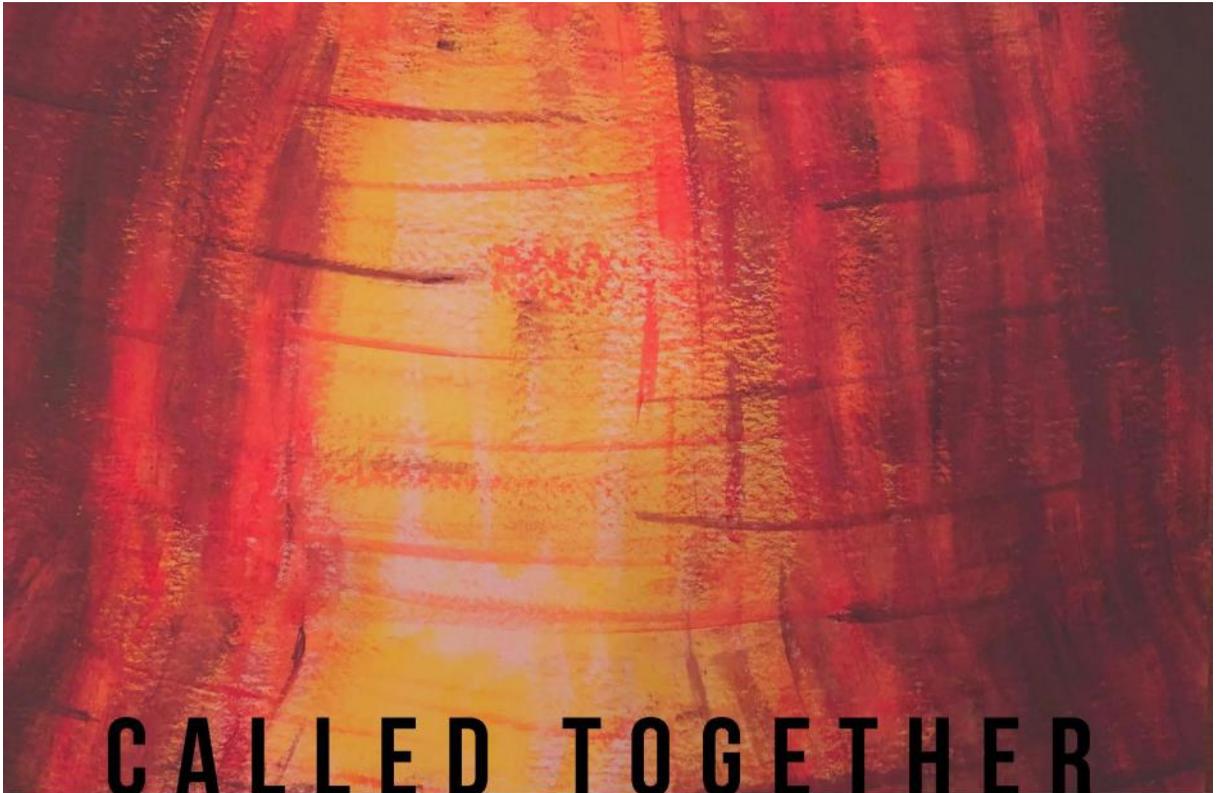


**Called Together  
Gathering In Sunday 2021  
September 12, 2021  
#BiggerBalcony**



**CALLED TOGETHER**

OUR CHURCH GATHERS US, GROUNDS US,  
AND HELPS US ECHO OUT INTO THE WORLD.

**first**  **congregational**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
timeless worship + modern faith

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 12, 2021

10:00 am

#BiggerBalcony

*"If we think of belonging only as membership in a club, organization, or church, we miss the point. Belonging is the risk to move beyond the world we know, to venture out on pilgrimage, to accept exile. And it is the risk of being with companions on that journey, God, a spouse, friends, children, mentors, teachers, people who came from the same place we did, people who came from entirely different places, saints and sinners of all sorts, those known to us and those unknown, our secret longings, questions, and fears."*

~ Diana Butler Bass,

*Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*

**PRELUDE**

*"Winter's Come and Gone"*

Unbroken Circle

by Gillian Welch & David Rawlings

*Oh little red bird  
Come to my window sill  
Been so lonesome  
Shaking that morning chill  
Oh little red bird  
Open your mouth and say  
Been so lonesome  
Just about flown away*

*So long now I've been out  
In the rain and snow  
But winter's come and gone  
A little bird told me so*

*Oh little blue bird  
Pearly feather breast  
Five cold nickels all I got left  
Oh little blue bird  
What am I gonna do  
Five cold nickels  
Ain't gonna see me through*

*So long now I've been out  
In the rain and snow  
But winter's come and gone  
A little bird told me so*

*Oh little black bird  
On my wire line  
Dark as trouble  
In this heart of mine*

*Poor little black bird  
Sings a worried song  
Dark as trouble  
'Til winter's come and gone  
So long now I've been out  
In the rain and snow  
But winter's come and gone  
A little bird told me so  
So long now I've been out  
In the rain and snow  
But winter's come and gone  
A little bird told me so*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### RINGING THE BELL

**CALL TO WORSHIP**      song lyrics by Marty Haugen      Sharon Benton & Davi Weasley

*There's a song we like to sing on Gathering In Sunday —*  
this Sunday when we rejoice at beginning a new program year,  
back to school, back to routines, knowing that the next months will bring  
stewardship talks and Thanksgiving gratitude and Advent mystery.

*There's a song that calls us together;*  
*naming us, whoever we are:*  
"We are the young, our lives are a mystery;  
We are the old who yearn for your face..."

*It calls us together and claims us for this special moment —*  
"Gather us in, the rich and the haughty  
Gather us in, the proud and the strong."

