

Welcome, All Worshipers

**Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.**

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” ~William Shakespeare, Act 1 Hamlet

(*) indicates when those who are able will stand.

Prelude

CENTERING SONG – ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! GIVE THANKS TO THE RISEN LORD

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name.

(sing through twice)

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DOTTIE HAASE, LAY READER

***OPENING HYMN: #391 IN THE MIDST OF NEW DIMENSIONS** VERSES 1-4

***Call to Worship** A Prayer of Anselm (1079-1142)

Leader: God, we pray that we may so know you and love you that we may rejoice in you.

All: And if we may not do so fully in this life, let us go steadily on to the day when we come to that fullness... Let us receive that which you promised through your truth, that our joy may be full.

***Opening Prayer** Julian of Norwich (1342-1416) *Adapted*

Leader: The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything.

All: God is the ground, the substance, the teaching, the teacher, the purpose, and the reward for which every soul labors.

Leader: The greatest honor we can give God is to live gladly because of the knowledge of his love.

All: All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.

Leader: Our savior is our true Mother in whom we are endlessly born and out of whom we shall never come.

All: All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well. Amen.

***Easter Song of Praise** #236 -- Halleluja

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 15:1-12

ANTHEM

CHOIR

CHILDREN'S SERMON

***HYMN: #270 LIKE THE MURMUR OF THE DOVE'S SONG** ALL VERSES

SERMON: WHY DOES THIS SCRIPTURE BOTHER ME?

REV. ROBERT CASE

A Song of Anselm (1079-1142)

Minister: Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you: you are gentle with us
as a mother with her children;

All: Often you weep over our sins and our pride: tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgement.

Minister: You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds: in sickness you nurse us, and with pure milk you feed us.

All: Jesus, by your dying we are born to new life: by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.

Minister: Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness: through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

All: Your warmth gives life to the dead: your touch makes sinners righteous. Lord Jesus in your mercy heal us: in your love and tenderness remake us. In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS, PASTORAL PRAYER

***CLOSING HYMN: #388 HELP US ACCEPT EACH OTHER ALL VERSES**

***BENEDICTION**

All: Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who make the journey with us. So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind.

Minister: And the blessing God who made us, who loves us, and who travels with us, be with you now and forever. Amen.

***UNISON RESPONSE:** And God will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand. Amen. *Words and music by Michael Joncas. Copyright 1979 OCP. Permission to reprint/stream this music obtained from*

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Postlude

OUR APPRECIATION IS EXTENDED TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS MORNING'S WORSHIP MINISTRY

Lay Reader: **Dottie Haase**
Altar Guild: **Sandy Jarmuzewski**
Counter: **Tammy Veasy**
Fellowship: **Bill & Dottie Haase, Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski, Sid Hausding**

Live Stream Operators: **Jay Kettler**
and **Lynn Borke**
Ushers: **Lynn Stewart** and **Pat Labadie**

This Week's Calendar

Sunday	April 24	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service
Tuesday	April 26	5:30 p.m.	Choir Practice

Announcements:

- ❖ Many thanks to all who so graciously gave of your time and talents to help make our Holy Week journey meaningful and Easter celebrations joyous!
- ❖ *Feed A Family program listing for Salvation Army food pantry needs:*
Hamburger and hotdog buns, Sloppy Joe mix, Hamburger/Tuna/Chicken Helper packs, Pasta & Sides and Rice & Sides, individual packages of peanut butter & crackers, cheese & crackers, cookies or pretzels, or Doritos. (Dollar Tree sells these in packages of 6. They are great for families with children!) Thanks for supporting our Feed A Family program! -- Missions Committee

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A unisex handicap-accessible restroom is located through the doors to your left as you exit the sanctuary.  
A ladies' room is near the Lockwood Street entrance. A men's room is in the middle hallway.  
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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

April 24, 2022

*We welcome people as they are,
share Jesus as He is, and serve
our community and the world in love.*



Transitional Ministers: *Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case (Pastor Emeritus)*
and *Reverend Eugene Bacon*

Organist & Choir Director: *Kat Tomaszewski*

Office Administrator: *Judy Suszek*

Treasurer: *Denise Fusina*

Custodian: *Mike LaMarre*

Office hours: 9:00am – 1:00pm, Monday – Thursday

Phone: (989) 356-1795

Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com

Web page: www.uccalpena.org

201 South Second Avenue • Alpena, Michigan 49707

In the Midst of New Dimensions

391

Julian Rush, 1985; alt.

