

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ST. CLAIR



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

## **The Potter and the Clay**

**Jeremiah 18:1-6**



**“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
you’re welcome here.”**

**300 Adams Street, St. Clair, MI 48079  
810-329-4142 [www.firstconggsc.org](http://www.firstconggsc.org)**

**WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD – Sept 4, 2022**  
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

† Those who are able, may stand.

**ALTAR FLOWERS**

Today's altar flowers are in celebration of the first wedding anniversary of Jordan and Amanda Kellogg donated by Beverly Stewart, Jordan's grandmother.

**CHIMES**

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

**PRELUDE**

Change My Heart O God

**WELCOME**

Rev. Alana Kelley

Welcome to First Congregational Church of Saint Clair, United Church of Christ, where no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you're welcome here. Many thanks to all who are here for this worship service. Greetings to those of you with us on the Facebook Livestream. And a big thank you to all who are helping with this morning's worship service.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Announcements are in the back of this bulletin.)

**GATHERING**

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus  
W&R vs 1, 2, 3, 4

**CALLING ON GOD AND OPENING PRAYER**

Marge Guinther

One: Like clay, we arrive at this time of worship:

**Many: Shapeless and full of potential, we arrive.**

One: Like clay, we prepare for this time of worship:

**Many: Stretched and twisted into formation, we prepare.**

One: Like clay, we enter this time of worship:

**Many: Formed and ready for warmth, we enter.**

One: Let us pray.

**Many: Loving Creator, maker of everything good, we are in**

**your hands. Be with us now as we gather ourselves to seek your wisdom and strive to become the people you would have us be.**

One: Unlike clay, we actively resist the diverse ways you shape us into what the world needs.

**Many: We frequently struggle to trust in your vision for who we could become. We anxiously avoid facing the heat that protects and sustains us. We humbly confess to these and all our shortcomings.**

*(observe a brief moment of silence)*

One: God graciously chooses us despite our self-destructive ways. God repeatedly mends our broken places and unceasingly delivers us from harm toward wholeness. Praise God that we are loved and forgiven!

## **RESPONSE**

Spirit of the Living God  
NCH 283

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh of me;  
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh of me.  
Melt me. Mold me. Fill me. Use me.  
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh of me.

## **JOYS, CONCERNS, AND THE INVITATION TO PRAY**

We will take a moment to share your joys and concerns and then move into silent prayer. Your prayer requests will be lifted up during the Pastoral Prayer. After each petition, the response will be “Ever listening God” **“Hear our prayer.”**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

## **THE CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

Children in church will be invited to come forward to sit on the step so Pastor Alana can share a story or a short message with them. Afterward, we'll sing Children of God.

Children of God, let's love one another.  
Love is a gift, a blessing of God.  
Love one another, sisters and brothers.  
Love is a gift of God.

Let love be more than what we say.  
Make it the way that we live each day.

Oh, oh, Children of God, let's love one another.  
Love is a gift, a blessing of God.  
Love one another, sisters and brothers.  
Love is a gift of God.  
Love is a gift of God.  
Love is a gift of God.

## **WE PRAISE GOD BY SHARING OUR GIFTS**

Offering Invitation: The cost of discipleship is bold and radical. It requires a countercultural giving of possessions and self. Let us risk the safety of ordinary and choose to build with God by sharing our tithes, offerings, and our very selves.

## **OFFERTORY**

My Lord What a Morning

## **†OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

Grateful  
SPP 143

Grateful - for the life you give us, thankful- for your Holy One,  
Joyful in your Spirit flowing-over all, O God of Love.  
Grateful - for the Bread of Heaven, thankful for your Holy Word.  
Joyful in your mercy flowing, we will praise you.

## †UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy Giver of all Gifts, we thank you for this opportunity to share and participate in the ministries you've placed before this faith community. Bless all that we bring and each one of us as we go back out to continue your work in the world. **Amen.**

## HYMN OF PREPARATION

Help Us to Accept Each Other  
NCH 388 vs 1, 2, 3

## THE FIRST READING

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Marge Guinther

## MUSICAL MEDITATION

## THE SECOND READING

Luke 14:25-33

Rev. Alana Kelley

**COMMUNION MEDITATION** "Flexibility, My Dears" Rev Alana Kelley

## THE CALL TO COMMUNION

Invitation  
Sharing the Story  
Blessing the Elements  
The Call to Supper  
Communion Hymn    You Satisfy the Hungry Heart  
Prayer of Thanksgiving after The Meal

**We thank you, Jesus, for giving us this meal so that we can remember and thank you for your many gifts. Amen.**

## THE COMMISSIONING

Before we were born, we were wonderfully and fearfully formed. Like clay, may God continue to reform and reshape us into our truest self, now and every day after. **Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

Called as Partners in Christ's Service  
NCH 81 vs 1 ,2, 4

## BENEDICTION

May God bless you and keep you well. God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. God asks us to accept the joys and the costs of discipleship, therefore go out into the world and carry with you the Peace of Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the Encouragement of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## POSTLUDE

This Little Light of Mine

## ALTAR FLOWERS

Today's altar flowers are in celebration of the first wedding anniversary of Jordan and Amanda Kellogg donated by Beverly Stewart, Jordan's grandmother.



