

Becoming Church: What Comes Next?

April 7, 2024



first congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
timeless worship + modern faith

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

April 7, 2024

10:00 am

All transformation takes place here [in the liminal experience]. We have to allow ourselves to be drawn out of “business as usual” and remain patiently on the “threshold” (limen, in Latin) where we are betwixt and between the familiar and the completely unknown. There alone is our old world left behind, while we are not yet sure of the new existence. That’s a good space where genuine newness can begin. Get there often and stay as long as you can by whatever means possible. It’s the realm where God can best get at us because our false certitudes are finally out of the way. This is the sacred space where the old world is able to fall apart, and a bigger world is revealed. If we don’t encounter liminal space in our lives, we start idealizing normalcy.

~Richard Rohr

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

WELCOME

Sharon Benton

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 or in the Narthex. Their movements back and forth are a joy for us.

RINGING THE BELL

*Rise in body or spirit

WELCOME SONG

"Be Not Afraid"

Lucy Bledig

Find a rhythm with an egg shaker!

Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le - lu - ia!

Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le - lu - ia!

The image shows a musical score for the song "Be Not Afraid" in 4/4 time, featuring a treble and bass clef. The melody is simple and repetitive, with a consistent rhythm. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score is presented in two systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le - lu - ia!". The first system ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second system also ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Text: Taizé Community
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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THE STORY

Sharon Benton

*What do you imagine the disciples did once Jesus was gone from them?
Where would you have looked for new leadership?*

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Jim Hollander

There is no church school today. Children may return to sit with their families.



1 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!
 2 Long years have come and gone, and still God reigns su - preme,
 3 Let cour - age be our friend; let wis - dom be our guide,
 4 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!



For Christ the Word has led us through the a - ges long!
 em - power - ing us to catch the vi - sion, dream the dream!
 as we in mis - sion mag - ni - fy the Cru - ci - fied!
 For Christ the Word has tri - umphed o'er the a - ges long!



In bold ac - cord, come cel - e - brate the jour - ney now and praise the Word!

This text was the winner in a hymn competition sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Bicentennial Committee for the 1988–1989 observance, which had the theme "Celebrate the Journey." The late 18th-century tune (first used with Psalm 148) is appropriately celebratory.

WE ARE A NURTURING, BELOVED COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PRAYER

Kris Johnson

One Voice: Christ, God resurrected you from the dead, and we shouted:

All Voices: Hallelujah! Christ is Risen. Christ is risen, indeed. Hallelujah!

One Voice: Now what? Where do we go from here? What do we do now?

All Voices: We can't simply stand around and keep looking for you.

**You have shown us a new way of living,
and you've told us to go live it.**

One Voice: So God, help us with our first baby steps in this resurrection life.

All Voices: Help us explore what it means to be your people in community.

One Voice: Even though it's been more than 2000 years,

All Voices: we always have something new to learn.

One Voice: Hallelujah! Christ is risen!

All Voices: Christ is risen, indeed. Hallelujah! Amen.

SUNG PRAYER

"With Sighs Too Deep for Words"

by Anne Krentz Organ. Used with permission.

Leader:



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

All:



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

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.*

WE ARE GROWING AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN FAITH.

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE

Acts 1, selected verses
Common English Bible

Kris Johnson

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Kris Johnson

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.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

"We Are Welcome Here"
by Linda Allen

Linda Allen

*No matter who you are, where you've traveled
If all you've known has come unraveled
Are you tired? Too tired to bear it?
We will walk with you, we will share it*

*You are welcome here, welcome here
You are welcome here.*

*No matter who you are, what name you choose
The miles you walked In someone else's shoes
Who you are, the work you do,
Does not define our care for you*

*You are welcome here, welcome here.
You are welcome here.*

*If you feel loved, and long to share it
If you feel lonely, we'll help you bear it.
If you are strong, strong as an oak tree
If you're a river seeking mystery*

*You are welcome here, welcome here.
You are welcome here.*

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.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERING

Sharon Benton

You may make an offering either in the plates at the door or online.

