



**March 12, 2023**

**11 a.m.**

Flowers Given By: **Rosanna Blumenberg, Diane Reed and George Reed** in loving memory  
of **George and Dorothy Reed**

PRELUDE

*Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound*

arr. George Shearing

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: On the waters of life where we navigate our small boats through smooth sailing  
and surging storms, we gather around the truth:

**Many:** **Sometimes God calms the seas; sometimes God calms the sailor.**

One: Whether today you sailed in here humming or hurting; whether you navigated here  
with confidence or wondering, “what am I doing?”; whether you are ready to sing  
praises or sighing with pain, we hear Christ saying softly to us what he said to  
Peter,

**Many(softly):** **“Come”.**

One: And in that one-syllable word our hearts leap and souls stir, so brothers and sisters,  
come!

**Many:** **It is good to be here. Alleluia and Amen.**

\*OPENING HYMN

*My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

#403

**My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ love and righteousness; I dare not trust this  
earthly frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’s name. Refrain**

*Refrain:* **On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand,  
all other ground is sinking sand.**

**When shadows veil my Savior's face, I rest upon unchanging grace; In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil. Refrain**

**Christ's oath and covenant and blood support me in the rising flood; When all around my soul gives way, Christ then is all my hope and stay. Refrain**

**When Christ shall come with trumpet sound, oh, may I then in Love be found, Dressed in God's righteousness alone, fault-less to stand before the throne. Refrain**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**God, like the disciples on the boat years ago, we are trying to steer the vessels called, "life" through the seas of today. Sometimes we white-knuckle wheel, clinging to control, and determined to go in a direction, even when the wind whips so strong our sails are shredded. Sometimes, like the disciples, we are afraid, perhaps not of ghosts, but of each other and an unknown future. And sometimes, O God, we like Peter even venture out of the boat, step into the water, and immediately feel like we are sinking down. Help! Meet us in this moment as we release our grasp; hold us as we want to chart a clear path forward and go no matter what; speak to us now with words we need to hear, we pray.**

*Silence.*

**May Your presence continue to shape and surround us as we turn toward the One who walks on water, as if out for a Sunday stroll, Jesus our Savior. Amen.**

**\*SUNG RESPONSE**

*O Sing a Song of Galilee  
(Verse 3 only)*

#51

**O sing a song of Galilee, of lake and woods and hill, of One who walked upon the sea and bade its wave be still: For though, like waves on Galilee, rough seas of trouble roll, when faith has heard the Savior's word, fall peace upon the soul.**

**ENGAGING SCRIPTURE**

Matthew 14:22-33

<sup>22</sup> Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. <sup>23</sup> And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, Jesus was there alone, <sup>24</sup> but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. <sup>25</sup> And early in the morning Jesus came walking toward them on the sea. <sup>26</sup> But when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. <sup>27</sup> But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, I AM; do not be afraid." <sup>28</sup> Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." <sup>29</sup> Jesus said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup> But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" <sup>31</sup> Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" <sup>32</sup> When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. <sup>33</sup> And those in the boat worshiped Jesus, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

**SERMON**

*Amid the Wind and Waves*

OFFERING/ANTHEM

*My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

Daniel Kallman

PASTORAL PRAYER and LORD'S PRAYER (**SUNG**)

**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.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

*Be Still, My Soul*

#488

**Be still, my soul: for God is on your side; bear patiently the cross of grief or pain; Leave to your God to order and provide; in every change God faithful will remain. Be still, my soul: your best eternal friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.**

**Be still, my soul: for God will undertake to guide in future days as in the past. Your hope, confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be clear at last. Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know how Jesus' power ruled them long ago.**

**Be still, my soul: the hour will soon be here when we shall be with God whom we adore, with disappointment gone, no grief nor fear, sorrow replaced with joy forever more. Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Chaconne*

Louis Couperin

## **Announcements ~ Sunday, March 12, 2023**

**Join us for FEAST (Friends Eating and Studying Together) as we offer a Taste of the Oasis Center opportunities.** Join us from **10:30 am to noon on March 16 and 23.** We begin in Syster Hall with refreshments at 10:30 am.

