



November 19, 2023

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

First Congregational

United Church of Christ

1200 Clark Street, Rapid City SD 57701

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November 19, 2023

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Judges 4:1-7 Matthew 25:14-30

✝ Invites worshipers to rise in spirit or body as they are able.

NCH indicates the New Century Hymnal.

You may notice there are several elements included in our time of worship. We want you to know this is intentional, as each of us may come for differing reasons; each of us may connect to Spirit in different ways. At First Congregational UCC, we are exploring how LOVE inspires us to create space for one another.

Join Us Online!

You can view our worship streamed on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/RCFirstUCC>. Copies of the video are available on our church web site's video tab **www.rcfirstucc.com**.

Call to Worship Music Music Selections

(French horn alone or horn and organ)

Centering as God's People

Greetings

One: "God knows us from within ourselves, not as objects, not as strangers, not as intimates, but as our own selves."

- Thomas Merton

Many: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Prelude *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*

L. Smith

Call to Worship

One: Unexpected God,

We close our eyes to so much in the world — the problems we can't solve, the people we can't help, the strangers we don't understand.

Many: Worse, we close our minds too often as well. To the everyday miracles of creation, to the joy of each new day, to the gifts placed deep within us.

One: Open our hearts to receive the wonder of your surprising love.

Many: To see the world as you do — with mercy, hope and love. To serve the world as you know we can — with courage, hope and love.

One: To witness to you in the world, sharing your peace, hope and love.

Prayer of Invocation

O God,
I find myself at the beginning of another day.
I do not know what it will bring.
Please help me to be ready for whatever it may be.

If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
If I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly.

I pray just for today, for these twenty-four hours,
for the ability to cooperate with others according to the way
Jesus taught us to live.
"Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in
heaven."
May these words that he taught us become more than
words in our lives.
May it be so.

✠The Peace

Hearing God's Word

First Lesson: Judges 4:1-7 **Pew Bible, OT page 215**

A Message for the Young at Heart Pastor Erin Erickson

Anthem, Choir *Give Thanks to God* L. Larson

Second Lesson: Matthew 25:14-30 **Pew Bible, NT, page 26**

Sermon *Bad Joke?* Pastor Erin Erickson

Prayers of Community

Invitation to Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (alternate version from Peter Parr)

*We offer alternative versions of the Lord's prayer to help us to gain
understanding and depth behind the traditional words that many of us
say without thinking about their meaning.*

**Our Father, Perfect Love,
We turn again to You.
Guide us; help us to love,
So that Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.**

Give us this day
That which we need.
Fill us with hope and trust.
Help us to forgive our brothers and sisters
(and ourselves as well);
And to look on them as You look on us.
Give us strength to resist temptation.
When we are tempted, let us choose peace.
Deliver us from our fears. For what You love is safe.
And Your love remains forever and always.
Amen.

Offerings

Invitation

Blanket Sunday Special Offering

Carol Boyles

Offertory

Now Thank We All Our God

R. DeBruyn

✠Doxology

NCH 778

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One.

✠Prayer of Dedication

Community Announcements

Going Into God's World

✠Hymn

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

NCH 565

✠Benediction

Postlude

Now Thank We All Our God

S. Karg-Elert

Altar Flowers

The flowers on the Communion Table this morning are given by
Dorothy Slingsby.



Events

Sunday, November 19

Blanket Sunday

- 9:30am: Worship Service/
Nursery available
- 9:45am: Sunday School
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour/
Grocery Card Sales
- 10:45am: Pastoral Relations/
Personnel Committee

Tuesday, November 21

- 11:30am: Church Chat
- 12:45pm: Spiritual Practices
- 1:00pm: Craft Day
- 7:00pm: Church Board

Wednesday, November 22

- 2:00pm: Westhills Communion
- 6:00pm: Bell Choir Practice
- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Thursday, November 23

Happy Thanksgiving!

Sunday, November 26

- 9:30am: Worship Service/
Nursery available
- 9:45am: Sunday School
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour
- 3:00pm: B.H. Chamber Music
Society Concert

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Birthdays

- November 22: **Bruce Tompkins**
- November 23: **Jack Bossen**
- November 24: **Annie Haan**

Blanket Sunday Special Offering

For over 75 years, Church World Service has been helping people of faith bring God's hope and healing to people in the U.S. and around the world. The CWS Blankets program was created to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time. Our church will collect this special offering during the worship service **today**. Please make checks out to **First Congregational Church** with **Blanket Sunday on the memo line**. Thank you.

Grocery Card Sales

Be ready for Black Friday! Church Response grocery cards will be available for purchase in the Fellowship Hall following **today**.

POINSETTIAS

Orders will be taken in Fellowship Hall **today, November 26** and **December 3** for poinsettias to be used to decorate the church during the Christmas season. The cost is \$15.

Pledge Drive

It is that time of year again, when we remember to support our church through our tithes! A large majority of the church's income comes through the pledges of our members and friends. Pledge cards are available. We ask that

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you will faithfully make your pledge to the church for 2024.

