



# First Congregational Church of Anoka United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation  
September 10, 2023 ♦ Rally Sunday



This bulletin is designed to assist you as you watch our livestreamed worship service, whether you follow along live or view it at a later time. The stream can be found on our YouTube channel at this location:

<https://www.youtube.com/@AnokaUCC>

## Welcome & Announcements

*If you would like to join our mailing list, email [office@uccanoka.org](mailto:office@uccanoka.org) and ask to be added.*

## Prelude

Koki Sato

## The Church Bell Rings

## \*Opening Hymn

“By Whatever Name We Call You” #560

**By whatever name we call you, Fashioner of spheres,  
You are grander, so much wiser than our minds perceive.  
Labels limit understanding, God, you have no peers.  
So, we question—changing, growing—wanting to believe.**

**In whatever way we worship, Mystery divine,  
You are only dimly known through ritual and creed.  
Though we try to capture you in symbol or in sign,  
Only as we let you be, can longing hearts be free.**

**In whatever gifts we offer, All-inclusive One,  
You accept your own creation, fragments we return.  
Not as owners but as stewards, is our giving done.  
In true wonder we receive the love we cannot earn.**

## \* Call to Worship and Opening Prayer (adapted from Psalm 72)

One: God, give the ruler your justice, and your righteousness to a ruler's son.

**Many: May the next ruler judge your people with righteousness, and your afflicted ones with justice.**

One: Let us pray:

**Many: May the mountains raise up well-being for the people, and the hills, righteousness. Blessed be the fount of justice, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be her glorious name forever; may her glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen!**

A Time for Children (10:30)

*ADVISORY: The livestream of the service continues during the Children's Time; if your child sits facing the Pastor their face shouldn't appear on camera.*

Prayer of Preparation

"Pour Out Your Spirit"

C. Grundy

From the sac - red wa - ters of my birth  
to the sac - red wa - ters of this hour,  
I have leaned up - on You who knit me in my  
moth - er's womb. O pour out Your Spir - it now.

Choir Anthem

"Gracious Spirit Dwell With Me"

K. Lee Scott.

Scripture Reading – Matthew 18:1-7

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" <sup>2</sup> He called a child, whom he put among them, <sup>3</sup> and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. <sup>6</sup> "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. <sup>7</sup> Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn

“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service” #495 (v 1, 2, 3)

**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.  
All God’s children, richer, poorer, all God’s people, young and old,  
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, in a small or global sense,  
Help us bear each other’s burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,  
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.**

Prayers of the People

*If you wish to share a prayer with the congregation (joy, concern, hope, worry, or anything at all), raise your hand and a Deacon will bring you a microphone. Offer your prayer and finish by saying, “God in your love” to which we will all respond, “Hear our prayer.”*

Sung Prayer

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; in -

cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

Prayer of Our Savior (unison)

*The Prayer has many versions; pray whichever you desire (debts, sins, trespasses, etc.).  
We affirm that God has many names, so use one of the suggested or another of your choosing.*

**Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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.**

Offering

Text-to-Give: **844-334-1477**

*Thank you for your gifts to our ministries!*

*If you are watching from home (live or later), please consider adding to the Offering by sending your gifts by mail, text, or online ([uccanoka.org/donate](http://uccanoka.org/donate)).*

*You can support the church further through the RaiseRight program:  
[www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com). Our unique church ID is 9WKLGX8TRZCN.*

Offertory

Koki Sato

\* Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN (#17)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

\* Benediction

\* Congregational Blessing

“God Be With You” (#809)

Dorsey/Hutchins

**God be with you. God be with you. God be with you ‘til we meet again.**

**O God be with you. God be with you. God be with you ‘til we meet again.**

Postlude

Koki Sato

*You may be seated as you listen to the Postlude. If you choose to depart at this time,  
please speak gently as you exit out of respect for those who choose to listen.*

Acknowledgements

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Text-to-Give: 844-334-1477



*First Congregational Church, UCC of Anoka is an Open and Affirming Christian Community for all. We affirm that the image of God is most fully reflected in diversity. We invite all people to share their energy and talents in full participation with our community. We welcome all individuals and families of any sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, relationship status, race, national origin, socioeconomic status, age, mental and physical health or ability, or belief. Together, we celebrate these and all other facets of one's essential being.*