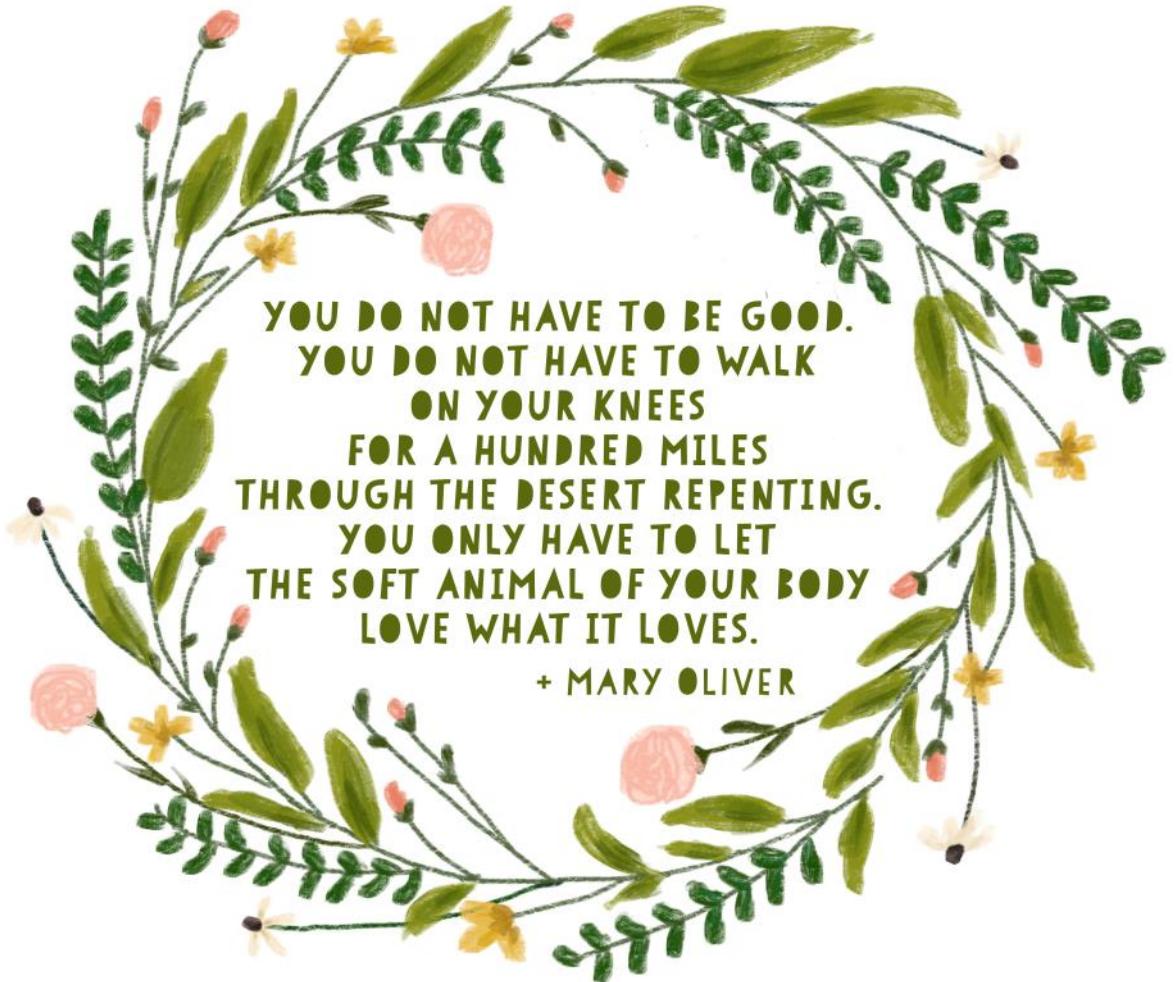


A Brief Theology of Valentine's Day
February 14, 2021
#BiggerBalcony



**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE GOOD.
YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WALK
ON YOUR KNEES
FOR A HUNDRED MILES
THROUGH THE DESERT REPENTING.
YOU ONLY HAVE TO LET
THE SOFT ANIMAL OF YOUR BODY
LOVE WHAT IT LOVES.**

+ MARY OLIVER

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

February 14, 2021

10:00 am

#BiggerBalcony

Please sign in to Worship Connect to let us know you're here!

