



everything [in] between

acceptance & resistance



Good Friday
April 18, 2025

No matter who you are, or where you are on
life's journey, you are welcome here.



**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST** 

Welcome to the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, a progressive community of faith seeking to follow the teachings of Jesus, pursue justice and live God's love.

PRELUDE

Kol Nidrei Adagio

Max Bruch

GATHERING WORDS / FIRST READING Luke 23: 1-19, excerpts

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: As day turns to night, and all we see becomes shadowed,

All: We enter into this holy evening, in between resistance and acceptance.

One: This night, we are reminded of Christ's love, Christ's courage, Christ's sacrifice.

All: We are reminded of the depth of these things, and hope for a faith as deep.

One: Let us be present to the story, mindful of how we live, and open to God's presence as we worship.

OPENING SONG

Stay With Us, O Lord

Taize

Stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, night will soon fall.

Then stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, light in our darkness.

SECOND READING

Luke 23:20-27

Bruce Martell

²⁰ Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, ²¹ but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" ²² A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." ²³ But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

²⁶ As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷ A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.

FIRST STORY: Simon of Cyrene

Craig Patton

The first candle is extinguished.

INTERLUDE

Were You There?

African-American Spiritual 𐀀

Handchime Choir

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: When we follow in the steps of Jesus, we say yes to bearing a cross—
not because there is value in suffering,
not to prove our selflessness, nor because God
wills it, but because living as Jesus lived
makes the cross inevitable. So together, let us pray:

**All: Jesus, when we side with you,
we side with all who threaten the centers of power.**

One: When we refuse the call
to see others' struggles as our own,
we abandon our kin to shoulder their crosses alone.
So we pray, O God,

**All: Embolden us to accept the risks that come with following you—
even as we resist the powers and systems
that set crosses on our shoulders. Amen.**

The second candle is extinguished.

THIRD READING

Luke 23:28-31

²⁸ But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' ³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' ³¹ For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

SECOND STORY: The Woman and the Dry Wood

Deborah Tomblyn

The third candle is extinguished.

REQUIEM

Sanctus

Gabriel Faure*

FOURTH READING

Luke 23:32-43

Jill Saxby

³² Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." ⁴³ He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

THIRD STORY: The Criminal on the Cross

Rich Mead

The fourth candle is extinguished.

SUNG MEDITATION

Jesus, Remember Me

Taizé

Choir Solos and Congregation:

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kin-dom.

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kin-dom.

PREPARING FOR THE LAST READING

FINAL READING

Luke 23:44-48

It was now about noon, and darkness covered the whole earth until about three o'clock, while the sun stopped shining.

Fifth candle is extinguished.

Then the curtain in the sanctuary tore down the middle. Crying out in a loud voice, Jesus said: “Father, into your hands I entrust my life!” After he said this, he breathed out his last breath.

Sixth candle is extinguished.

All the crowds who had come together to see this event returned to their homes beating their chests after seeing what had happened.

All are invited to stomp your feet or pat your knees to invoke the people’s grief and the rumbling of the land.

Once the rumbling fades, we will remain in silence for a time.

REQUIEM

In Paradisum

Gabriel Faure*

CLOSING LITANY

REQUIEM

Kyrie

Gabriel Faure*

TOLLING OF THE BELL

A bell will toll 33 times, one for each year of Jesus’ life.

SILENT DEPARTURE

You are invited to remain and pray in silence and depart when you are ready. The benediction printed below is offered for your silent contemplation.

As we leave communal worship
to enter deeper into this liminal space between life, death, and life again,
go with the knowledge that the Triune God— who fashioned you with love,
whose Spirit breathes in and through you,
and who shares in our every sorrow and every joy— goes with you,
even in doubt, even in death, even to the end of the age.
Go in peace, and in silence, to wait with those who wait,
and mourn with those who mourn. Amen.