1. In the midst of new di-men-sions,
in the face of chang-ing ways,
Who will lead the pil-grim peo-ples
wan-dering in their sep-arate ways?

Refrain:

God of rain-bow, fier-y pil-lar,
lead-ing where the ea-gles soar,
We your peo-ple, ours the jour-ney
now and ev-er, now and ev-er, now and ev-er-more.

2. Through the flood of starv-ing peo-ple,
war-ring fac-tions and de-spair,
Who will lift the ol-ive branch-es?
Who will light the flame of care?

Refrain:

3. As we stand a world di-vid-ed
by our own self-seek-ing schemes,
Grant that we, your glob-al vil-lage,
might en-vi-sion wid-er dreams.

Refrain:

4. We are man and we are wom-an,
all per-sua-sions, old and young,
Each a gift in your cre-a-tion,
each a love song to be sung.

Refrain:

Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song

Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1982

1. Like the mur-mur of the dove's song,
like the chal-lenge of her flight,
like the vig-or of the wind's rush,
like the new flame's ea-ger might:
Come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come.
2. To the mem-bers of Christ's bod-y,
to the branch-es of the Vine,
to the church in faith as-sem-bled,
to our midst as gift and sign:
Come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come.
3. With the heal-ing of di-vi-sion,
with the cease-less voice of prayer,
with the power to love and wit-ness,
with the peace be-yond com-pare:
Come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come.

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Isa. 38:14; Rom. 8:26; 12:4–5; John 15:1–5

Help Us Accept Each Other

Fred Kaan, 1974; alt.

1. Help us ac-cept each oth-er as Christ ac-cept-ed us;
teach us as sis-ter, broth-er, each per-son to em-brace.
Be pres-ent, God, a-mong us, and bring us to be-lieve
we are our-selves ac-cept-ed and meant to love and live.
2. Teach us, O God, your les-sons, as in our dai-ly life
we strug-gle to be hu-man and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for peo-ple, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them, or as they may be-come.
3. Let your ac-cep-tance change us, so that we may be moved
in liv-ing sit-u-a-tions to do the truth in love;
To prac-tice your ac-cep-tance, un-til we know by heart
the ta-ble of for-give-ness and laugh-ter's heal-ing art.
4. God, for to-day's en-coun-ters with all who are in need,
who hun-ger for ac-cep-tance, for righ-teous-ness and bread,
Bring us new eyes for see-ing, new hands for hold-ing on;
re-new us with your Spir-it; God! Free us, make us one!

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John 15:12; 17:20–23; Eph. 4:1–6, 11–16

Scripture Reading

John 15:1-12

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. ¹²"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Congregational Conversations. *Avery Aten, Chair, Welcoming Committee*

The Welcoming Committee invites one and all to attend small group discussions. We'll sit around a table in Fellowship Hall and share thoughts and experiences on topics such as:

- What do we mean when we say "whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here"? Do you think some people fear rejection due to age, poverty, substance abuse, race, ethnicity, LGBTQ identity, and won't come "through our doors" to find out that we are truly welcoming?
- How can we let people who are not attending our church know they are welcome here?
- Does anyone here have family or friends who are LGBTQ?
- What does "Open & Affirming" mean to you? Do you have anxiety or concerns about our church changing if we become Open & Affirming?
- What is your understanding of our church's role in the community?
- How do you envision our church 5 years from now?

These will be open discussions, just the sharing of thoughts, with about 8-10 participants per session. Our first two sessions (more to be scheduled later) will be held in May:

- After Fellowship Hour on Sunday, May 15 (a light lunch will be served).
- On Friday May 20 at 7 pm (a light supper will be served).

A sign-up list to attend one of these sessions is located on the table in the Narthex, or call the church office at 989-356-1795. With questions or for more information, please contact a member of the Welcoming Committee: Avery & Marcia Aten, Terry Bell, Bill Dempsey, Bill & Dottie Haase, Boris & Edith Gerber, Jay & Marilyn Kettler, Beth Petty. To help us schedule future sessions, please let us know if other meeting dates or times are preferable, we'll schedule additional sessions to accommodate everyone. Please come, we want and need to hear the thoughts of all our members and friends.