

Gathering In Sunday

Altars Along the Way

September 18, 2022



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

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 18, 2022

10:00 am

Welcome! Please participate in as much or as little of the service as you feel comfortable.

*We love children in worship—their noises and wiggles are welcome, too.
There are pillows in the front where they can see the instruments and participate fully,
or the coloring, book, and play area is available in the corner near the windows.
Their movements back and forth are a joy for all of us.*

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davi Weasley

RINGING THE BELL

THE STORY

Sharon Benton

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

by Spill the Beans, alt.

Jean Waight

One Voice: It takes faith to embark on a journey,
especially a journey not of our choosing.

**All Voices: It takes faith to make the first step
and then another and another.**

One Voice: It takes faith to name our fears
and still choose to go.

**All Voices: It takes faith to embrace what is new and different,
unfamiliar, or downright scary.**

One Voice: It takes faith to pause here and there,
catch our breath, and honor *this moment*.

**All Voices: It takes faith.
God, grant us a little faith.**



1. Here in this place, — new light is stream-ing, now is the
 2. We are the young, our lives are a mys - try, we are the
 3. Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will
 4. Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin - ing, not in some



1. dark - ness, van - ished a - way, See, in this space, our
 2. old who yearn for your face, We have been sung through-
 3. take the bread of new birth, Here you shall call your
 4. heav - en, light years a - way, but here in this place, the



1. fears and our dream-ings, brought here to you in the light of this
 2. out all of his - try, called to be light to the whole hu - man
 3. sons and your daugh-ters, call us a - new to be salt for the
 4. new light is shin - ing, now is the Kin - dom now is the



1. day. — Gath-er us in the lost and for - sa - ken, Gath-er us
 2. race. — Gath-er us in the rich and the haugh - ty, Gath-er us
 3. earth. — Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, Give us to
 4. day. — Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er, Gath-er us



1. in the blind and the lame; Call to us now, and we shall a -
 2. in the proud and the strong; Give us a heart so meek and so
 3. eat the bread that is you; Nour-ish us well, and teach us to
 4. in and make us your own; Gath-er us in all peo - ples to -



1. wa - ken, we shall a - rise at the sound of our name. —
 2. low - ly, give us the cour-age to en - ter the song. —
 3. fash - ion, lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true. —
 4. geth - er, fire — of love in our flesh and our bone. —

CONNECTION REFLECTION

Where are your “altars” from this past summer?

What have been some of your “let’s stop here” moments?

What would you like to pause to remember as a holy place or experience?

*To go deeper into today’s story, turn to others and reflect on the question;
if you prefer to reflect on your own, use the open space in your bulletin to write or draw.
If you need more space, use the “Room for Reflection” space on the last page.*



SUNG INVITATION TO PRAYER

“God Bless Every Step”



God bless ev-ery step that I am ta-king, and bless the earth be-neath my feet.

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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.*

*If you have a prayer request you'd like to share confidentially with our pastors,
have added to the confidential prayer list, or spoken aloud in worship,
go to www.fccb.net/contact-us/ to send a message or call the church to talk with a pastor.*

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE

Genesis 12:1-9
Common English Bible

Jean Waight

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Jean Waight

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

Ted & Susan Huffman

After Time with Children, preschool & elementary children are invited to attend Church School.

SUNG PRAYER

“Open Our Hearts”

O - pen our hearts, o - pen our minds:
O - pen our lives to you, O lov - ing
God. O - pen our hearts.

The musical score is written on three staves in 12/8 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

Words and Music: Jim Strathdee

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SERMON

“Altars Along the Way”

Sharon Benton

SONG

"Hallelujah"

Music by Leonard Cohen Lyrics by First Congregational Church's Poetry Group:
Amelia Bacon, Carletta Vanderbilt, Diane Bateman, John S Green,
Linda Conroy, Randy Flowers, Susan Huffman.

Verses sung by Scott Ward, Kris Johnson, Kay Marsh & Lucy Bledig.

Guitar: Craig Jennings

Please sing along on the chorus.

*Here's a place for you and me
from bell to base, a century
of growing faith and finding strength within
you.*

*We come from near, we come from far
We bring ourselves just as we are,
with doubt, despair and questions, hallelujah.*

Chorus: *Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah*

*Wherever we are on the road of life
in times of joy, in times of strife
our roots and stories we can share together.
Make place for children on the rug
we share our peace with each glad hug,
creating a communal hallelujah.*

Chorus

*Sometimes we've been called to feed,
and other times to plant a seed
we're learning as we listen to each other
Addressing inequality,
we'll build a strong community
in faith and peace, compassion, hallelujah.*

Chorus

*We need to look at where we'll go
to help restore this earth and so
responding to Your call we listen to You.
We'll work for justice, and we'll stride
stepping out to march with PRIDE.
Spirits rise and voices soar with hallelujah.*

Chorus

*We'll stand before the lord with song
and words that show us we belong
together as we live the life we're called to.
Bathed in the font of endless love,
we give our souls to God above
forever in this place of hallelujah.*

Chorus

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Jean Waight

- There are several options for giving: 1) Give at our website, <https://fccb.net/giving/>.
2) Mail checks to First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.
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.Mefccbu](https://www.paypal.com/Mefccbu).*

As we hear the story of Abram and Sarai's sojourn, we remember that we, as a faith community, mark moments on our communal journey. Please come forward, take a stone or two, and help build a mandala-like altar to mark this new beginning of our program year. If you have a financial offering you may leave it in the plate. If you are in the #BiggerBalcony, find a stone and place it by your computer/TV/device to join in the altar building. Alternatively, you may stop by the church during office hours this week to add your stone. (Please note that if you come forward you will be on camera).