**Like Clay: Service Prayers for the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost** were written by **The Rev. Phiwa Langeni**, the Ambassador for Innovation & Engagement for the UCC's **CARDD** and the Founder of **Salus Center** in Lansing, MI.



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**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS...**

Randy Kling, Dennis Wegner, Nancy Rice, Mary Ann Martin, Jan Yager, Rachel O'Connor, Gary Westbrook, Marge Guinther, Barb Jeffries, Genie Lucyk, Ann Whittaker, Matthew Pennewell, Lisa Latuperissa, Tommy Galvin, Brian Paret, Jr, Holly Weatherford (Breanna Paret's wife), everyone fighting the virus and the families of those who have lost that fight. Also, remember Edwin Summers, Cameron Coverly (Army), Nathan Distelrath, all who are serving in the military, first responders, medical personnel, and our elected officials.

**TODAY'S WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

SUNDAY STEWARD: Don O'Connor

SOUND & LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, David Kelley

MUSIC: Denise Gregg, Anna Moore

USHERS: Cal Eschenburg, Paul Lydy

THIS WEEK'S READER: Marge Guinther

POWER POINT: Sam Tricomo

**NEXT WEEK'S WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

SUNDAY STEWARD: Don O'Connor

SOUND AND LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, Kathy Cilluffo

MUSIC: Denise Gregg, Anna Moore,

USHERS: Jim Light, Doug Johnson

NEXT WEEK'S READER: Nancy Rice

POWER POINT: Pat O'Connor

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**OPEN AND AFFIRMING INCLUSIVE CHURCH COVENANT**

The members of the First Congregational Church of St. Clair, United Church of Christ, declare that we are a fully inclusive, Open and Affirming Congregation. We affirm the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and believe that all people are children of God. As such, we welcome to the community of faith all people of diverse race, physical and mental abilities, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, and socio-economic status. We covenant to provide to all a safe, loving, nurturing and compassionate community.

## **~CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS~**

### **VOLUNTEERS PLEASE**

Barb Jeffries is looking for volunteers she can call for occasional rides to meet with friends or run errands. She uses a light motorized chair and she's offering the use of her car for these dates. You must be able to lift 40 pounds. Kathy Cilluffo would help you learn best practices for getting Barb and her chair in and out of Barb's car. Call Barb Jeffries if you are willing and able to assist her.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday school begins Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, join Sunday school for crafts, bible, fun and Children's Moment during worship.

### **PASTOR'S EMERGENCY FUND**

Donations would be welcome at this time so we can continue to provide, on short notice, for those in need. Those needing assistance are screened and funds are sent to a landlord, a doctor, a utility; they are only given directly to the person making the request in certain circumstances, and seldom given that way. Our Communion Offerings are usually placed in this account.

### **SECOND SUNDAYS BACKYARD WORSHIP**

The last outdoor worship is scheduled for September 11.  
(If it's rainy or threatening rain, we'll be inside.)

### **PET BLESSING**

Our Pet Blessing is coming up on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **TAP OFFICE HOURS**

FRIDAYS 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. join Pastor Alana for coffee and conversation at TAP Cafe.

### **AN ART AND CRAFT SHOW IN THE CHURCH!**

We've talked about it and our plan now is to set up and exhibit of our works on September 8<sup>th</sup> keeping it up through mid-October. If you have works of art or crafts that you'd like to share, we invite you to bring them to the church. We'll provide a form for you to fill out including



information about your work. Work can be recent or can be from long ago! We'll need some assistance setting the exhibit up. If you'd like to help with this, please let Pastor Alana or Wendy know. If you have easels you can spare, we plan to exhibit heavier flat works on easels. 3D works will go in the glass case. If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Alana.

### **ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?**

If you're wondering about becoming a church member, please speak with Pastor Alana to set up a time to chat. She'll answer all your questions about the United Church of Christ and this church specifically.

### **LITTLE FOOD PANTRY**

This small pantry is a community outreach program sponsored by The Mission Team of this church. It is stocked twice-weekly with non-perishable food. Donation requests may change but the need to feed does not.

September is here.  
School is back.  
Filling meals to make.  
And lunches to pack.

School lunch box fillers – single-serve fruit cups, chips, pudding, etc.

BIG needs for the LITTLE pantry – (1) canned green beans and corn (2) canned chicken or tuna (3) cereal (4) peanut butter (5) spaghetti sauce.

Please leave food donations in the elevator room by shelves marked LITTLE RED FOOD PANTRY.

Any Question? Please call Nancy Kennedy at (810) – 329-3790.

