

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF ST. CLAIR**



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

**300 Adams Street, St. Clair, MI 48079
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**www.firstconggsc.org
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WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

May 18, 2025

Fifth Sunday of Easter

† Those who are able, please stand.

CHIMES

Where Charity And Love Prevail

† **GATHERING SONG**

My Redeemer Lives

WELCOME

Leader: Welcome to First Congregational Church of Saint Clair, United Church of Christ where, **People: no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you're welcome and loved here.**

† **OPENING PRAYER**

Dave Scheel

Leader: Gracious and loving God, You call us to love that is more than charitable. You call us to love that takes on our flesh and our vulnerabilities. We gather here to practice the solidarity of love that rises up from the valleys. Through you, this love forms us and calls us to follow the actions of Jesus.

People: We come together to become love's liberation, building collective power to resist injustice. We pray to be more than tolerant, more than accepting or even affirming. We ask that love guides us to new visions of flourishing. Today, we join together to embody love's accountability by laying down our defenses to grow beyond the edges of our knowing. Help us to pray and praise until love's kingdom fully comes. Amen.

† **HYMN**

O Savior, Let Me Walk With You
NC503 Verses 1,2,3,4

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION - ASSURANCE OF GRACE

People: Love beyond all knowing, we recognize how deeply limited our understanding of love is and how often we fail to recognize Love's true practice and meaning. In the silence of our hearts, let us

call to awareness the misunderstandings of love that have shaped us as individuals.

[moment for silent reflection]

Leader: For the ways we have wounded your Love,

People: O God, forgive us.

Leader: For the ways we have wounded your Love,

People: O God, forgive us.

Pastor: Let your spirit receive this assurance: in all these things we are forgiven through the One who loved us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Amen.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

God of love, we ask that you continue to open our hearts and minds today to love. The love that you give us so freely and unconditionally, that it becomes the love we give to each and every person in our midst. Use your perfect words in the scriptures to bless us so that we may bless others. It is in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

FIRST READING

Psalm 148
Dave Scheel

MUSICAL MEDITATION

Here, O My Lord, I See Your Face To Face

FCC ROCK TIME

Young And Young At Heart Message - Deana Currie

SECOND READING

John 13:31-35
Pastor Kim Newport

SERMON

“The Inclusivity of Love”

Pastor Kim Newport

† HYMN

Amazing Grace
NC547 Verses 1,2,3

JOYS, CONCERNS, AND INVITATION TO PRAY

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.

OFFERTORY

Please place your offering in the box at the back table at your convenience upon entering or leaving. Or use the QR code on the pew by the envelopes.

PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR TITHES & OFFERINGS

Let Love be our offering. Let Love be our giving. Let Love be our dedication. Let Love be our calling. Let Love be our thanksgiving. Let Love be our prayer. Amen.

†HYMN

*They'll Know We Are Christians
WR595 Verses 1,2,4*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Announcements are in the back of this bulletin.)

†BENEDICTION

People of Love, as you go from this place, let love be what blesses you, love that is not nice or polite, but knows how to sing in the midst of despair how to rise up in the midst of death and how to hold fast in the midst of chaos.

Let love be the blessing we share. Love that is not tolerant or charitable but knows how to care when all seems hopeless. How to listen when others are silenced and how to come alongside when no one else will.

People of Love, let love be your blessing, this day and every day. May it be so.



One License #A720797

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS...

Aimee H, Baby Paul, Jackie K, Joe M, David M,
Carol C, Susan C, Bryce D, Eric F, Matthew P, Ann W.
Also, remember to pray for all who are serving in the military, first responders, medical personnel, and our elected officials.

5/18/25 – WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SUNDAY STEWARD: Don O'Connor

SOUND AND LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, Mary Paquette

MUSIC: Denise Gregg

USHERS: Don O'Connor, Pat O'Connor

READER: Dave Scheel

POWER POINT: Kathy Cilluffo

COFFEE HOUR: Kathy & Dennis Wegner

5/25/25 – WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SUNDAY STEWARD: Don O'Connor

SOUND AND LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, Kathy Cilluffo

MUSIC: Denise Gregg

USHERS: Karl Heilman & Ken Van Nortwick

READER: Nancy Rice

POWER POINT: Jody Skonieczny

COFFEE HOUR: Don & Nancy Rice

READER 6/1/25 – Jacie Sanders

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~

CURIOUS ABOUT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

Please let Pastor Julia know(pastorjuliad@gmail.com) and she will set up a time to chat. Your questions about the United Church of Christ and this church specifically will be answered.

BIBLE STUDY – NO BIBLE STUDY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Join us for a unique Bible study experience with The Chosen! Each week, we'll watch an episode from the series, followed by scripture and group discussion.

This is more than a show, it's a journey of faith, reflection, and community. Whether you're part of our church, another congregation, or just curious, you're welcome here.

Bring your heart, your questions, and your hopes. Let's grow together as we explore the life of Christ in a deeper, more personal way.

6:00- PJ's Popcorn & Fellowship (Feel free to bring a snack to share!)

6:30- Episode Begins

7:30- Bible Study and Discussion

CHOIR

Choir practice Thursdays, at 7:30 p.m.

TAIZ'E

Taiz'e will return in October.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school will be held the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month unless otherwise noted. May Sunday school dates will be 5/11 & 5/18. Sunday school will conclude for the summer on 5/18.

MISSIONS

The Mission Team is requesting volunteers to staff the Ecumenical Food Pantry Tuesdays and Thursdays in June from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. There is a sign up sheet located on the back table in the sanctuary.

The Mission Team at First Congregational Church UCC of St. Clair is thrilled to bring back "Deserving Treats For Our Essential Workers"!

Throughout June, July, and August, we'll be delivering special treats and heartfelt thanks to essential workers across St. Clair County.

Want to help spread the love and gratitude? A sign-up sheet is available just off the sanctuary, or feel free to reach out to Pat O'Connor to get involved.

Let's show our appreciation for those who give so much to our community!

HEALTH CARE MINISTRIES

The Healthcare Ministry Team will resume blood pressure checks during coffee hour following worship on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

THE LITTLE RED 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.

Celebrate MAY
In more than one way.
Cinco de Mayo, Moms,
Then Memorial Day.

Celebrate each holiday
With family and food.
When you include the pantry
You lift a mood.

MAY pantry food requests:

Canned Green Beans
Canned Chicken
Canned Pasta
(with or without meat)
Peanut Butter
Spaghetti/Spaghetti Sauce
(canned)

MAY pantry extras:

Mother's Day
Desserts
(cake mix/frosting, cookies, etc.)

Memorial Day Gatherings:

Picnic Food
(chips, condiments, boxed pasta salad)

Please leave food donations in the elevator room on one of the shelves labeled LITTLE RED FOOD PANTRY. And please check the expiration date on each food item before leaving it for the pantry.

For questions, please contact Nancy Kennedy (810)329-3790.

COFFEE HOUR

There are several Sundays available to host coffee hour. Please be sure to check out the sign-up sheet on the back table of the sanctuary.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Do you have something you would like shared to our social media platforms? For any news, events, or stories you'd like to share with our community, please reach out to our Social Media Minister Karl Heilman in person, message our Facebook page or email him at kheilman84@yahoo.com. Let's continue to spread God's love together! Feel free to like, share, and engage with our content as we strive to connect and uplift one another through the power of social media. Check out our Facebook page at [@First Congregational Church UCC of St. Clair](https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchUCCofStClair) and our Instagram page at [@firstcong.churchofstclair](https://www.instagram.com/firstcong.churchofstclair).