Prayer Pals for All Ages!

Please fill out a Prayer Pal form in the Fellowship Hall and leave your form in the box there. Beginning in **December**, you'll be able to choose a Prayer Pal (or three) on a list in the Fellowship Hall!

Interest Survey

It's fun to be a team player!
An Interest Survey was included in last Sunday's bulletin for the departments of the church and various church groups and activities. We ask that the surveys be filled out by **December 3** and placed in the basket located in the Narthex. Copies are available in the office. Thank you.

Chamber Music Society Concert

Home for the Holidays concert with cellist, **Trevor Minton** will be held at **3:00pm** on **Sunday, November 26** at **First Congregational Church**.

Fellowship Hour Help

Coffee hosts **and** dishwashers are needed for the coffee hour following worship. Please sign up on the sheets in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you.

Book Study

A new (yet previously existing) Book Study will kick off on

Wednesday, December 6th at **9:30am**. We will decide on a book in November, and intend to meet each Wednesday **EXCEPT** the 3rd Wednesdays. Questions? Contact Pastor Erin.

Appetizers and Artwork for Advent

The Departments of Hospitality and Education will be hosting **Appetizers and Artwork for Advent** on **December 10** after church and asks our congregation to **bring a favorite appetizer, finger food or munchie**.

Artwork tables will be set up for all who would like to join in!

Bells of the Hills Concert

Bells of the Hills, a community handbell choir, will perform its winter concert at **First Congregational Church** on **December 10 at 2:00pm**. A freewill offering will be taken.

Toys for the Nursery

The church nursery is hoping to upgrade/replace some of its toys. They are asking for gently used or new toy donations appropriate for ages 0-5 such as Magna-Tiles, baby rattles/smaller baby toys, board books, board games for preschoolers, wood toys, planes/cars (Matchbox car size), coloring books, stacking or shape sorting toys. **Note:** Please, no large, bulky

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toys or stuffed animals. Toys that can fit in a shoe box are the ideal size. Please drop off donations in the nursery. Thank you!

Construction on Clark Street

Due to construction on Clark Street, traffic to the church has been re-routed to a very narrow section of Fulton Street. We all need to reduce our speed and watch for children as we drive to church. Thank you.

Thank You

The Craft Gang thanks everyone for their support of this year's Craft Bazaar. A special thanks to those who donated baked goods. Approximately \$2000 was raised to help fund church activities.

Prayer Concerns

Our sympathy and prayers to **Sue Maynard** and family following the death of **Clair Maynard** on November 9 in Rapid City. Services will be held at **10:00am** on **Monday, November 20** at **First Congregational Church** with Becky Fleming officiating. Refreshments will be served following the service. Clair will be greatly missed by our church family.

Please hold the following members and friends in your prayers:

Lee Boyles has ongoing health concerns.

Kay Daugherty's health is improving. She appreciates the love and prayers.

Andy and Barb Knight's son, **John Knight**, faces serious health concerns as the result of a fall, but is doing better.

Ron Laughlin, husband of **Becky Fisher's** cousin, Linda, is receiving treatment for cancer.

Wes Humke had cataract surgery on November 14. Cards are welcome and may be mailed to his address in the church directory.

Sid Michaels has started cancer treatments. Radiation treatments began in August. He is doing well.

Jodie Thuringer's father is facing a recurrence of health issues.

Pastor Dorotea Yucra's daughter, **Sarvia**, is receiving no treatment for terminal cancer at this time. She is being cared for at home by her mother and sister.

Nadine Zeller will have surgery on November 27 for kidney stones.

We also pray for those members of our church family who are in care centers or isolated in their homes, including:

Evelyn Bradshaw, Vivian Dittmer, Wes Humke, Eunice Johnson, Merrie Miller, Marrelyce Seaman, Dorothy Slingsby, Helen Snyder and Elena Van Pelt

Leaders

Erin Erickson, pastor

Becky Fleming, licensed minister

Mary Haan, Christian education coordinator

Alan Glover, choir director, organist

Michael Bossen, bell choir director

Audrey Fenner, organist

John Fenner, French horn

The Adult Choir

The Bell Choir

Patti Arneson and Laura Switzer, administrative colleagues

Chuck Rounds, moderator

Denise Webster, treasurer

Carol Boyles, Becky Fisher and Jenny Kozel, congregational representatives

Harold and Cam Miller, greeters

Elle Emerson and Elsa Grauman, acolytes

Kim Nearhood, reader

Dawn Erk and Olivia Erk, coffee hosts

Randy and Mary Daughenbaugh, dishwashers

Rev. Kathleen Batchelder, pastor emerita

Lynnell Parrott, organist emerita

Credits:

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come - L. Smith

Lorenz, 1975

Now Thank We All Our God - R. DeBruyn

OCP, 1990

Give Thanks to God - L. Larson

Hope Pub.

Now Thank We All Our God - S. Karg-Elert

Concordia, 1952

Doxology

Pilgrim Press, 1995

We Praise You, O God

Pilgrim Press, 1995

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

Pilgrim Press, 1995