



Thomas A. Edison  
**Congregational Church**

*April 14, 2024*



# Order of Worship

\*\* You are invited to stand  
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

*When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.*

## Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

### Prelude

#### **My Shepherd will Supply My Need**

Arr. By: John Purifoy  
Tune: Southern Harmony

### Call to Worship (responsively)

One: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

**All: Calling us to heal and transform the brokenness and the violence of our world.**

One: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

**All: Calling us to seek out the lonely and the lost and those who need to experience God's love.**

One: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

**All: Calling us to be disciples to the world, blessed, healed, and filled with joyous good news!**

One: The risen Christ invites us here today,

**All: To hear the story of God, to sing the songs of God, to pray prayers to God.**

One: Let us all worship God today,

**All: As the risen Christ worships among us in this very hour.  
Amen.**

— slightly adapted from a prayer found @ homiletics online

## Hymn of Praise

### Hymn to Joy “ God , We Love This Congregation “

Tune: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Words from: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

**God, we love this congregation!  
On this day, we're glad to see  
friends and neighbors, gathered, praying,  
as a church community.  
Young and old, we join in worship-  
some in-person, some online.  
We are drawn by faith and friendship  
to this blessed place and time.**

**In this year with all its trials,  
there are things that we have missed.  
Still, in Christ, you've walked beside us;  
by your Spirit, we've been blessed.  
Love's our history, love's our vision,  
Love's the work we're called to do.  
Bless us as our congregation  
moves together, serving you.**

### Passing of the Peace

May the Peace of Christ be with you!

**And, also with you!**

**Gift of Music**

**Katy Sumrow, Alto**

**You Raise Me Up with Be Still, My Soul**

Arr. By: Tom Fettke

## A Statement of Faith

One: God is at all times everywhere in creation and in humanity. Every man, woman and child are a child of God: we all belong to His family.

**All: We therefore say God loves us as a parent loves their offspring.**

One: Jesus of Nazareth is the man who, most completely exemplified the life God wishes each of us to live. From the Torah, He selected two sentences to comprehend our duty, namely, to love God with all our might, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

**All: We call Him Christ, the perfect reflection of God.**

One: The Holy Spirit represents the amazing grace of God working within us to help us achieve our human fullness.

**All: This is the God in whom we place our faith and to whom we plight our troth.**

One: This we believe

**All: Because we are Easter people. Amen.**

## Song of Prayer Response

Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

~slightly adapted prayer from: Mac Campbell's Easter Lyrics to Leonard Cohen's anthem "Hallelujah"

## Prayers for the people



## **Our Lord's Prayer** (*unison*)

**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.**

~ Common English Bible

## **Song of Prayer Response**

### **Song of Prayer**

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

~slightly adapted prayer from: Mac Campbell's Easter Lyrics to Leonard Cohen's anthem "Hallelujah"

## **Scripture**

**Luke 24:36-48**

### **Jesus appears to the disciples**

<sup>36</sup> While they were saying these things, Jesus Himself stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>37</sup> They were terrified and afraid. They thought they were seeing a ghost. <sup>38</sup> He said to them, "Why are you startled? Why are doubts arising in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> Look at My hands and My feet. It's really Me! Touch Me and see, for a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones like you see I have." <sup>40</sup> As He said this, He showed them His hands and feet. <sup>41</sup> Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, He said to them, "Do you have anything to eat?" <sup>42</sup> They gave Him a piece of baked fish. <sup>43</sup> Taking it, He ate it in front of them. <sup>44</sup> Jesus said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about Me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." <sup>45</sup> Then He opened their minds to understand the scriptures. <sup>46</sup> He said to them, "This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and a change of

heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things.

~Common English Bible

## **2 Corinthians 5:17**

<sup>17</sup> So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived!

~Common English Version

## **Response to the Sharing of God's Story**

The Story of God for the People of God!  
**Thanks Be to God!**

## **Hymn of Praise**

### **In the Bulb There is a Flower**

By: Natalie Sleeth  
Tune: Promise

**In the bulb there is a flower;  
in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise:  
butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter  
there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.**

**There's a song in every silence,  
seeking word and melody;  
there's a dawn for every darkness,**

bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future;  
what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.  
In our end is our beginning;  
in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing;  
in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection;  
at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season,  
something God alone can see.

