

**The Sound that Love Makes:
A Voice in the Wilderness
December 3, 2023**



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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 3, 2023

10:00 am

Whoever would proclaim religion must do it unadulterated. ~ Freidrich Schleirmacher

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

ANNOUNCEMENTS (9:55 am)

WELCOME

Davi Weasley

RINGING THE BELL

WELCOME SONG

*“Come, Sound of Love”
by Ruth Cunningham*

Come sound of Love in - to our hearts. Come
Spir - it of Ad - vent in - to our hearts.

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THE STORY

Sharon Benton

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Jim Hollander

*Children may go with Josh to church school in the social hall
or remain in the sanctuary as they choose.*

MUSIC FOR CONTEMPLATION

Judy Widrig

Where is God making space in your life? What paths is the Spirit inviting you to make?

***LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

Jessica, Mike, Leah & Henry Good

One: We gather around the wreath again, in a time of challenge, a time of hope, a time of waiting.

All: **Once again we gather around the circle; lighting a candle to raise warmth in cold days.**

One: You who called out of the Wilderness across centuries and miles, call us again.

All: **Give us ears to hear and hearts that crack open at Your cry.**

One: God of Advent, give us strength in the waiting.

All: **God of Advent, give us courage to hear the sound that love makes.**

***HYMN 121 (black hymnal) "Toda la Tierra" (All Earth Is Waiting)**

TAULÉ



All earth is wait - ing to see the Prom - ised One,
Thus says the proph - et to those of Is - ra - el,
Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be made plain;
In low - ly sta - ble the Prom - ised One ap - peared,



and o - pen fur - rows, the sow - ing of our God. All the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el": One whose
o - pen new high - ways, new high - ways for our God, Who is
yet feel that pres - ence through - out the earth to - day, For Christ



world, bound and strug - gling, seeks true lib - er - ty; it
name is "God with us," our Sav - ior shall be, through
now com - ing clos - er, so come all and see, and
lives in all Chris - tians and is with us now; a -



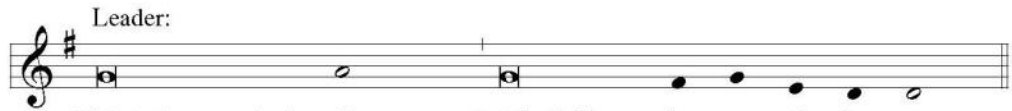
cries out for jus - tice and search - es for the truth.
whom hope will blos - som once more with - in our hearts.
o - pen the door - ways as wide as wide can be.
gain, on ar - riv - ing Christ

brings us lib - er - ty.

WE ARE A NURTURING BELOVED COMMUNITY

SUNG PRAYER

“With Sighs Too Deep for Words”
by Anne Krentz Organ. Used with permission.



This is the sound of our Prayers And the Spirit in - ter - cedes for us



with sighs, with sighs too deep for words. With sighs, with sighs too deep for words.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sharon Benton

WE ARE GROWING AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN FAITH

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:1-11
New Revised Standard Version

Joy Brown

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Joy Brown

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

“Highway Making”

Davi Weasley

ANTHEM

**“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”
arr. Howard Helvey**

Chancel Choir

WE ARE LIVING CHRIST-INSPIRED ACTION

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Sung Invitation

Come, Let Us Bring

By Billema Kwillia & Marty Haugen

*Come let us bring our gifts to God in praise,
So that we might minister in countless ways.*

*Come, let us bring the warm and fragrant bread,
Broken here so all God's people might be fed.*

*Come, let us bring the sweet, abundant wine.
In this cup, we taste the joy of grace divine.*

Sharing the Elements

You may come forward to receive communion or if you wish to remain seated, someone will come around to you in your seat. Raise a hand or indicate that you would like communion as they come around. If you come forward you will be on the video stream.

*You may either dip your bread in the communal cup
or take a single-serving of juice from the center server.*

*If you're worshiping at home, gather something to eat and drink:
the risen Christ will meet you right where you are.*

***HYMN 115 (black hymnal)** “The Baptist Shouts on Jordan’s Shore” WINCHESTER NEW

***BENEDICTION**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE & SHARING

Judy Widrig

*Offering plates will be passed during the postlude
for you to share a gift to support the ministries we serve.*

*After the postlude we encourage you share with someone your response to today’s question:
Where is God making space in your life? What paths is the Spirit inviting you to make?*



*Your generosity allows the work of this place nurture beloved community,
grow authentic Christian faith, and live Christ-inspired action. Thank you! .*

There are several other ways to give: 1) Give at our website, <https://fcb.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.

5) Scan the QR code above or on the back cover of the bulletin.

Cover Image “The Seeing Shepherds” by Daniel Bonnell.

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COMMUNION ELEMENT INGREDIENTS:

Communion loaf— whole wheat flour, molasses, yeast, salt. Juice — grape juice, vitamin C.

Gluten free bread — sorghum, tapioca, millet & rice flours; sea salt, honey, canola oil, water, ginger ale, egg.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Today after worship—Christmas Presence!

Make graham cracker creations in the Social Hall!

WORSHIP:

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

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

Monday

Walking Group: weekly, **10:00 am**, Barkley Pond

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

Poetry Group: **1st & 3rd Mondays 7:00 pm**

Tuesday

Book Club: **1st Tuesdays, 9:30 am**

Pilgrim Circle: **2nd Tuesdays, 12:00 noon**

Green Team: **2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7:00 pm**

Wednesday

Glee Club: weekly, **3:00 pm**

Adult Forum: weekly, **7:00 pm**

Thursday

Men's Breakfast Group, **1st Thursday, 9:00 am**, Country Club

Grandparent Group: **2nd Thursdays, 10:30 am**, Fireplace Room

20s/30s/40s/ Group, **5:30 pm**, **last Thursday** of the month.

Young Adult Peer Philosophy Group: weekly, **7:00 pm**, Fireplace Room

Friday

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

Sunday

Chancel Choir: weekly, **8:30 am**

Children's Church School: weekly, **during worship**

Handbells: weekly, **11:30 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.

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

Summer Office Hours: M-Th, 10:00 am-4:00 pm

LEAD PASTOR: Sharon Benton, she/her

PASTOR: Davi Weasley, they/them

CHURCH SCHOOL COORDINATOR:

Josh Marchand, they/them

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig, she/her

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig, she/her

ACCOUNTANT: Marinda Seholm, she/her

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran, she/her

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE:

Kurt Aagard, he/him

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:

Georgia Drost, she/they

MODERATOR: Mark Schofield

VICE MODERATOR: Scott Ward, he/him

PAST MODERATOR: Beth Tyne

CLERK: Janet Malley, she/her

TREASURER: Craig Jennings

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