<http://tiny.cc/worshipconnect>

PRELUDE

"Summerland"

Judy Widrig

by William Grant Still

Published by Still William Grant Music. Used under CCS #12615.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sharon Benton

WELCOME SONG

"God of Change & Glory"

KATHERINE

refrain

Lucy Bledig, vocals & piano

by Al Carmines. Used with permission.



Ma-ny gifts, one Spir-it, one love known in



ma-ny ways. In our dif-fer - ence is bless-ing, from di-ver-si - ty we praise One Giv-er,



one Lord, one Spir-it, one Word Known in ma-ny ways, hal-low-ing our days.



For the Giv-er, for the gifts, praise, praise, praise!

TIME WITH CHILDREN

A MOMENT FROM CULTURE

film clip from *The Color Purple*,
by Alice Walker

Listen, God love everything you love - and a mess of stuff you don't. But more than anything else, God love admiration.

You saying God vain? I ast.

Naw, she say. Not vain, just wanting to share a good thing. I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it.

What it do when it pissed off? I ast.

Oh, it make something else. People think pleasing God is all God care about. But any fool living in the world can see it always trying to please us back.

Yeah? I say.

Yeah, she say. It always making little surprises and springing them on us when us least expect.

You mean it want to be loved, just like the bible say.

Yes, Celie, she say. Everything want to be loved. Us sing and dance, make faces and give flower bouquets, trying to be loved. You ever notice that trees do everything to git attention we do, except walk?

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Gail Dunavan

There are several options for giving: 1) Mail checks to First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. 2) Give at our website, <https://fccb.net/giving/>. 3) Use the GivePlus app. Download from your app store, set up an account, and give! 4) Give by text. Text a dollar amount to 208-516-2657, and set up your account. You're ready for easy giving by text! 5) Give by PayPal. Our easy link is [PayPal.Me/fccbucc](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https://www.fccb.net).

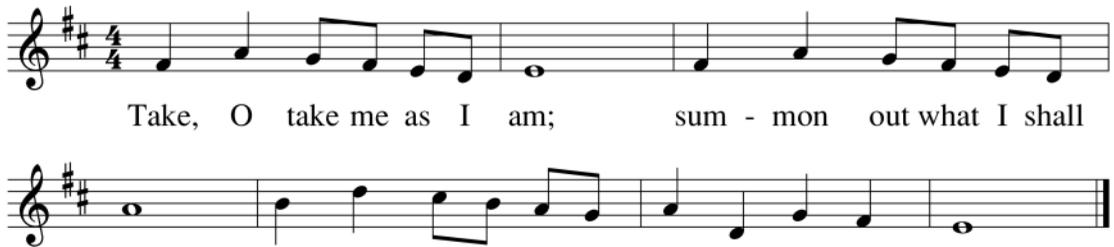
HYMN

"Take, O Take Me as I Am"

TAKE O TAKE ME

by John Bell. ©1995, WGRG, Iona Community.

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Take, O take me as I am; sum - mon out what I shall
be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b.1949

Tune: John L. Bell, b.1949

© 1995, Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

SCRIPTURE READING

Song of Solomon 1:15-17; 8:6-7

Gail Dunavan

*Common English Bible**Look at you — so beautiful, my dearest!**Look at you — so beautiful! Your eyes are doves!**Look at you — so beautiful, my love!**Yes, delightful! Yes, our bed is lush and green!**The ceilings of our chambers are cedars;
our rafters, cypresses...**Set me as a seal over your heart,**as a seal upon your arm,**for love is as strong as death,**passionate love unrelenting as the grave.**Its darts are darts of fire —**divine flame!**Rushing waters can't quench love;**rivers can't wash it away.**If someone gave**all his estate in exchange for love,**he would be laughed to utter shame.*

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Gail Dunavan

One: For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us:

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“A Brief Theology of Valentine’s Day”
a letter from The Salt Team

Sharon Benton

HYMN

“Like a Tree Beside the Water”

HYFRYDOL

Words by James F. D. Martin. Tune by Rowland H. Prichard.
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1. *Like a tree beside the waters, nurtured by your loving care,
We, O God, your sons and daughters, your enduring witness bear,
In each passing generation may your voice be heard.
Bless, we pray, this congregation with your holy, living Word.*
2. *Like a tree beside the river, drawing life from holy streams,
Fill us with your love forever; recreate our hopes and dreams.
Through the storms of life sustain us by the wisdom of your grace.
May the changing of the seasons find us in your warm embrace.*
3. *We, beside the living waters, drink from your eternal life.
Give to all, your sons and daughters, faith that rises over strife.
O Living God, most glorious, strengthen us for life today.
By the hope of timeless promise guide your church upon the Way.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sharry Nyberg

The Prayer of Jesus

We invite you to use the language for God that is most comfortable for you:

"Our Creator," "Our Father" or "Our Mother."