### **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY**

September is our month to work the Ecumenical Food Pantry. There are still some dates that need to be covered. If you've never worked

this food pantry, it's good work and important. The shifts are 3 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary or call the office and Wendy can help you find a date that works for you.

### **COLLECTION**

We will be collecting non-perishable food items or monetary donations for the food pantry during the months of **July and August**. You can bring your food donations to church and place them in the elevator room on the designated shelf labeled food pantry and place monetary donations in the metal box outside of the office.

Mary Brown said the following items are needed:

Mustard  
Ketchup  
Hamburger Helper  
Boxed Potatoes  
Cereal  
Tuna  
Laundry Detergent  
Kleenex  
Paper Towels

If there are additional items that are needed, we will update the list. If you have questions, please contact either Barb Fandrlick or Kathy Cilluffo.

### **ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY - One of our church's missions Needed: Donations and Workers!**

How the Ecumenical Food Pantry Operates: The Ecumenical Food Pantry is supported by nine local churches and serves clients in the city of St. Clair and the townships of St. Clair, China and East China. The pantry is located in the Eddy Building. Here's how it works:

- Around 3:45 pm, team leader(s) arrive at the pantry with a list showing how many clients we will be serving that evening.
- At 4:00 pm, our church's volunteers arrive.
- Between 4-5 pm we pack bags with a week's worth of food for

each family on the list; the amount packed depends on the size of the family.

- At 5:00 PM, the first family will arrive to pick up their food and may receive soap, toilet paper, etc. if they need it. (Clients call ahead and are assigned a time to arrive at the pantry, beginning at 5:00 PM and scheduled every 10 minutes until 7:00 PM) We may finish early depending on the number of clients.

Workers: September is our month to staff the Ecumenical Food Pantry. We expect to need workers for Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 4:00-7:00 PM. There will be a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of the church. If you have not worked the Pantry before, please consider it-an experienced worker will always be working with you, so lack of experience shouldn't hamper your desire to volunteer. There will also be a space to sign if you would be available as a last-minute substitute. If you have any questions, please call me, Kathy Cilluffo at 810-289-8032 email: [kcilluffo57@yahoo.com](mailto:kcilluffo57@yahoo.com) or Barb Fandrlick at 810-919-3873 email: [barbfandrlick@gmail.com](mailto:barbfandrlick@gmail.com). The maximum number of workers needed each evening is 4.

Donations: Bring non-perishable items to our church in the elevator room, the first set of metal shelves marked for the pantry opposite entry door. You may also donate cash or check to the church, marked for the Ecumenical Food Pantry.

**Greatest Need:**

Canned meats (beef, tuna, chicken)  
Canned Beef Stew and Roast Beef/Corned Beef Hash  
Chili (with meat, vegetarian, or no beans)  
Canned fruit & applesauce

**Other items that are always in short supply:**

Canned Pasta (ravioli, spaghetti, Spaghetti-O's, etc)  
Spaghetti noodles  
Spaghetti sauce  
Meal Helper Kits  
Packaged dry potato and rice dishes  
Canned or bottled juices

Canned vegetables  
Canned tomatoes  
Cereals  
Pancake mix & Syrup  
Powdered Milk

### **ALTAR FLOWERS**

There are several Sundays available if you wish to donate altar flowers. If you wish to donate altar flowers, please contact Bev Stewart at (810) 329-2147 or (810) 300-2664.

## HYMN LYRICS

### GATHERING

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus  
W&R 344 vs 1, 2, 4

I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus,  
I have decided to follow Jesus,  
no turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me  
The world behind me, the cross before me,  
The world behind me, the cross before me.  
no turning back, no turning back.

Will you decide now to follow Jesus?  
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?  
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?  
no turning back, no turning back.  
(I have decided to follow him)

### HYMN OF PREPARATION

Help Us to Accept Each Other  
NCH 388 vs 1, 2, 3

Help us accept each other  
as Christ accepted us;  
teach us as sister, brother,  
each person to embrace.  
Be present, God, among us,  
and bring us to believe  
we are ourselves accepted  
and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O God, your lessons,  
as in our daily life  
we struggle to be human

and search for hope and faith.  
Teach us to care for people,  
for all, not just for some,  
to love them as we find them,  
or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us,  
so that we may be moved  
in living situations  
to do the truth in love;  
To practice your acceptance,  
until we know by heart  
the table of forgiveness  
and laughter's healing art.

## **CLOSING HYMN**

Called as Partners in Christ's Service  
NCH 495 vs 1, 2

Called as partners in Christ's service,  
called to ministries of grace,  
We respond with deep commitment  
fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing,  
side by side and friend with friend,  
Equal partners in our caring  
to fulfill God's chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring,  
Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
Let us follow, never faltering,  
reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer,  
all God's people, young and old,

Blending human skills together  
gracious gifts from God unfold.