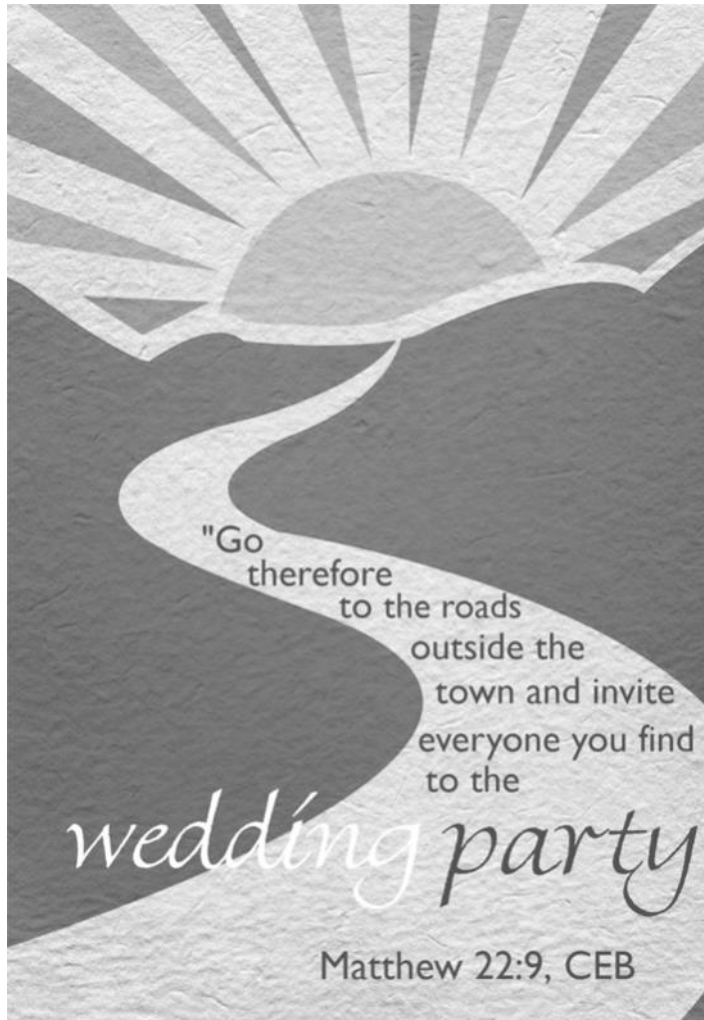


Stories in the City
“The Disinvited Christ”
March 12, 2023



We thank the following people for assisting with worship:

HEAD USHER:
Lyz Staman

LITURGIST:
Janet Ott

As a reminder, all vocalists take rapid Covid tests before singing without a mask.

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 us.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 12, 2023

10:00 am

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

INTROIT

“First Born of Mary” FIRST BORN OF MARY

with a bounce

First-born of Ma - ry, pro - voc - at - ive prea - cher, it - in - er - ant tea -
- cher, out - sid - er's choice; Je - sus in - spires and dis -
- arms and con - fus - es who - ev - er choos - es to hear his voice.

by John Bell. ©1998 Iona Community / WGRG (North America). Used under OneLicense #A-718199.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sharon Benton

RINGING THE BELL

THE STORY

Sharon Benton

**Rise in body or spirit*

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

by Teri Peterson

Janet Ott

One Voice: You are invited!

**All Voices: God, help us lay aside the things that prevent us
from accepting your invitation.**

One Voice: You are not just welcomed, but wanted!

All Voices: God, help us let go of our desire to control who else is here with us.

One Voice: You are called!

**All Voices: God, help us to live each day according to your word,
so we'll be dressed and ready when we hear you.**

One Voice: Come!

All Voices: We come to worship, to prepare, to listen, and to respond!

***HYMN 7**

“All People That on Earth Do Dwell”

OLD HUNDREDTH

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Ted & Susan Huffman

After Time with Children, children are invited to Church School.

SUNG RESPONSE

“Come Into the Streets With Me”

SEE SAW SACCARA DOWN

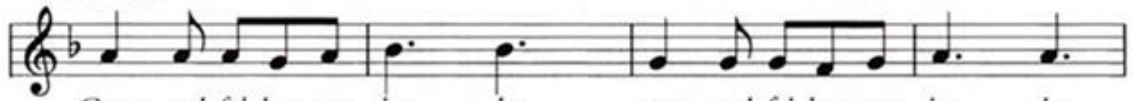


Come in-to the streets with me! Come to where the crowds will be,



see a strange and gen - tle king on a don-key tra - vel - ling.

