

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Fourth Sunday of Easter
April 25, 2021

***Please rise in body or in spirit.*

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND GREETING

Rev. Dr. David Dethmers

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

PRELUDE

St. Agnes, arr Fred Bock

Martha Jones

Note: this is a fairly straightforward arrangement of the hymn tune to be used for today's last hymn.

CALL TO WORSHIP - Based on Psalm 51:1-10 (*The Message*)

Andrea Bartlett

Generous in love—God, give grace! Huge in mercy—wipe out my bad record.

Scrub away my guilt, soak out my sins in your laundry.

I know how bad I've been; my sins are staring me down.

You're the One I've violated, and you've seen it all, seen the full extent of my evil.

You have all the facts before you; whatever you decide about me is fair.

I've been out of step with you for a long time, in the wrong since the very beginning.

What you're after is truth from the inside out. Enter me, then; conceive a new, true life.

Soak me in your laundry and I'll come out clean, cleanse me and I'll have a snow-white life.

Tune me in to foot-tapping songs, O God; set these once-broken bones to dancing.

Don't look too close for blemishes, give me a clean bill of health.

God, make a fresh start in me, shape a new beginning from the chaos of my life.

Into your hands, O God, I commit my life. Use me, please, for good.

HYMN TNCH #547

Amazing Grace

Lexi Taddeo

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see.

'twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;

How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares we have already come

'Tis grace has brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home,

My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures;

God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 1:15-19a

Andrea

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

**SUNG RESPONSE

Open Our Hearts

**Open our hearts, open our minds
open our lives to you, O loving God.**

****SCRIPTURE:**

Revelation 2:1a, 2-5

David

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

SERMON SERIES: *The Once and Future Church*
Today's Message: The Reality of a Dying US Church

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Change My Heart, O God

Lexi

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, may these gifts be not only a down payment in our future, but an investment in your reign, we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER

David

HYMN

God, Grant that We May Be Transformed
Tune: *St. Agnes*

Lexi

God grant that we may be transformed, united all in one.
A new community of love, by whom your will be done.

Release us from the power of pride, from selfishness us free.
Bring us to that new life in Christ, of sharing willingly.

We'll sing together from our hearts, with joy made clear to all.
We trust that as we walk with you, you'll lift us when we fall.

This wisdom, hidden from the rich, is good news to the poor;
God counts our wealth by how we share, not by how much we store.

Transform us all dear God we pray, and make your church be one,
A sharing, loving fellowship, by whom your work is done.

****BENEDICTION**

David

POSTLUDE

Lord, I Know I Been Changed, arr. Larry Shackley

Martha

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
song leader
musician

Rev. Dr. David Dethmers
Andrea Bartlett
Lexi Taddeo
Martha Jones

Acknowledgements

Unless otherwise noted, music streamed with permission, OneLicense A-709231.

- ◇ *St. Agnes (Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee)*, John B. Dykes, 1866, arr by Fred Bock © 1973, Fred Bock Music Company.
- ◇ *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*, NCH 547. Tune: Amazing Grace, Columbia Harmony, 1829, arr Edwin O. Excell, 1900. Text: John Newton, 1799, alt.
- ◇ *Change My Heart, O God*. Words and music vs 1: Eddie Espinosa © 1982, Daybreak, represented by Hal Leonard. Vs 2 & 3 © 2009, Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ.
- ◇ *God Grant That We May Be Transformed*. Tune: St. Agnes, John B. Dykes, 1866. Words Zimbabwe traditional, adapted by Tom Colvin © 1997 by Hope Publishing Co.
- ◇ *Lord, I Know I Been Changed*. Traditional American Spiritual arranged by Larry Shackley © 2010, Lorenz Publishing Co., a division of the Lorenz Corporation.

This Week at FCUCC **April 25 – May 2, 2021**

Sunday 25	10:00	Worship	sanctuary
	11:05	Sermon Discussion	sanctuary
Friday 23	10:00	Coffee Hour	zoom
Sunday 2	10:00	Worship w/ Communion	sanctuary
	11:05	Sermon Discussion	sanctuary

“Corona Time” Church office hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 to 3:00

FCUCC Staff

intentional interim minister	david@uccgj.org	Rev. Dr. David Dethmers
choir & bell director	topcatkc@aol.com	Karen Caton**
organist/pianist	marthajjones7960@gmail.com	Martha Jones
office administrator	office@uccgj.org	Beth Rakestraw
volunteer treasurer/finance	finance@uccgj.org	Martha Jones

** On leave of absence until choirs can gather in person again.

Announcements

Contact: Beth Rakestraw, Office Administrator, office@uccgj.org

April “Food” Item for Catholic Outreach | More Canned Goods! Yes, we did collect canned fruits and veggies for Outreach a few months back — and guess what? People have (joyfully and gratefully) eaten them! So ... time to do it again.

