

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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April 12, 2026

10:00 AM

*"We are a community in Christ, called to act with love toward our neighbors."*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER**

### **EXPRESSING OUR LOVE**

*(As we prepare for worship, we invite quiet contemplation of the Living God.)*

*\*For those who are able, please stand.*

#### **PRELUDE**

#### **WELCOME**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND JOYS**

**INTROIT # 263** (Red) "A Mighty Fortress"

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

#### **Responsive Reading**

God calls us to love one another, to bear each other's burdens.

**We are called to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep.**

But what happens when we take on too much? When our empathy traps us in another's struggles?

**Lord, teach us to help without losing ourselves, to care with wisdom and grace.**

Toxic empathy pulls us into the quicksand of pain, leaving both parties stuck.

**But healthy empathy stays rooted in truth, extending a hand of hope.**

Jesus wept with the suffering but did not let their emotions derail His mission.

**He healed, He loved, and He spoke truth, always leading others toward wholeness.**

Let us follow His example, empathizing without enabling, helping without hurting.

**Lord, help us set healthy boundaries, to uplift without being pulled under.**

May we stay grounded in Your wisdom, anchored in Your truth.

**Together, we seek to love well, guided by Your Spirit.**

**Amen.**

**\*HYMN # 198** (Red) "God of Grace and God of Glory"

**OPENING PRAYER** A Prayer for Empathy

**\*SONG OF PRAISE #338** (Red) (Gloria Patri)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen. Amen.

## **GOD MOMENT**

**THE CHILD IN US ALL** Seeing with Someone Else's Heart

**SERMON** Toxic Empathy

**\*HYMN # 232** ( Red) "Lord, I Want to be a Christian"

## **PRACTICING OUR SPIRITUALITY**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE - CONCERNS**

#### **PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

**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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**ACKNOWLEDGING OUR GIFTS** (Please send pledges & donations to the church via mail or use online giving.)

#### **MUSICAL OFFERING**

**\*SONG OF PRAISE HYMN #780** Doxology (NCH – Black)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, O heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**\*HYMN # 237** (Red) "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind "

#### **BENEDICTION**

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** "One in Love"

One in love, one in friendship true,  
One in hope, one in spirit, too,  
One in faith God will care for ou  
Till we meet together again.

#### **POSTLUDE**

**WE EXTEND THE HAND** of Christian fellowship to all who have come to worship in this Welcoming, Open and Affirming congregation. May our prayers and the hearing of God's Word make our burdens lighter, our hearts encouraged, and our souls refreshed.

If you are visiting for the first time, we welcome you.

**OUR THANKS** to Jon Clinch and all who participated in our service this morning.

**ALTAR FLOWERS ARE NEEDED!** Please sign up on the flower sign-up list on the table in the entrance or call Cynthia King 802-885-5831.

<b>PRAYER LIST</b>	Jaz	Jocelyn	Sheila	Helen
	Amie and Nicole	Wesley	Ted	Elmer
	Dan	Ellen	All others in need	

**CHECK OUT our church web site: [firstchurchspringfield.org](http://firstchurchspringfield.org) and our YouTube channel First Church Springfield 4738 (@firstchurchspringfield4738)**

**TO JOIN OUR ONLINE LIVE WORSHIP SERVICE EACH SUNDAY AT 10 AM, CLICK ON THE LINK FOR OUR NEW WEBSITE:**

[www.firstchurchspringfield.org](http://www.firstchurchspringfield.org)

Note that a copy of the bulletin and hymns are available midway on the homepage.

Click on Worship on the homepage and it will take you to our Facebook page and a live video. Click on the video.

Glad you can worship with us!

**CHOIR** meets to raise our voices on the final Sunday of each month, rehearsing at 9 AM just before worship. All are welcome to join.

**CONGREGATIONAL CARE:**

Those words can mean most anything. Would you or someone you know benefit from prayers, home visits, help with shopping, rides to appointments, prepared meals, food to help you over a hard time? If you have such a need, or know someone who does, please contact Congregational Care chair, Claire Trask at 886-7377.

**COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR!**

April	12	Sunday Worship – Peter Andrews	10:00 AM
April	19	Sunday Worship – Michael Mario	10:00 AM

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**  
**PASTOR'S HOURS**

Tues. & Wed. 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
Wed. 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

**STAFF**

Pastor: Michael Mario  
Administrative Assistant: Sheila Turner  
Sexton: Todd Murray

~ *NOTES* ~