*But this year we can't sing; this year, we're not together.*  
For the second year in a row we're at home rather than in this building,  
worshiping God in community.

*Still the final verse remains for us.*  
*The final verse reminds us:*  
"Not in the dark of buildings confining  
Not in some heaven light years away  
But here in this place [wherever we are] the new light is shining  
Now is the kingdom, now is the day."

*"Gather us in and hold us forever*  
*Gather us in and make us your own*  
**Gather us in, all peoples together**  
**Fire of love in our flesh and our bones**

**UNISON PRAYER**

Carol Garguile

**Gather us in, Holy One.**

**Gather us wherever we are and whatever we bring to this time:  
celebration and desolation and everything in between are welcome here.**

**If we have something to give, gather us.**

**If we have nothing left and need to be filled in every way, gather us.**

**If we find this a familiar and comforting place, gather us.**

**If we don't even know why we're here, gather us.**

**Let the sound of the bell gather us.**

**Let its ringing call to our spirits.**

**Let it vibrate through our beings, claiming us as one people,  
and let it cause us to echo out into your world  
as a message of hope. Amen.**

**MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

*"O, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"*

Handbells

by Thomas Jarman

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Davi Weasley

**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.**

**A READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

Isaiah 58  
New Revised Standard Version

Carol Garguile

**SCRIPTURE RESPONSE**

Carol Garguile

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.**

**TIME WITH CHILDREN**

Susan Huffman & Ted Huffman

**MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

“Joyful, Joyful”  
by Ludwig Beethoven

Handbells

**SERMON**

“Called Together”

Sharon Benton

**MUSICAL MEDITATION***“Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”*

Unbroken Circle

Music by John Wyeth. Words by Robert Robinson, adapt. by Ruth Duck.

*Come O Fount of every blessing,  
tune my heart to sing your grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
call for songs of highest praise.*

*Teach us some melodious chorus  
sung by flaming tongues above,  
telling you all offer for us:  
gifts of wisdom, joy, and love.*

*Here we raise to you an altar;  
you have brought us to this place.  
May our footsteps never falter  
as we walk within your grace.*

*One in Christ, no longer strangers,  
we know joys that never cease,  
trusting you in every danger  
we become a house of peace.*

*To your grace we live as debtors;  
to your name all praise is due!  
Let your goodness, like a fetter  
bind our wandering hearts to you.*

*Prone to wander, how we feel it,  
Yet you guide us in your way.  
Take each heart, o take and seal  
for your service day by day.*

**INVITATION TO OFFERING**

Carol Garguile

*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://fcb.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/fcbbucc](https://www.paypal.com/mefcbbucc).*

**BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE***“Salt Spring”*

Unbroken Circle

by John Reischman

*Let us know you're here! Go to Worship Connect <http://tiny.cc/worshipconnect> to sign in.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**COFFEE HOUR TODAY!** Join us after worship for an online time of fellowship! Bring your coffee or tea and catch up with old and new friends. We'll also be greeting our new Interim Co-Ministers for Faith Formation, Susan and Ted Huffman. We'll start right after worship on Sunday, probably around **11:00 am**, and chat for an hour or so. Join with this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82317477917>.

**FAITH FORMATION GATHERING IN TODAY!** The Faith Formation Board invites families of all sizes, shapes and configurations to join us for a fun Zoom meeting **Sunday, September 12 at 2:00 pm**. Hear the stories, ring your bell, eat a snack, try a craft, and share God's love! Activities are designed for age 3 through grade 5. Join with the Zoom link in the Connection Calendar.

### WORSHIP:

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

**WAYS TO CONNECT:** For more information about these and other groups and activities, contact [office@fccb.net](mailto:office@fccb.net).

- **Monday**
  - ◆ Poetry Writing Group: **1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00 pm**
  - ◆ Happy Hour: **1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm**
- **Wednesday**
  - ◆ Faith Formation for Families: **weekly, 6:00 pm**
  - ◆ Adult Forum: **weekly, 7:00 pm**
- **Thursday**
  - ◆ Evening Book Club, **6:30 pm weekly**
- **Friday**
  - ◆ Afternoon Coffee Group: **2nd & 4th Friday, at 1:00 pm**
  - ◆ Knitting Group, **Fridays, 10:00 am**
  - ◆ Exploring Prayer, **Fridays, 6:30 pm**
- **Saturday**
  - ◆ Creative Connections, **1st Saturdays, 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](mailto:sharon@fccb.net)

Davi: [davi@fccb.net](mailto:davi@fccb.net)

You can also email our Office Manager  
Cydne at [office@fccb.net](mailto: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

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

[office@fccb.net](mailto:office@fccb.net) • [www.fccb.net](http://www.fccb.net)

Facebook: [facebook.com/fccbucc](https://facebook.com/fccbucc)

Twitter: @BhamUCC

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

**LEAD PASTOR: Sharon Benton**

**PASTOR FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS,**

**& MISSION: Davi Weasley**

**INTERIM MINISTERS OF FAITH FORMATION:**

**Ted & Susan Huffman**

**MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig**

**ORGANIST: Judy Widrig**

**WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:**

**Skyler Spain**

**NURSERY ATTENDANT: Lisa Harbine**

**ACCOUNTANT: Erin Kennedy**

**OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran**

**CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE: Kurt Aagard**

**FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE:**

**Alanna Steele**

**HEALTH MINISTER: Carol Nicolay**

**MODERATOR: Bill Henkel**

**VICE MODERATOR: Beth Tyne**

**PAST MODERATOR: Caryl Dunavan**

**CLERK: Janet Malley**

**TREASURER: Laurie Hoyt**

**HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller**

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