Refrain



Come and fol-low my lea - der, come and fol-low my lea - der,



Je - sus Christ is ri - ding by, come and fol-low my lea - der!

by Shirley Erena Murray. © 1992, Hope Publishing Company. Used under OneLicense #A-718199.

MOMENT FOR MINISTRY

Extravagant Welcome

Membership Board

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Janet Ott

**You continually reach out to us, Holy God,
generously giving yourself to draw us in to your love.**

**We confess that we sometimes think we have more important things to do,
and we bristle at your reminder of what our priorities are meant to be.**

**Forgive us when we are preoccupied with maintaining the status quo,
and we reject the new thing you are doing.**

**We confess that much of our energy is taken up with stuff,
and we don't have time to turn aside to join you if we can't see the return on
investment.**

Forgive us when we take you for granted,
 assuming you're doing nothing special enough to warrant disrupting our routines.
 Give us a glimpse of your kin-dom feast,
 and make us ready not only to respond, not only to come in,
 but to participate in your vision.
 We ask in the name of Christ,
 through whom we are called as your beloved...

KYRIE ELEISON

gently

Cantor: Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. ALL: KY - RI - E E - LEI - SON.

Cantor: Chri - ste e - lei - son. ALL: CHRI - STE E - LEI - SON.

ALL: KY - RI - E E - LEI - SON.

Cantor: Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Music © 1998 WGRG, Iona Community. GIA Publications, Inc., exclusive North American agent.

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ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Janet Ott

One Voice: God, we proclaim your grace.

All Voices: Grace that holds every story,
grace that redeems every dream,
grace that reveals Love stronger than death.

Give us strength to hear the good news of our own forgiveness,
the good news of our own belovedness.

Give us strength to proclaim belovedness and peace to our siblings.

One Voice: The peace of Christ be with you.

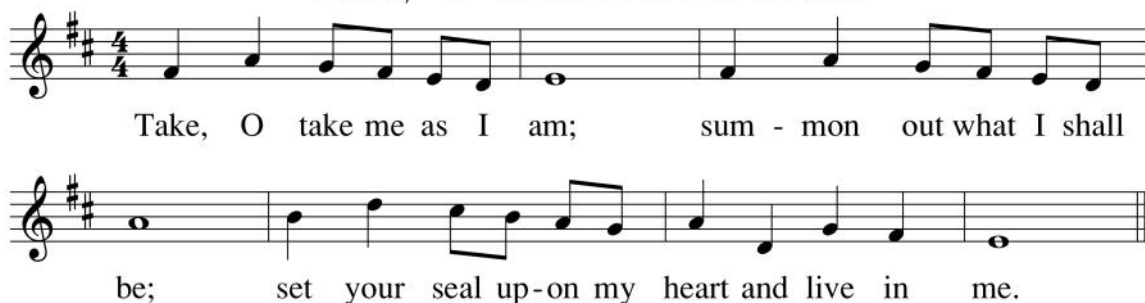
All Voices: And with God's world.

PASSING THE PEACE

Sharon Benton

If you're willing to come to the microphone and offer "The peace of Christ" or "May God's peace be with you" or some other words of grace, please note you are also sending your message to those worshiping on line.

SUNG INVITATION TO PRAYER "Take, O Take Me as I Am"



The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the prayer: "Take, O take me as I am; sum - mon out what I shall". The second staff contains the melody for the second line: "be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me." The music is written in a simple, accessible style with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Text: John L. Bell, b.1949

Tune: John L. Bell, b.1949

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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.*

ANTHEM

“O God, How We Have Wandered”

Text by Kevin Nichols. Tune by J. S. Bach. Used under OneLicense #A-718199.

Quartet: Cherie Little, Cathy Arnold, Brian Rapp, Dick Little

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22:1-14

Janet Ott

Common English Bible

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Janet Ott

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

“The Disinvited Christ”

Sharon Benton

HYMN 388 (seated)

“Help Us Accept Each Other”

AURELIA

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Janet Ott

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 Breeze app. Download from your app store, set up an account, and give!

4) Give by text. Text a dollar amount to (360) 205-1297, and set up your account.

Offering Music

“He That Shall Endure to the End”

Vocal Quartet

from *Elijah*, by Felix Mendelssohn

COMMISSIONING OF HEALTH MINISTER KAREN LAUCKHARDT

Supported by the Called to Care Ministry

Introduction

Affirmation of our gifts of the spirit

Pastor: Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry of each person in the life of the church or in various settings in the life of the world. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

All: There are different ways of serving but the same God is served.

Pastor: The body of Christ is a single body, which has many parts.

All: It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.

Pastor: If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

All: Together we are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.

