



God is still speaking,

First Congregational Church, UCC

Third Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2020

Rev. Dr. Daniel Ling

Our Mission: Feeding the hungry in body, mind, and spirit

*“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome at First Congregational Church.”*

Welcome

It’s a joy to have you worship with us, in spirit.

Statement of Oneness (*unison*)

We were made in the image of God; thus, as we grow in faith and mature in spirit, that image shall shine all the more clearly. Like Jesus, we are children of God; thus, as our birthright, we shall live all our days surrounded by unconditional love. Humanity, the Image of God, is beautiful in God’s sight, part of a magnificent creation; therefore, we are beautiful in God’s eyes.

The Scriptures declare that the entire Kingdom of God is within us. Also, we live our lives immersed in Divinity. We gather to celebrate that sacred and wondrous Truth.

Many hurtful and unjust things happen in our world, motivated by hatred or fear. Yet also there is love in our hearts. Let us declare that love, acknowledge it is of God, and promise to grow in love day by day. Amen.

Call to Worship

Psalm 116 (The Message)

One: I love God because God listened to me when I begged for mercy.

All: Death stared me in the face, hell was hard on my heels

One: Not knowing which way to turn, I cried out, "Please God, Save my life!"

All: God is gracious. It is our most compassionate God who makes things right.

One: God takes the side of the helpless;

All: When I was at the end of my rope, God saved me

One: What can I give back to God for the blessings he's poured out on me?

All: I'll lift high the cup of salvation, a toast to God! I'll complete what I promised God I'd do, and I will do it together with God's people.

*Hymn #67

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens

(2 verses, see page 4)

*Unison Prayer

Scripture**1 Peter 1: 13-23** (The Message)

So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that's coming when Jesus arrives. Don't lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. You didn't know any better then; you do now. As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God's life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness. God said, "I am holy; you be holy."

You call out to God for help and he helps, he's a good Father that way. But don't forget, he's also a responsible Father, and won't let you get by with sloppy living.

Your life is a journey you must travel with a deep consciousness of God. It cost God plenty to get you out of that dead-end, empty-headed life you grew up in. He paid with Christ's sacred blood, you know. He died like an unblemished, sacrificial lamb. And this was no afterthought. Even though it has only lately-at the end of the ages-become public knowledge, God always knew he was going to do this for you. It's because of this sacrificed Messiah, whom God then raised from the dead and glorified, that you trust God, that you know you have a future in God.

Now that you've cleaned up your lives by following the truth, love one another as if your lives depended on it. Your new life is not like your old life. Your old birth came from mortal sperm; your new birth comes from God's living Word; Just think: a life conceived by God himself!

This is the Word that conceived the new life in you.

Scripture**Luke 24: 13-35** (The Road to Emmaus)

That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

He asked, "What's this you're discussing so intently as you walk along?" They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn't heard what's happened during the last few days?" He said, "What has happened?"

They said, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death and crucified him. And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn't find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn't see Jesus."

Then he said to them, "So thick-headed! So slow-hearted! Why can't you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don't you see that these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?" Then he started at the begin-

Sermon

A Call to Holy Living

Prayer Request and Offertory Reminders

***Hymn #212**

Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us

(2 verses, see page 5)

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the comfort and challenge of the Holy Spirit, be with each one of you, now and always. Go in peace and the God of peace go with you. Amen

67 God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens

1. God, who stretched the span-gled heav-ens in-fi-nite in time and place,
2. We have ven-tured worlds un-dreamed of since the child-hood of our race;
3. As each far hor-i-zon beck-ons, may it chal-lenge us a-new,

flung the suns in burn-ing ra-diance through the si-lent fields of space;
known the ec-sta-sy of wing-ing through un-trav-eled realms of space;
chil-dren of cre-a-tive pur-pose, serv-ing oth-ers, hon-oring you.

we, your chil-dren, in your like-ness, share in-ven-tive powers with you;
probed the se-crets of the at-om, yield-ing un-i-mag-ined power,
May our dreams prove rich with prom-ise, each en-deav-or, well be-gun;

Great Cre-a-tor, still cre-a-ting, show us what we yet may do.
fac-ing us with life's de-struc-tion or our most tri-um-phant hour.
Great Cre-a-tor, give us guid-ance till our goals and yours are one.

WORDS: Catherine Cameron, 1967

MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard, 1844; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The English Hymnal*, 1906

HYFRYDOL

87.87D

Cameron, a Canadian now a professor of social psychology in California, intended this text to be sung to *AUSTRIAN HYMN*. The Welsh tune used here appears in

Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us

1. Sing of one who walks be - side us and this day is liv - ing still,
 2. We have walked with him as strang - ers through the jour - ny of the day,
 3. Ris - en one, stay with us, raise us, once a - gain the night is near.

one who now is clos - er to us than the thoughts our hearts dis - till,
 and have told him of the ter - ror that has swept our hope a - way.
 Dine with us and share your wis - dom, free our hearts from ev - 'ry fear.

Christ who once up - on a hill - top, raised a - gainst the power of sin,
 He has of - fered words of com - fort, words of en - er - gy and light.
 In the calm of each new eve - ning, in the fresh - ness of each dawn,

died in love as his own crea - tures cru - ci - fied their God and Friend!
 Did our hearts not blaze with - in us as he broke the bread this night?
 if you hold us fast in friend - ship we will nev - er be a - lone.