



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC LEADER**  
*GATHERED TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE*



**DECEMBER 31ST, 2017**

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

# Welcome

*Please turn off cell phones in the sanctuary.*

## **Children in Worship**

Infants and children bring life to our worship and are always welcome. Worship Activity Bags for children are located at the back of the church: teal bags for 2-5 years, navy blue for 6-10 years. We offer childcare in our professionally staffed nursery in our downstairs nursery for children ages infancy through 6 years old.

## **Sunday School**

Sunday School is on break this week. Join us at 9am next week!

## **Sunday Brunch**

The Son Cafe is on break this week. Join us at 11am next week!

## **Interested in Membership?**

Contact Pastor Craig, call (309)-762-0787 or email [craig@fccmoline.org](mailto:craig@fccmoline.org).

## **Wi-Fi Password**

Welcome!

## **Resources**

Ushers can provide large print bulletins and hearing amplifiers.

## **Getting connected**

Please fill our pew pads to offer us a record of your attendance.

Cover Art

*The Nativity* by Gwen Raverat, 1916

*Today*  
from the life  
of the church

Thus says the Lord:

A voice is heard in Ramah,

lamentation and bitter weeping.

Rachel is weeping for her children;

she refuses to be comforted for her children,

because they are no more.

-from Jeremiah 31

For whom is Rachel weeping?

In the book of Genesis Rachel dies in childbirth while giving birth to her second son, Benjamin. Jeremiah took the imagery of sorrow associated with Rachel's tragic death and revised it, creating the image of Rachel weeping for her lost children.

Initially, Rachel's children referred only to the far northern tribes of Israel, who are, in fact, her children according to the Bible. After rethinking the prophecies in light of the experience of Judah, Rachel's crying no longer refers to only her sons of the northern tribes, but to all Israel and Judah.

Would we think today that Rachel weeps for all little children who die at the hands of military oppressors?

Pastor Michael

# *Gathering of God's People*

## **PRELUDE**

## **GREETING AND WELCOME**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**And also with you.**

## **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, And be thankful.

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;**

with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

**And whatever you do, in word or deed,  
do everything in the name of Jesus.**

## **\*OPENING PRAYER**

Let us pray. **Almighty God, you have poured upon us a new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

## **\*OPENING HYMN**

*#46 On This Day Earth Shall Ring*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us pray. **Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and follow in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Let us pray. God with us: You came as a baby manger. You slept on straw and greeted shepherds. Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things. And then, through these gifts, help us bless the lives of others in the strength of your holy name. Amen.

## \*SONG OF PRAISE

*Magnificat*

Ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat a - ni-ma me - a Do-mi-num.

Ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat a - ni-ma me - a!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: 'Ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat a - ni-ma me - a Do-mi-num.' The second staff contains the melody for the second line: 'Ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat, ma - gni-fi-cat a - ni-ma me - a!'. The second staff begins with a triplet of three eighth notes and a fourth measure with a four-measure rest.

## \*PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

## CHILDREN'S TIME

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Holy God, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Spirit, that as the Scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

### *Proclaiming the Good News*

#### **SCRIPTURE**

ISAIAH 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.  
The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the Lord will give.  
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 148

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens;

**praise God in the heights.**

Praise the Lord, all you angels;

**sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

Praise the Lord, sun and moon;

**sing praise, all you shining stars.**

Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens,

**and you waters above the heavens.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord,

**who commanded, and they were created,**

who made them stand fast forever and ever,

**giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

Praise the Lord from the earth,

**you sea monsters and all deeps;**

fire and hail, snow and fog,

**tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

mountains and all hills,

**fruit trees and all cedars,**

wild beasts and all cattle,

**creeping things and flying birds;**

sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,

**princes and all rulers of the world;**

young men and maidens,

**old and young together.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord,

**whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.**

The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants,

**the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah!**

**SCRIPTURE**

GALATIANS 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

**\*GOSPEL**

MATTHEW 2: 13 - 23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.'

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

'A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;

she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

**SERMON**

Pr. Michael Swartz

**\*HYMN**

#53 *What Child is This*

# *Responding to the Good News*

## **PASTORAL PRAYER**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

## **OFFERING OUR GIFTS**

### **INVITATION**

As the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so will God cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. With thankful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

### **OFFERTORY**

#### **\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God From whom all blessings flow,**

**Praise God, all creatures here below;**

**Praise God above, ye heavenly host;**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Holy God, use us, and these gifts, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and honor your presence in all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## *Sending in Mission*

#### **\*HYMN OF SENDING**

*#36 In the Bleak Midwinter*

#### **\*BENEDICTION**

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen**

#### **\*POSTLUDE**

## **SERVING TODAY**

### *Head Usher*

Jim Moorhusen

### *Lector*

Rylee Warpehoski (Confirmand)

### *Ushers*

Andrew Michl (Confirmand)

Mary Lou Carlson

Nancy Michl

Don Shearer

Linda Shearer

Nancy Keller

### *Liturgist*

Allie Maranda (Confirmand)

## **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH STAFF**

Rev. Craig Jan-McMahon, Senior Pastor

Rev. Michael Swartz, Associate Pastor

Maureen Holmes, Chancel Choir Director

Mason Moss, Interim Organist/Pianist

Gail Glockhoff-Long, Campanella Ringers Director

Jennifer Dailing, Office Assistant

Taylor Anderson, Director of Marketing and Communications

Becca Peterson, Director of Family Ministry

Sara Otta, Finance Manager

Wes Llewellyn, Fellowship Coordinator

Harleigh Jones, Nursery Coordinator

Amanda Peterson, Red Wagon Preschool Director

Mike DeToye and Ron Mahar, Custodians



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL**

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

*Gathered to Share God's Love*