## **Pastoral Words**

## **Song of Prayer Response**

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah**

~slightly adapted prayer from: Mac Campbell's Easter Lyrics to Leonard Cohen's anthem "Hallelujah"

## **Invitation to the Offering**

*What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church  
to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.*

## **Offertory**

**Katy Sumrow, Alto**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

By: Albert Hay Malotte

## **\*\* Doxology**

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

Tune: Thomas Ken, 1709

## **Life of Our Church**

### **Faith Development**

**JOIN US WEDNESDAY @ CHURCH @ 11 AM & 6:30 PM;  
AS WELL AS ONLINE THURSDAY @ 11 AM**

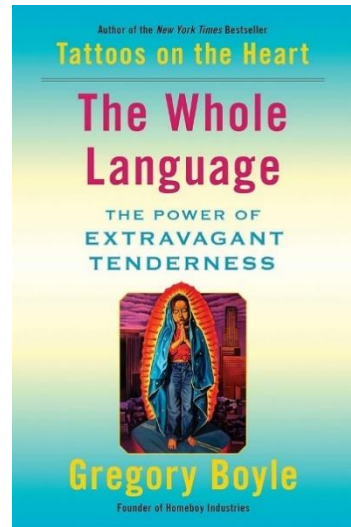
**Meeting a modern-day saint, Father Greg Boyle. Father Boyle is a Jesuit priest who works with gang members in Los Angeles. This is a great "good news" narrative to share in the shadows of Easter.**

**For this beautiful story that is just waiting to be heard.**

### **Reading for Wednesday**

**1 John 3:11-24/Matthew 25:31-46**

**Today's flowers are gifted to the church by Jack Walmsley in memory of Sandra Robbins Walmsley who was a great wife and Author. We would like to thank him for this beautiful gift.**





**We are looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board, or you can go to the website “Signup Genius” if interested.**

**If you haven’t returned your Volunteer Survey, Please pick one up in the basket in the Fellowship Hall and return it filled out.**



**Sunday April 14<sup>th</sup> Lunch and Learn**  
Immediately following the service, Beth Moss, our Faith community Nurse, will have a discussion on: Anger and Resolutions. Beth will discuss what Anger is and suggestions on what works to lessen its power.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or you can RSVP to the office by April 10<sup>th</sup> so we will know how many boxed lunches to order.

### **WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP NEWS**

**Women’s Fellowship will meet Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at noon at the church and the speaker will be Kim Gaide from Lee Health Military Support Group. Please bring your own lunch – coffee and dessert will be provided.**

## Spring Piano Recital April 19th.

You're invited to Alena Michel's Spring Piano Recital, where talented kids of all ages will showcase their musical skills. Join us for an enchanting evening filled with beautiful melodies and youthful performances! Friday, April 19th at 6:00 PM here at the church.

**For next week's God's  
word:  
Enfolded by Love  
John 10:11-18**

### **Benediction (responsively)**

Our worship has ended, but now our life of service begins!  
Go from this space, for you and I are the body of Christ, and all of creation awaits us. So, live passionately, and love faithfully, and celebrate every moment of your life from now until the Finale. Our God of relentless, amazing, creative, and hopeful grace goes with us! Amen. **Amen.**

~ Adapted from The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

### **Postlude**

#### **Processional of Joy by Ludwig van Beethoven**

Arr. By: Hal Hopson

Tune: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

## Time with our Children

### An Open Mind

By Lois Parker Edstrom

Luke 24:36-48

To grow and become strong, what must you do? Yes, you must eat good food. Do you consider fruits and vegetables to be good food?

When Jesus reappeared to His disciples, after His death, He said to them, **“Do you have anything here to eat?”**.

They gave Him some broiled fish and He took it and ate it while He was with them. He then explained to them how everything that had been written about Him was being fulfilled.

The Bible tells us “He opened their minds, that they might understand the Scriptures” – what had been written about His life and death and His appearing again after death.

We have talked about growing and becoming strong by eating good food. We must open our mouths to eat – letting the healthy food in. We must also open our minds and let the good news, which Jesus brings, become a part of us. We are told God will help us understand. We grow and become strong Christians by opening our minds to what God is trying to teach us. Open your mind to God’s word and receive His love.

Scripture quotations from the World English Bible, Copyright 2007, Richard Niell Donovan

## Ten Reasons Why You Should Be Going to Church

I’ve just seen one too many articles on why people aren’t coming to church. Admittedly, there are some good reasons. But I’d like to share my top 10 reasons why you *should* be coming to church. Others will have different reasons, and some may disagree with the ones I have listed, but here they are.

10. Coming to church doesn’t mean you have no doubts about God or faith or religion. It means you have a place you can share with people who have their

own doubts.

9. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life. It just is. A church community cannot be everything to everyone in times of crisis, but when the bottom falls out of your world, it's great to have a community to lift you back up.
8. Bad stuff is going to happen in your life, part two. The time to build a relationship with God is not when life turns ugly, and you've run out of all other options. Attending worship regularly helps build a relationship with God and others that will give you a solid foundation when the winds blow, and the storms come.
7. Not all churches are anti-something. Most of us are for people, for acceptance, for hospitality. Really, we're out there. We just don't get the good press.
6. Any church worth its salt has really good food on a regular basis.
5. Churches offer paint-by-number opportunities to serve. Many people would like to help the poor, the hungry and the homeless, but they don't know how to get involved, how to make the time to be involved, or what they can do to really make a difference. Churches offer you ways to plug in to help those who need it most.
4. You've got a gift. Probably two or ten of them. Becoming involved in the ministry of a church will help you discover and use gifts you never even knew you had.
3. Not all churches are after your money. Good churches want you to have a healthy relationship with money. Sure, churches need to pay the electric bill and the pastor and the youth director, but money and the church are more about you than it is about the church. It's about your own relationship with money. World events have proven that it's much better to put faith in God than in a bank account. Church can help you with that.
2. Taking a break from our hectic lives to come to church is accepting the gift of Sabbath. Wayne Mueller says, "[Sabbath] dissolves the artificial urgency of our days, because it liberates us from the need to be finished." We don't take Sabbath and come to worship because we have time and have finished up everything that needs to be done. We take Sabbath because it is time to stop, and we are designed to stop, rest, and reflect. Those who don't are destined to crash and burn.
1. Jesus is really cool. Even if you don't know if you can believe in the whole Son-of-God thing, even if you refer to the resurrection as the Zombie Jesus event and even though those of us already in church often do a lousy job of following him, come to church to get to know Jesus. The more you get to know him, the more you'll understand why people call his way The Way.

Rev. Anne Russ, Pastor, Argenta Presbyterian Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas

## If the Church Were Christian

If the church were Christian, Jesus would be a model for living, not an object of worship. If we in the church were serious about honoring Jesus, conducting ourselves as he did would be our chief goal. For the joy of Christian faith is not to be found in the worship of Jesus, which he never expected and seemed to discourage, but in modeling Jesus' mercy and love, which alone has the power to transform us and our world.

PHILIP GULLEY



**“CHURCH ISN’T SOME  
COMMUNITY YOU JOIN  
OR SOME PLACE YOU  
ARRIVE. CHURCH IS  
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN  
SOMEONE TAPS YOU  
ON THE SHOULDER  
AND WHISPERS IN  
YOUR EAR, “PAY  
ATTENTION, THIS IS  
HOLY GROUND;  
GOD IS HERE.”**

RACHEL HELD EVANS  
SEARCHING FOR SUNDAY

## **Edison Church and Our Ministry Partnerships.**

### **Ministry Partnerships 2024**

Edison Park Elementary School

Operation INASMUCH Fort Myers

South Fort Myers Food Pantry

Mission Peniel

Nations Association Charities

Lee County Military Support

ACT – Abuse, Counseling & Treatment

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

One Great Hour of Sharing

Builders without Borders

Campolo Center for Ministry

Local outreach with Food, Power Bill's and Prescriptions

Center for Sight, a US Eye Company, Ahuachapan, El Salvador  
Eye and Medical Care

Fires in Lahaina, Hawaii

Guardian ad Litem

## PRAYER LIST

### Our Church Members:

Kate Baumann; Roy Shipley; Liz Lloyd; Barry Pierce;  
Dan Van Riper; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch; Joe Helling; Greg Haston;  
Ian Laughlin; Pat Jessie; Nancy Bergman and family after the  
passing of John; Duane Gardner.

### Friends & Family:

Duane (Friend of Tom & Sherrie McIntyre); Prayers for the family (Sister-in-law of Tom Johns & Joseph Helling); Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Martha Calvert, (Friend of Ian Laughlin); Jeffrey Lloyd (Son of Liz Lloyd); John Schmidt (Gail Courtwright's brother); Carmella Colitti (great niece of Rosemary Priore); Jim Marc-Aurele (Lou & Carol's son); Darlene Gonzalez (Flo Newbrough's sister); Bob and Darlene Kulesza (Bob is Carol Marc-Aurele's brother); Rhonda and Hunter (friends of Martha Long); Howard Youngquist (brother of Malcolm Youngquist); Clay (homeless gentleman); Elvis, Pamela, Franciso & other son (homeless family); Roy Waldhauer (friend of Sandy Cole); Stephen (homeless gentleman); Lori and Pops (homeless couple); Mitch (homeless gentleman); Carl Richard Gilmore (friend of Sandy Cole); Matt, Bradley, Gregory, and Scott (homeless men); Norma Stott ((friend of Sandy Cole).

---

***No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,  
you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church.  
Welcome home!***

---

Website:	<a href="http://www.edisonchurch.com">www.edisonchurch.com</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/EdisonChurch">Facebook.com/EdisonChurch</a>
Email Pastor:	<a href="mailto:Pastorjim@taecc.com">Pastorjim@taecc.com</a>
Email Office:	<a href="mailto:Admin@taecc.com">Admin@taecc.com</a>
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Friday 9 AM – 2 PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office  
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

***Our Church Staff***

*Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III  
Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce  
Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson  
Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel  
Pianist - Barry Pierce  
Beth Moss – RN, MA Faith Community Nurse*

*Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the  
right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.*