Those who are participating in the overnight Easter Vigil may move to the chapel as you feel ready to do so. Consider reflecting on the scriptures printed in this bulletin, as you keep watch.

WORSHIP NOTES

This evening's liturgy was adapted from content written by Avery Arden, A Sanctified Art LLC, sanctifiedart.org.

About the Author: Avery Arden (*they/ze*) is an autistic, genderqueer minister living near Atlanta, Georgia, with their wife and two cats. They graduated from Louisville Seminary with an MDiv in 2019 and now serve on the board of More Light Presbyterians. A firm believer that binaries are meant to be broken, Avery's work integrates their Catholic roots, Presbyterian branches, and love for all things liminal. Their ministry centers around trans and disability theologies, as well as practical efforts to lead faith communities ever closer to God's all-welcoming, universally-accessible Kin(g)dom. Check out their book, *The Kingdom in the Rubble* (2018) for poetry exploring these same themes.

For a full list of where you can find Avery's work visit linktr.ee/queerlychristian.

The second monologue was written by the Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton.

☞ **Royalty for Spirituals:** Historically, the composers of African American Spirituals were neither known nor compensated for use of their songs. The FCC UCC music department has committed to paying forward a 'royalty' each time we include a Spiritual in worship. We are now donating funds to the *Indigo Arts Alliance*. You are invited to contribute, as well. Donate by check or online, with "Royalty for Spirituals" in the memo. *Thank you.*

Members of the Meetinghouse Choir

Soprano

Sheryl Kieran
Deb Sandler
Jill Saxby
Betsy Westcott-Keiter

Tenor

Chris Keiter
Skyler Keiter-Massefski
Bruce Martel

Alto

Joyce Brown
Debra Honey
Judy Kimball
Gina Tapp

Bass

Kevin Cleary
Walter Kimball
Bruce Lockwood

Members of the Handchime Choir

Julie Brockhus
Gin Gedney
Peggy Murray

Sharon Potter
Kathy Sahrbeck

**Text and Translation for 3 movements from
Requiem in D minor, Op. 48 by Gabriel Faure**

<p>Sanctus</p> <p>Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth</p> <p>Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.</p>	<p>Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth</p> <p>Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.</p>
<p>In Paradisum</p> <p>In Paradisum deducant Angeli in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.</p> <p>Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat et cum Lazaro quondam paupere aeternam habeas requiem</p> <p>Aeternam habeas requiem.</p>	<p>May the angels receive them in Paradise, at thy coming may the martyrs receive thee and bring thee into the holy city Jerusalem.</p> <p>There may the chorus of angels receive thee, and with Lazarus, once a beggar, may thou have eternal rest.</p> <p>May thou have eternal rest</p>
<p>Introit/Kyrie</p> <p>Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis</p> <p>Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Exaudi orationem meam ad te omnis caro veniet</p> <p>Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison Kyrie eleison</p>	<p>Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them</p> <p>Thou, O God, art praised in Sion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Hear my prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.</p> <p>Lord have mercy Christ have mercy Lord have mercy</p>

EASTER WORSHIP

Easter Sunrise Service, 6 am Sunday, April 20: Gather at Fort Williams Park, on the hill by the flagpole, to welcome the rising Son.

Sunrise will happen at 5:50 am; gather at 5:45 am to see the first rays of light!

Easter Festival Worship, Sunday, April 20, 10 am in the sanctuary - Come make a joyful noise as we celebrate the resurrection! Easter Egg hunt to follow worship.

Earth Sunday Worship, April 27 - First Sunday after Easter, 10 am

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Interconnected: Exploring our Kinship with God's More-than-Human Creation - An

Earth Day Art Exhibit: To open in late April. Want to contribute? All are welcome!

Paintings and wall-hangings should be wired / ready to hang when submitted.

Submissions due by 12 noon, Monday, April 21.

Give to Leslie or deliver to the front office.

Contact Leslie Gatcombe-Hynes: lesliegatcombe@gmail.com

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