let those re-fuse to sing who nev-er knew our God;  
3 God's grace on earth is found, the seeds of glo-ry sown;  
4 The hill of Zi-on yields a thou-sand sa-cred sweets  
5 Then let our songs a-bound, and ev-ery tear be dry;



To-gether God's great love pro-claim, and thus sur-round the throne.  
But we our thanks and praise will bring for love so deep and broad.  
Ce-les-tial fruits on earth-ly ground from faith and hope have grown.  
Be-fore we reach the heav-en-ly fields, or walk the gold-en streets.  
We're trav-el-ing through Em-man-uel's ground, to great-er worlds on high.

*A story concerning this hymn holds that the pastor of a New England church once asked the choir to lead the singing of the second stanza on a Sunday when it threatened to "refuse to sing"*

Tune: ST. THOMAS S.M.  
*Williams' New Universal Psalmist, 1770*  
Alternate setting: MARCHING TO ZION

Word alterations Copyright 1993 The Pilgrim Press.

## **\*Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Redeeming God, with you there is always more life, more hope, more joy.  
When doubt assails us, and we fail to recognize you at work in our lives,  
When fear impairs our faith,  
When anger and sorrow stop us from doing the risky work of love,  
Lord, have mercy!

## **\*Words of Assurance**

In those times when our faith falters, when we cannot recognize the presence of the Holy among us, God takes our faith and transforms it, patiently showing us the many ways Christ walks among us. Look around you: grace abounds at the heart of all life. You are all God's children, loved without condition, rest in that peace. Amen.

## **Offertory**

## **\*Hymn of Dedication**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

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!

## **\*Offertory Prayer**

Thank you, Holy God, for the abundant life we enjoy. For the relationships that nurture us. For the blessings that support us. May everything we give here today help to meet human needs. Extend our outreach beyond our vision. In these ways we offer praise to you. Amen.

## **Celebration of the Sacrament of Communion**

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks and praise to God.

In the beginning, God danced through the universe, bringing light to the darkness, form to the void, and separating the water into earth and sky. God blessed the world with love and joy. But, despite all of God's attempts to save humanity from themselves, peace and harmony seemed out of reach for God's people. Never giving up, God became human. Born into humble beginnings, God, through Jesus, experienced the fullness of earthly life-- the glory of a sunset, the relief of laughter, the deep sorrow of loss, and the frustration of being misunderstood.

Jesus told stories of compassion, forgiveness, and justice. Jesus loved his enemies, ate with sinners, and healed minds, bodies, and souls. By his example, we now live, in communion with one another. Today we join with all people on earth and all the company of heaven to praise God's holy name:

From *Deutsche Messe* by Franz Schubert; adapt. by Richard Proulx

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

power and might. might.

Heav - en and earth are full,  
Bless - ed is he who comes

full in the name of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high - est, ho -

san - na in the high - est.

**Words of Institution and Invitation to the Table**

*Gluten-free bread is served.*

**The Bread and the Cup**

**Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether**

## Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

*Percy Dearmer, 1925; alt.*

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*Matt. 18:20*

*Unison*

Unison

1 Draw us in the Spir-it's teth - er, for when hum - bly  
2 As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of  
3 All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -

in your name, two or three are met to - geth - er,  
Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the Giv - er,  
ments of you, that by car - ing, help-ing, giv - ing,

you are in the midst of them; Al-le - lu - ia!  
break the bread and bless the cup, Al-le - lu - ia!  
we may be dis - ci - ples true. Al-le - lu - ia!

Al-le - lu - ia! Touch we now your gar - ment's hem -  
Al-le - lu - ia! So now bind our friend - ship up.  
Al-le - lu - ia! We may serve with faith a - new.

English hymnal editor Percy Dearmer originally wrote these

Tune: UNION SEMINARY 8787444

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## Prayer of Thanksgiving

## \*Recessional Hymn

## Forward Through the Ages

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## Forward through the Ages

*Heb. 11; 1 Cor. 12*

Frederick Lucian Mueser, 1908; alt.

1 For - ward through the a - ges, in un - bro - ken line,  
2 Wide grows God's do - min - ion, reign of love and peace;  
3 Not a - lone we con - quer, not a - lone we fall,

move the faith - ful spir - its at the call di - vine;  
for it we must la - bor, till all serv - ings cease,  
in each loss or tri - umph, lose or tri - umph all.

Gifts in dif - fering mea - sure, hearts of one ac - cord,  
Prop - ets have pro - claimed it, teach - ers tes - ti - fied,  
Bound by God's far pur - pose in one liv - ing whole,

man - i - fold in ser - vice, one the sure re - ward,  
pu - ets sang its glo - ry, mar - tyrs for it died,  
move we on to - geth - er to the shin - ing goal.

*Exemplars of flowers selected at Macclesfield and analysed in the*

THUR. ST. GERTRUDE 4565 D with refines



## \*Benediction

### Benediction Response

*Bouma*

May you hear laughter in the wind. May you see hope in the light.  
May you find courage in your faith. May you know joy in your God.

### Postlude

Presto

*Kabalevsky*

### Open & Affirming Statement

In our ongoing quest for hearts that open, minds that understand,  
and lives that serve, we welcome into our fellowship, membership, leadership, and employment,  
all people, regardless of abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, or any God-given characteristic.

**First Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
164 Years of Hearts that Open, Minds That Understand,  
and Lives That Serve.**

**Fifty Year+ Members**

\*Janet Acker, 1970

Judy Blazek 1953

Margaret Frum 1960

Marjorie Goldsmith 1933

Dave Hamer 1958

Margaret Hole 1955

Lennie Jefferson 1967

Mark Jefferson 1951

Maralee Jensen 1955

Shirley Jensen 1962

Lou Lamberty 1968

Pat Lamberty 1968

Pat Lange 1969

Gary McConnell 1963

Kathy McConnell 1963

Joyce Mullins 1956

Susan O'Donnell 1955

Pete Peterson 1969

Jenny Pfeifer 1968

Sam Pfeifer 1968

Curt Ralston 1948

Irma Rosberg 1960

Bob Vassell 1952

Tracy Zaiss 1964

*\*Indicates new additions this year.*



## Announcements

**May 3, 2020**

**Prayers:** family of *Linda Livingston*, who died last week.

**Chancel flowers and decorations:** sponsored this month by friends and family of First Central. Thanks to *Bud Cassidy* for the loan of his beautiful painting!

**Happy Birthday this week:** to *Maddie Ferber, Gary Kiel, Krissy Straka, Carolyn Gardner, Savannah Kirwan*, and *Grant Switzer*.

**Fifty Year Members:** *see insert*

**Fair Trade Coffee:** sponsors this month are *Jeannie Bates, John & Nancy Schalles*.

**FIRSTKids:** 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

### Activities for the Coming Week, May 4 – May 9

*Lectionary Readings: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14.*

**Monday:** Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Pastor's Study.

**Wednesday:** Bible study, 3 p.m. on Zoom  
Pre-K, K Sunbeams, 6 p.m., on Zoom.  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m. on Zoom

### Sunday, May 10

**Worship:** 10:30 a.m. on YouTube

**FIRSTKids:** 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

**First Forum:** 3 p.m. on Zoom. *Biblical Israel*, led by *Deb Kirwan*.

*Want to donate electronically? Please scan the QR code.*