*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 ways to give: 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.*
- 5) Scan the QR code on the back cover of the bulletin.*

MUSIC FOR CONTEMPLATION

"A Safe Place"

Linda Allen



1 Come, great God of all the a - ges; make your earth - ly
 2 Come, Christ Je - sus, flesh and spir - it, sure foun - da - tion,
 3 Come, great Spir - it, in and with us, tune our ears to
 4 Come, O come, in cel - e - bra - tion, house - hold of the



mis - sion known; speak through ev - ery deed and per - son;
 cor - ner - stone; help us form the church e - ter - nal;
 hear your call; through the mov - ing of your pres - ence,
 one true God; in com - mit - ment and re - joic - ing



let your way and will be shown. Guide the church to true com -
 may your vi - sion be our own. Send a mes - sage to each
 let re - deem - ing love re - call min - is - try in ded - i -
 let us go where Christ has trod; as we act in faith and



mit - ment; give di - rec - tion now, we ask; fit us for the
 fol - lower; lead all peo - ple to your way; urge us to strong
 ca - tion, love em - bod - ied in our deeds; chal - lenge us to
 rev - erence, let us, God, the fu - ture see; place us in the



work of build - ing; ded - i - cate us to the task.
 faith and ac - tion as we build the church to - day.
 do your bid - ding, see your pur - pose, fill all needs.
 church tri - um - phant, now and for e - ter - ni - ty.

This text was written in 1987 for the capital cornerstone campaign of the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. It is set here to a mid-20th-century tune created in wartime England to replace a Haydn tune tainted by Nazi associations.

***BENEDICTION**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

Judy Widrig

ROOM FOR YOUR REFLECTIONS

WEEKLY CALENDAR

*Do you receive our Friday Announcements email? Contact office@fccb.net to sign up!
For more information, see our Connection Calendar in the Friday email
or contact office@fccb.net.*

Sunday

Hybrid worship in person, and on Facebook or on Zoom, our #BiggerBalcony, **10:00 am**
Spirit "Exploring Prayer" Group, **April 28, after worship**, Fireplace Room

Monday

Walking Group: weekly, **10:00 am**, Barkley Pond
Church Council: **4th Mondays, 7:00 pm**, Zoom
Poetry Group: **1st & 3rd Mondays 7:00 pm**, Zoom

Tuesday

Book Club: **1st Tuesdays, 9:30 am**, Fireplace Room
Pilgrim Circle: **2nd Tuesdays, 12:00 noon**, Narthex
Green Team: **2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7:00 pm**, Mt. Baker Room

Wednesday

Glee Club: weekly, **5:00 pm**, Narthex

Thursday

Men's Breakfast Group, **1st Thursday, 9:00 am**, Country Club
Grandparent Group: **2nd Thursdays, 10:30 am**, Fireplace Room
Thursday Book Group: **Thursdays, 5:00 pm**, Zoom
20s/30s/40s/ Group, **5:30 pm, last Thursday** of the month, various locations
20-Somethings Peer Philosophy Group: weekly, **7:00 pm**, Fireplace Room

Friday

Game Night: **3rd Fridays, 6:00-9:00 pm**, Room 32

Saturday

Meditation Group: **Saturdays, 11:00 am**, Chapel

Sunday

Chancel Choir: weekly, **8:30 am**, Sanctuary
Children's Church School: weekly, **during worship**, Social Hall
Handbells: weekly, **11:15 am**, Room 16

*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.

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

Office Hours: 10:00 am-4:30 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

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran, she/her

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE:

Kurt Aagard, he/him

BOOKKEEPER: Eric Bowen, he/him

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:

Georgia Drost, she/they

MODERATOR: Scott Ward, he/him

PAST MODERATOR: Mark Schofield

CLERK: Janet Malley, she/her

TREASURER: Craig Jennings

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