

First Congregational United Church of Christ—Charlevoix Mi.

March 22, 2020

Fourth Sunday in Lent

One Great Hour of Sharing

<https://unsplash.com/photos/zpG3x9pXS> 8

Welcome to our online worship experience! Though we are separated physically for one another's physical health, we still join together to worship God, be inspired, and care for our mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

You are invited to find a comfortable place in your house and set aside a time for worship. Light a candle if you wish, or get a cup of tea. Take your time as you read, listen, watch, sing, pray, and share in this worship of God. Whether you worshipping on Sunday morning, or whenever you have time, we are glad you are a part of our community.

As always, we want your feedback on how we can worship better with you in this time of physical distancing. Feel free to give feedback and suggestions to pastor@chxucc.org Ok, let us begin!

To go to any of the listed videos, simply click on the link or copy and paste into your web browser.

Choral Introit— <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cn2zKKhhF3I>

Psalm 23—Bobby McFerrin

Call to Worship— *read these words aloud, or silently, or with someone else*

Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord,

Praise the name of the Lord!

Blessed be the name of the Lord

From this time on and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun to its setting,

The name of the Lord is to be praised.

The Lord is high above all nations,

And God's glory is above the heavens.

Praise the Lord!

Opening Hymn — For the Healing of the Nations

Accompaniment with Lyrics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0Ia0LEw-1o>

or

Listen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdYJeGHmCjM>

Prayer of the Day—*read silently or pray aloud*

Creator of us all,

whether we are from China or Italy or the United States, we are one people, made in Your image, and we are in need of healing.

Bind us together, Great Creator, reminding us that we are from the same stardust.

Call us into the work of love for one another. Help us to denounce racism, to call

out prejudice when we perceive it, and to work for justice. We are all Your

children. Help us to view one another as siblings, bound together in love. In the

name of Christ, in whom we all have the name children of the living God, we pray.

Amen.

Offering

It is natural in times of worry that we seek to conserve what we have. Yet this natural calling is to eliminate excesses in our life, not to harden our hearts. It is also natural in times of worry that we realize what is important and needs to be sustained. If you believe the church is one of those places that brings the community together, we invite you to give. Our physical doors may be closed, but our ministries grow in new ways each day.

This Sunday, is also a special offering Sunday: One Great Hour of Sharing is a multi-denominational collection to care for people in crisis and disasters.

Watch this video to learn more about OGHS: <https://youtu.be/P9GzDb12MW4>

Through the wonders of our breeze software program and the hard work of Alice Pletz-Miller, our treasurer, you can donate online. Go to:

<https://chxucc.breezechms.com/give/online>

Or you can mail in your offering. Please make a note if it is for our regular collection or One Great Hour of Sharing

Scripture - *printed at the end of the bulletin*

Psalm 23 —Listen again to the choral introit

John 9:1-41

Listen here: <https://youtu.be/XI2tRzIP30U>

Sermon “there are none so blind as those who will not see” by Pastor Greg Briggs

<https://youtu.be/aVhCt13WCHA>

Hymn of Reflection—Amazing Grace

<https://youtu.be/u4qbmPpfG6s>

Prayers

Lenten Prayer UCC Statement of Faith: <https://youtu.be/0et7Mgn7n1E>

Joys and Concerns

Via zoom, Sunday at 11:00 am

<https://zoom.us/j/8630372823>

Or call 312 626 6799 and enter Meeting ID: 863 037 2823

Pastoral Prayer—*read silently or pray aloud*

Holy One, Bridger of Distance, Connector of Beings, hear our prayer....

In the midst of non-stop news stories about illness and scarcity,
press conferences and cancellations...

grant us quiet in our minds.

In the midst of heightened anxiety about caregivers and caregiving, about health
and hygiene,

grant us calm in our hearts.

In the midst of opposing views:

close doors or stay open, reach out or hunker down...

grant us peace in our spirits.

In the midst of distance in our families, our faith communities, in all our
relationships with others...

grant us connection in our separation.

In the midst of our lives: our gratitude and concerns, our hopes and longings...

grant us an abiding sense of Your Comfort.

Amen.

Benediction

Remember, God has always loved you, loves you now, and will always love you, no
matter what.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd.
I lack nothing.
He lets me rest in grassy meadows;
he leads me to restful waters;
he keeps me alive.
He guides me in proper paths
for the sake of his good name.
Even when I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no danger because you are with me.
Your rod and your staff—
they protect me.
You set a table for me
right in front of my enemies.
You bathe my head in oil;
my cup is so full it spills over!
Yes, goodness and faithful love
will pursue me all the days of my life,
and I will live in the Lord's house
as long as I live.

John 9:1-41

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. Jesus' disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?"

Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God's mighty works might be displayed in him. While it's daytime, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After he said this, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on the man's eyes. Jesus said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means *sent*). So the man went away and washed. When he returned, he could see.

The man's neighbors and those who used to see him when he was a beggar said,

“Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?”

Some said, “It is,” and others said, “No, it’s someone who looks like him.”

But the man said, “Yes, it’s me!”

So they asked him, “How are you now able to see?”

He answered, “The man they call Jesus made mud, smeared it on my eyes, and said, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and then I could see.”

They asked, “Where is this man?”

He replied, “I don’t know.”

