

Greetings to our members, those from United Congregational Church in Conway and all our friends at home,

This Sunday is our first communion Sunday back in the sanctuary. We will be serving communion by way of prepackaged, sealed communion cups that include a wafer. While we would love returning to serving the congregation from the communion table, this way offers to us the safest alternative.

Please remember that it is important to make a reservation with Diantha, since our seating is limited. You may reach her at 413-625-6592 or through her email, foxtowne@gmail.com. Remember to wear a mask and keep distance while entering and leaving the building.

Our Safety Procedures will be reviewed by the church leadership later this month. We are monitoring the changes in the state's recommendations and the recommendations from the United Church of Christ. You will be notified through email when changes occur.

First Safety Change: We are now singing hymns in worship with certain safe practices in mind. We remain seated, keep our masks on, and sing two verses of each hymn.

We continue to record our services. We are recording Sunday Morning worship and uploading the service on YouTube within a day or two after the service. When the video is released an email notice will be sent out with the link.

Looking forward to seeing you in worship!

Pastor Rob

Welcome to Sunday Worship

June 6, 2021

Good Morning to our members, those from United Congregational Church in Conway and all our friends at home. This morning our scripture lesson, from the Apostle Paul's second letter to the Christians in Corinth, brings to us the reality of our mortality and the promises of God through Jesus Christ.

This Sunday is a Communion Sunday and our first since returning to the sanctuary. If you wish to participate at home you are encouraged to follow this resource on your own and celebrate Communion by reading the Communion prayers and serving yourself keeping in mind that even when alone, we are all a part of the body of Christ and our tradition holds to the priesthood of all believers.

Prayer Requests: We are accepting requests for prayer (healing, comfort, thanksgiving, and others). Please send your requests to the Pastor at pastor01089@gmail.com no later than Saturday night. Requests will then be included in Sunday morning worship and sent out through our email list to the congregation for our common prayer life during the week. PLEASE remember that all prayer requests received become public knowledge. If you are uncertain if your request for another might be confidential, do not send it.

And now let us be in worship

Call to Worship (Responsive, L=Leader, P=People) Psalm 121, edited

L We look to the hills, where does our help come?

P Our help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

L We look to the hills, where does our help come?

P Our help comes from the Lord!

Unison Morning Prayer & the Lord's Prayer

Holy God, we greet this new day with praise on our lips. In you alone we find peace, we find comfort, we find love and we find safety. From you we hear the call to enter your ministry, to learn of your will and to love our neighbor. For faithful living we pray for the gifts of the spirit, that we may be disciples of your Christ, our way, our truth, our life who taught us to pray saying...*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Prayers of the People

This morning's prayers present three opportunities to offer prayers for those in need of healing, for those in need of the comfort of the Holy Spirit and prayers of thanksgiving. There will also be a time for personal prayers and meditation.

Let us come to God in prayer.

Gracious God, who in Jesus did bring sight to the blind, who did speak the words and the lame lifted themselves up and stood on solid ground, who did touch, and disease melted away, **Hear, these our prayers for those who are in need of your healing:**

(Your prayers for healing)

Loving God, who grants us all life and breath and the precious gift of time. Who sets before us the ways of life and the ways of death, we pray for those in need of the comfort of your Holy Spirit: Those who once knew love, friendship, support and care, and now cry the tears of loss, loss of spouse, loss of child, loss of lover, loss of friend and neighbor. Grant, O God, that they may know that all are in your holy and safe keeping and that you are with them in the wilderness of loss and loneliness. **Hear these our prayers for those in need of the comfort of your Holy Spirit:** (Your prayers for comfort)

Almighty God, who sends the sun and the rain in due season, whose creation is sufficient for all life, and who delights in the work of your hands, **hear our prayers of thanksgiving and joy:** (Your prayers of thanksgiving)

In this time of prayer, open our hearts to you that might be in your presence, open our minds to the peaceful quiet of meditation. (Your personal prayers and meditation)

Loving God, who hears every prayer and answers not according to our desire, but according to your Holy Will, let your love rain down upon people. Amen

Scripture Lesson:

The Apostle Paul founded the church in Corinth in 50 AD. From that point on, his relationship to that congregation was both rocky and loving. Over the years he visited Corinth at least twice and wrote more than the two letters that are in the New Testament. In Second Corinthians, Paul mentions his second visit as being painful and references a letter that he describes as a letter of tears. The book of Second Corinthians is Paul's assurance to the Christians in Corinth that his next visit will not be painful and that his love for them continues as does God's love.

So, we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

After the reading, you may reflect on this passage.

The sermon for this Sunday may be viewed on the video posted by Tuesday.

Sermon: *Wasting Away*

The Sacrament of Communion

The Invitation

Jesus said, *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.*

This morning may we come to this table of Christ seeking rest.

This morning, may we find true refreshment for our tired and parched souls in the breaking of bread and the pouring of the cup.

This morning, may we find fresh forgiveness and mercy overflowing in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord's Christ.

This morning, may we find that the grace of Christ may come to us at this table, in the breaking of this bread and the pouring of this cup.

The Prayer of Consecration

O Lord, My God, the journey is too great for us: unless you feed us with the bread from heaven and the cup of life, unless you share with us your own life, victorious over sin, hatred, pain, and death. Let your spirit flow through our hearts. May your strength, be our strength. Your love, be our love. Your will be our will. As we come to this table, bless this bread from heaven and this cup of life that we may be one with you, in heart, mind and will. Amen.

Blessing of the Bread

On the night that Jesus was to be betrayed, he sat at table with all of his disciples. During the course of the meal, he took bread off the table. When he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (You break your bread and eat)

Blessing of the Cup

Again, on that same night, Jesus took a cup after supper, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. (You may drink from your cup)

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off, you met us in Jesus of Nazareth and brought us home. He declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gates of your kingdom. May we who break bread in his name, live the life he calls us to. May we who share of his cup, bring life to others. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us so that we, and all your children, shall live in love and be free. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction: Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.