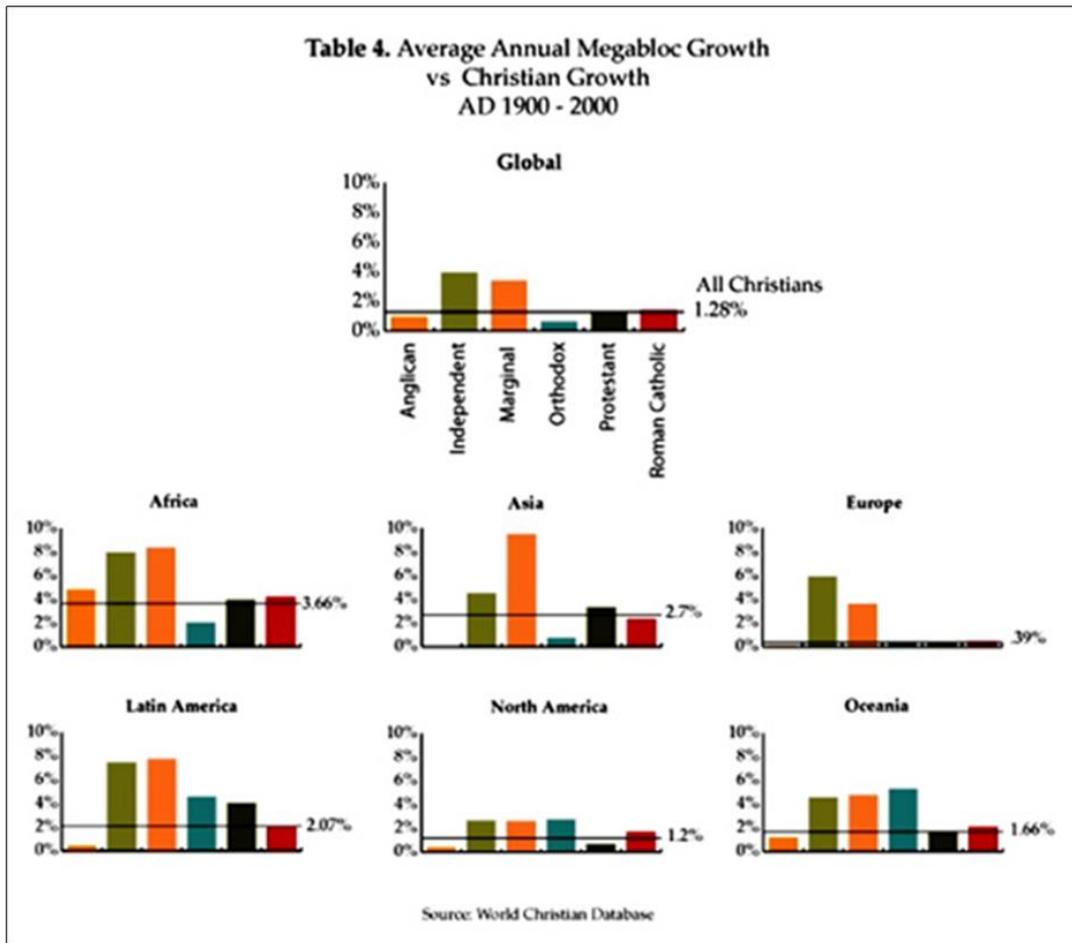
Second Quarter Mission & Outreach Project | Homeward Bound | Our second quarter project will be helping to support the work done by Homeward Bound. In April we will be collecting face masks (cloth or disposable) and earplugs. Please consider helping us with this worthwhile project.

Adult Spiritual Formation Opportunity | Christianity after Religion: The Once and Future Church | **Sundays, April 18 through May 16** | Discussion group to follow worship TODAY in the sanctuary. The discussion will be taped and available for those who worship at home.

Project 1.27 Info Night | Tuesday May 11 | Join us for a Project 1.27 Info Night for Christians interested in pursuing foster care and adoption of kids in the Colorado Foster Care System. First Baptist Church, 720 Grand Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81501. Learn more and register online at project127.org/infonight.

Art Center Art & Frame Sale | Friday, April 30, noon to 4 pm | Saturday, May 1, 9 am to 3 pm | For decades, a local artist named Jac Kephart (who is now internationally-known) ran a florist-shop here in GJ. He had a special relationship with our church, and supplied us with Sunday flowers at a big discount. He also donated a set of original drawings of long-ago church leaders that hung for quite awhile on the walls of our Fellowship Hall. Jac died about a year ago, and in his honor, his widow has made a large contribution to the Art Center to construct a new gallery named after Jac. Her gift is a matching contribution, so the Center needs to raise an equal amount of money for creating the gallery, including some basic sub-system issues (like adding a fire-sprinkler system). To help raise the money, the end of this month (see dates and times above), the Center is having a sale of art of all kinds (including jewelry, paintings, pottery, baked goods, and more) and frames of all sizes. You can pick up some fabulous bargains, and help support this community effort at the same time!

This graphic has been included for your reference during the discussion time after service.



Pastoral Care

The best way to contact Pastor David at any time is on his cell phone: 520-528-0855, with either a call or a text. Or you can leave a message at church: 970-242-0298, x104. To share a prayer request with the congregation, contact Beth Rakestraw, office@uccgj.org or 970-242-0298 x 105.

- ◇ Donna Hochmuth asks for your continued prayers as she recovers from a fall.
- ◇ Linda Randolph's sister Lil Blackmon has had a successful second surgery and is recovering and resting well at home. She and Linda say "thank you" for all of your prayers.
- ◇ Continue to pray for Rick Smith (former church custodian) and his family.
- ◇ Continue to pray for David Hays (Sharyl & Bob Peterson's nephew) and his family as they respond to his health situation.