Covenant

Leader: Karen Lauckhardt, sister in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility for particular service in the ministry of the church. Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared to serve with the help of God?

Health Minister: I am.

Leader: Do you promise, relying on God's grace, to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing the love of Christ?

Health Minister: I do.

Leader: Members of this household of faith, you have heard the promises of our sister in Christ who has answered God's call to service as a Health Minister. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with her. Will you witness to the commitment we now make?

People: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to honor your leadership and assist you, that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ.

Commissioning

Pastor: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the people of First Congregational Church of Bellingham, United Church of Christ, I rejoice to announce: You are recognized, affirmed, and commissioned as a Health Minister.

All: Thanks be to God!

***HYMN 495**

“Called as Partners”

BEECHER

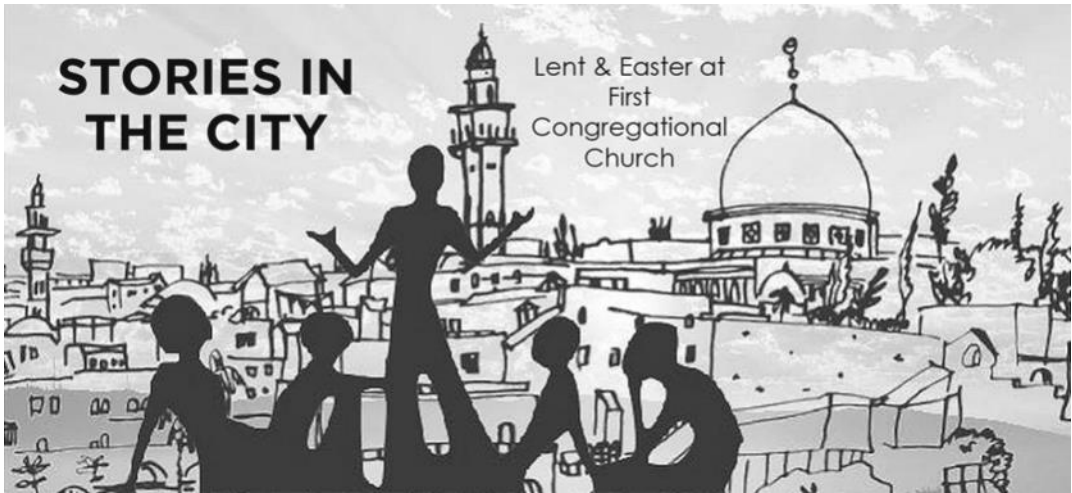
***BENEDICTION**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

Judy Widrig

*Immediately following worship,
please join us for a congregational meeting to talk about funding solar panels.*



Join us throughout Lent and into Easter.

Holy Week Worship

Maundy Thursday Storytelling Service:

April 6, 7:00 pm, Sanctuary, Facebook, & Zoom

Good Friday Tenebrae Service:

April 7, 7:00 pm, Sanctuary, Facebook, & Zoom

Easter Sunrise Service:

April 9, 6:30 am, Bloedel Donovan Park

Easter Celebration Service:

April 9, 10:00 am, Sanctuary, Facebook, & Zoom

See the Connection Calendar & Friday Announcement emails for special opportunities to connect during Lent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do you receive our Friday Announcements email? Contact office@fccb.net to sign up!

Congregational Meeting Today! Solar Panel Project

WORSHIP:

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

For details, see our Connection Calendar in the Friday email or contact office@fccb.net.

Monday

Board Meetings—2nd Mondays, **6:30 pm**

Church Council—4th Mondays, **7:00 pm**

Poetry Group—**7:00 pm**

Tuesday

Book Club—First Tuesday of the month, **9:30 am**

Pilgrim Circle—Second Tuesday of the month, **12:00 noon**

Wednesday

Meet Me in the Middle—**12:00 noon**

Glee Club—**5:00 pm**

Adult Forum—**7:00 pm**

Thursday

Evening Book Study—**5:00 pm**

Friday

Knitting Group: weekly, **10:00 am**

SPIRIT Group, 2nd & 4th Fridays, **6:15** welcome, **6:30 pm**

Game Night—3rd Fridays, **6:00-9:00 pm**

Saturday

Creative Connections—1st Saturdays at **10:00 am**

Sunday

Chancel Choir—**8:30 am**

Worship—**10:00 am**. Children's Church during worship

Youth Group—**11:30 am**

Going Deeper—after worship, hybrid

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

2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225

Church Office: 360-734-3720

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: Mark Schofield

VICE MODERATOR: Scott Ward

PAST MODERATOR: Beth Tyne

CLERK: Janet Malley

TREASURER: Jen Sandoval

HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller

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