Our 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 and ever. *Amen.*

BENEDICTION

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

"Widmung"
by Robert Schumann
Public domain

Judy Widrig

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lent Adult Forums: There is **no Adult Forum February 17**, Ash Wednesday. On **February 24**, we begin a six-week reading of *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*, by Amy-Jill Levine. For details, see our Full Circle blog: <https://www.fccb.net/blog/february-adult-forums/>.

Lenten Prayer Series: Beginning **Friday, February 19**, from **6:30-7:30 pm**, Jean Scribner will facilitate a six-week series title For more information, visit <https://www.fccb.net/blog/lenten-prayer-series/>.

WORSHIP:

- **Sundays, 10:00 am**—Worship on Facebook Live. #BiggerBalcony

Upcoming Services:

- **February 17: Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 pm**
- **February 21:** First Sunday of Lent, Mark 1:9-15 (Genesis 9:8-17)
- **February 28:** Second Sunday of Lent, Mark 8:31-9:8 (Psalm 22:23-31)
- **March 7:** Third Sunday of Lent, John 2:13-22 (1 Cor. 1:18-25)

WAYS TO CONNECT: For more information about these and other groups and activities, contact office@fccb.net.

- **Monday**
 - ◆ Poetry Writing Group: **1st & 3rd Mondays at 7:00 pm**
 - ◆ Happy Hour: **1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm**
- **Tuesday**
 - ◆ Book Club, **First Tuesday of the month, 9:30 am**
 - ◆ PJs & Storytime **Tuesdays, 6:30 pm**
- **Wednesday**
 - ◆ Adult Forums, **Wednesdays, 6:30 pm**
 - ◆ Faith Formation for Children & Youth **Wednesdays, 6:30 pm**
- **Thursday**
 - ◆ Morning Coffee Group: **1st & 3rd Thursdays, 9:30 am**
 - ◆ Evening Book Club, **6:30 pm weekly**
- **Friday**
 - ◆ Knitting Group, **Fridays, 10:00 am**
 - ◆ Coffee Hour, **2nd & 4th Fridays. 1:00 pm**
- **Saturday**
 - ◆ Create & Check In, **every other Saturday, 10:00 am**

To stay up to date, follow us on social media, subscribe to our Friday Email, or check in with our Full Circle Blog, <https://www.fccb.net/blog/>.

Open and Affirming (ONA): As an Open and Affirming congregation believing in a loving God, all people are welcome in this church without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, economic or social status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

We Try To Use Language which will help people feel included in our worship. Since not everyone is comfortable with the same language, we invite you to amend the words of the service as we sing and pray if they do not adequately express your faith. We invite you to assist us in creating new expressions of our common faith and life together.

Technical Support: If you need help streaming our worship services or connecting in other ways, please let us know.

VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH PASTORAL STAFF

In the before time, our pastoral staff were available by appointment. In COVID-19 time, they are available for virtual meetings by appointment. Contact them by email or call the pastoral care line, 360-733-4255

Sharon: sharon@fccb.net

David: david@fccb.net

Sharry: sharry@fccb.net

You can also email our Office Manager
Cydne at office@fccb.net
and she'll pass your message on.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ

An Open & Affirming Congregation

2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225

Church Office: 360-734-3720

Office Mobile Phone: 360-303-6806

24/7 Emergency Pastoral Care: 360-733-4255

office@fccb.net • www.fccb.net

Facebook: facebook.com/fccbucc

Twitter: @BhamUCC

Office Hours: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

LEAD PASTOR: Sharon Benton

PASTOR FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS,

& MISSION: David Weasley

MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION:

Sharry Nyberg

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig

NURSERY ATTENDANT: Lisa Vaughn

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran

ACCOUNTANT: Renée Relin

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE: Kurt Aagard

CARE ADMIN. SUPPORT: Laura Norton

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE:

Alanna Steele

HEALTH MINISTER: Carol Nicolay

MODERATOR: Bill Henkel

VICE MODERATOR: Beth Tyne

PAST MODERATOR: Caryl Dunavan

CLERK: TBA

TREASURER: Laurie Hoyt

HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller

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