Offering Music

Judy Widrig

*HYMN

"We Will Walk With God / Sizohamba Naye"

SIZOHAMBA NAYE



We will walk ___ with God, wo wo wo, we will walk ___ with God.



We will walk ___ with God, wo wo wo, we will walk ___ with God.



We will go re - joic - ing till the kin - dom has come.



We will go re - joic - ing till the kin - dom has come.

Words: Swaziland traditional hymn; tr. © 2002 Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community, Scotland,
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Music (SIZOHAMBA NAYE): Swaziland traditional hymn, P.D.

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***BENEDICTION**

Davi Weasley

POSTLUDE

Judy Widrig

ROOM FOR REFLECTION

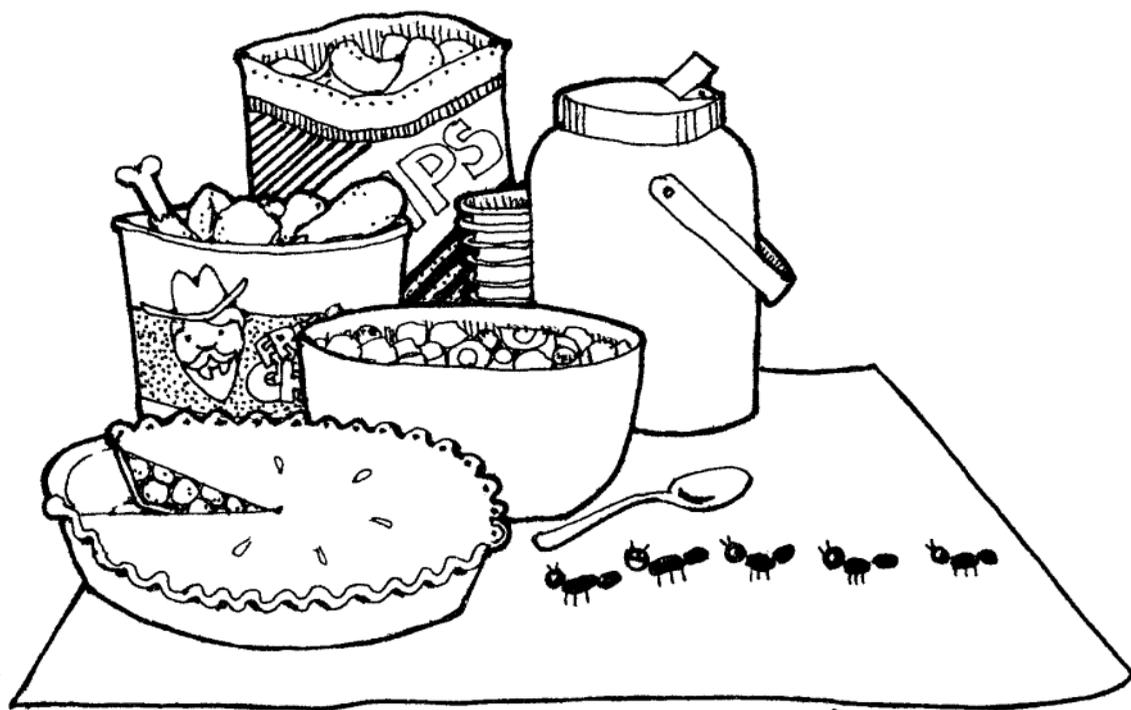
Gathering In Picnic Today!

Squalicum Creek Park, after worship

Food provided, including vegetarian and gluten-free options.

See the opposite page for details.

All are welcome! Join us!



It's Picnic time!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP: Today's flowers were provided by **Kjersten Hayes, in celebration of her mother, who is cancer free.** Share the beauty of your autumnal garden with us! [Sign up online.](#)

THANK YOU to today's Head Usher Carol Garguile & our Liturgist, Jean Waight.

COVER IMAGE by Thomas Dils on Unsplash

CHURCH SCHOOL TODAY! The fall children's Church School program begins this morning. Following the Time with Children, preschool and elementary school children will go to the Fellowship Hall for learning activities focused on Creation Care. For more information, talk to Susan Huffman.

GATHERING-IN PICNIC at Squaticum Creek Park is TODAY. You are all invited! If you are in the sanctuary, head over to the park after worship. If you are in the Bigger Balcony, you can join others at the park at about **11:30 am.** There will be food for everyone, including vegetarian and gluten-free options. If you have a special diet, feel free to bring your own food and join us. *Unbroken Circle* will provide great Bluegrass music, including the opportunity to sing along. There will be games and space for conversation. Food, music, games, fellowship and fun for all! Join us!

NEW ADULT GROUPS will be starting in October. Pick up an announcement sheet for more information or watch the Full Circle Blog and the Friday Announcement emails.

WORSHIP:

- **Sundays, 10:00 am**—Hybrid worship in person and on Facebook Live, our #BiggerBalcony

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.

APPOINTMENTS WITH PASTORAL STAFF

Pastoral staff are available by appointment virtually, or in person with masks. Contact them by email or call the pastoral care line, 360-733-4255.

Sharon **sharon@fccb.net**

Davi: **davi@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

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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: Davi Weasley**

INTERIM MINISTERS OF FAITH FORMATION:

Ted & Susan Huffman

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig

ACCOUNTANT: Erin Kennedy

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE: Kurt Aagard

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:

Georgia Drost

MODERATOR: Beth Tyne

VICE MODERATOR: Mark Schofield

PAST MODERATOR: Bill Henkel

CLERK: Janet Malley

TREASURER: Jen Sandoval

HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller

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