**Artful Prayer** ~ Looking for creative and fun ways to add to your prayer life? Join the Artful Prayer team (Brenda Robinson, Donna Papenhausen, Lindsey Huddleston, Dawn Swain, Cindy Woodling) for a variety of fun sessions. No art experience required, just a spirit to explore God's sacred presence in your life in new ways. All supplies provided. **This offering is hybrid, please contact the church office for the link.**

**Sacred Conversations on Race** ~ each week you will join others in discussion of important topics facing our community and country. Topics include: **March 16** - "The lie that invented racism" - TED Talk by John Biewen **March 23** - "The difference between being "not racist" and antiracist" - TED Talk by Ibram Kendi. **This offering is hybrid, please contact the church office for the link.**

### **NEXT UCC MEN'S BREAKFAST ON MARCH 18**

The UCC Men's breakfast series continues on Saturday, March 18 and all the men of the congregation, new and longtime members, are invited to join for breakfast in Syster Hall then. Coffee will be on at 8 am and breakfast served at 8:30 am. We will enjoy fellowship

together and hear a presentation from **Barbara Richards, Executive Director, about Project 180** which assists those leaving incarceration to transition back to daily life. Barbara's office is located on our FCUCC campus and she will share with us the good work which this organization does in our community. (A free will offering will be taken to cover breakfast costs.) **You may register by Thursday, March 16 by calling Sherry at the church office at 941-953-7044.** We hope to see you there!

Finally! Coming up in March - the long postponed First Congregational UCC **Chili Cook-Off!** All are welcome **Sunday, March 26, at 12:15 in Syster Hall.** The congregation will vote on their favorite, and the winner will receive a modest prize and lots of praise!

Please put **Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>** on your calendar and help us prepare our sanctuary for Holy Week. We will Murphy Soap Oil the pews, vacuum the cushions, and clean our worship space. We will begin at 9 am and many hands make light the work. Thank you!!

### **Holy Week 2023:**

**Palm Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9 and 11 am** ~ Join us for the triumphant entry into Jerusalem as we wave palm branches and sing out our Hosannas!! Our Chancel Choir will sing at both the 9 and 11 am services. Our 11 am service will be livestreamed. All are welcome and bring a friend!

**Maundy Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm** in the sanctuary ~ We gather around the table with the disciples on the last night of Jesus' life to experience and encounter the Bread of Life. Members of the Worship Team will help lead our service and we will celebrate Holy Communion. This service will be livestreamed.

**Good Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at noon** in the sanctuary ~ Beneath the cross of Jesus we gather to open our hearts to the One who meets us in our pain. Our Chancel Choir will sing and this service will be livestreamed so you can watch at any time.

**Easter Sunday Celebration, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 and 11 am** ~ We gather to sing and share the gospel truth, Christ is risen, he is risen indeed, Alleluia!! We welcome our brass quintet and choir at both services. 11 am will be livestreamed. All are welcome and bring a friend.

We will be hosting a **grief group starting on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 11 am in the Oasis Center.** This is an opportunity to share together, support one another, and offer God's love. This group is open to all whose hearts are heavy because grief takes many forms and faces. Please sign up by calling the church office.

### **Calendar:**

#### **Sunday, March 12**

Sunday Worship, 9 am, sanctuary

Sunday Worship, 11 am, in the sanctuary and online

COLLAGE, noon, Syster Hall

**Monday, March 13**

Library Committee, 11 am, Syster Hall

**Tuesday, March 14**

COLLAGE, 11 am, Zoom

Spiritual Education and Growth, 2 pm, Oasis Center and Zoom

Peace and Justice, 3 pm, Oasis Center

Tuesday Night Bible Study, 6:30 pm, Zoom

**Wednesday, March 15**

Security Committee, 9:30 am, Oasis Center and Zoom

Bible Study, 11 am, Hybrid ~ Oasis Center and Zoom

Choir, 7 pm, Chapel

**Thursday, March 16**

Green Team meeting, 10 am

**FEAST**, 10:30 am, Syster Hall and Oasis Center

Staffing Team, 2 pm, Zoom and Oasis Center

Finance Team, 3 pm, Zoom

**Saturday, March 18**

Men's Breakfast, 8 am, Syster Hall

**Sunday, March 19**

Sunday Worship, 9 am, sanctuary

Sunday Worship, 11 am, in the sanctuary and online

Fellowship Time, noon, Syster Hall

We encourage you to subscribe to the weekly **Midweek Message** via your email to keep connected with activities in the church.