Then they led the man who had been born blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus made the mud and smeared it on the man’s eyes on a Sabbath day. So Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see.

The man told them, “He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and now I see.”

Some Pharisees said, “This man isn’t from God, because he breaks the Sabbath law.” Others said, “How can a sinner do miraculous signs like these?” So they were divided. Some of the Pharisees questioned the man who had been born blind again: “What do you have to say about him, since he healed your eyes?”

He replied, “He’s a prophet.”

The Jewish leaders didn’t believe the man had been blind and received his sight until they called for his parents. The Jewish leaders asked them, “Is this your son? Are you saying he was born blind? How can he now see?”

His parents answered, “We know he is our son. We know he was born blind. But we don’t know how he now sees, and we don’t know who healed his eyes. Ask him. He’s old enough to speak for himself.” His parents said this because they feared the Jewish authorities. This is because the Jewish authorities had already decided that whoever confessed Jesus to be the Christ would be expelled from the synagogue. That’s why his parents said, “He’s old enough. Ask him.”

Therefore, they called a second time for the man who had been born blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know this man is a sinner.”

The man answered, “I don’t know whether he’s a sinner. Here’s what I do know: I was blind and now I see.”

They questioned him: “What did he do to you? How did he heal your eyes?”

He replied, “I already told you, and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

They insulted him: “You are his disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses, but we don’t know where this man is from.”

The man answered, “This is incredible! You don’t know where he is from, yet he healed my eyes! We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners. God listens to anyone who is devout and does God’s will. No one has ever heard of a healing of the eyes of someone born blind. If this man wasn’t from God, he couldn’t do this.”

They responded, “You were born completely in sin! How is it that you dare to teach us?” Then they expelled him.

Jesus heard they had expelled the man born blind. Finding him, Jesus said, “Do you believe in the Human One?”

He answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.”

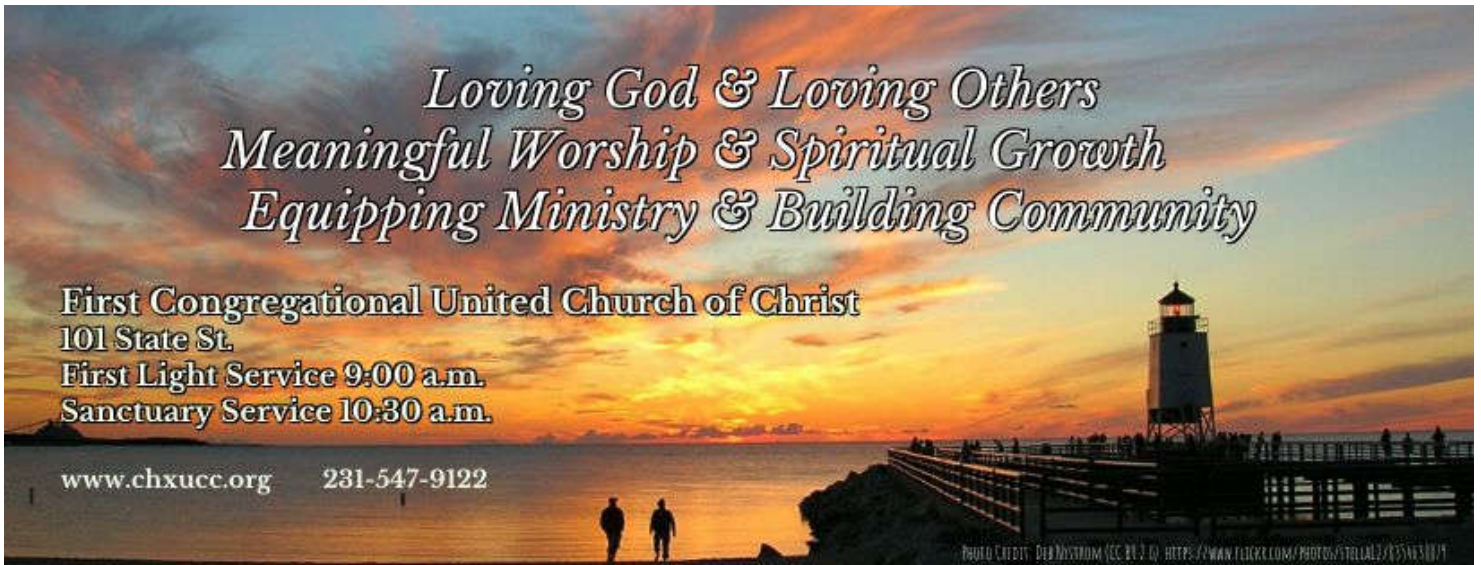
Jesus said, “You have seen him. In fact, he is the one speaking with you.”

The man said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshipped Jesus.

Jesus said, “I have come into the world to exercise judgment so that those who don’t see can see and those who see will become blind.”

Some Pharisees who were with him heard what he said and asked, “Surely we aren’t blind, are we?”

Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you wouldn’t have any sin, but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.



The First Congregational United Church of Christ in Charlevoix, Michigan is a community of believers who seek to serve God by providing opportunities for meaningful Christian worship and spiritual growth, loving God and others, equipping us for ministry in our local church, and our church's wider mission, building community through fellowship and love.

Stay connected with the church by using our webpage: chxucc.org and following us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firstcongregationalchurchofcharlevoix/>