

All Questions Considered: An Instant Sermon August 25, 2024



FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 25, 2024

10:00 am

*The answers you get from literature depend on the questions you pose.
~ Margaret Atwood*

*The questions which one asks oneself begin, at least, to illuminate the world,
and become one's key to the experience of others.
~ James Baldwin*

PRELUDE

Michael Hannon

WELCOME

Davi Weasley

We love children in worship—their noises and wiggles are welcome, too. There are pillows and a coloring, book, and play area in the front and in the corner near the windows. Younger kids may enjoy the Narthex play area. Their movements back and forth are a joy for us as they participate fully.

RINGING THE BELL

WELCOME SONG

*“Behold, How Good”
by Michael John Trotta*

One Accord

THE STORY

Sharon Benton

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sharon Benton

During the summer, children are welcome to move about, sharing in the activities in the children's corner or moving to the tables and pillows in the front.

*Rise in body or spirit

WE ARE A NURTURING, BELOVED COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PRAYER

The Apostles’ Creed in Questions

One Voice: Eternal One, hold our hands as we ask:

All Voices: Do I believe in God, the Father Almighty?

One Voice: Can God be Father-Mother, single parent, trans, or non-gendered?

**All Voices: Or is God beyond even these images of “persons”?
Rock, web, universe, connection?**

One Voice: Is God maker of heaven and earth—wonders and terrors included?

All Voices: Or is God *part* of heaven and earth?

One Voice: What does it mean for Christ to be Lord? Aren’t we done with feudal language yet?

**All Voices: Do I believe Jesus Christ is God’s only Son, or are we all
God’s children? What makes Jesus different?**

One Voice: Jesus’ birth and death and ascension into “heaven” are all questionable; when do we get the stories of his life and teaching?

**All Voices: Do I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy universal church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting?**

One Voice: Are my questions allowed, or am I tiptoeing into heresy?

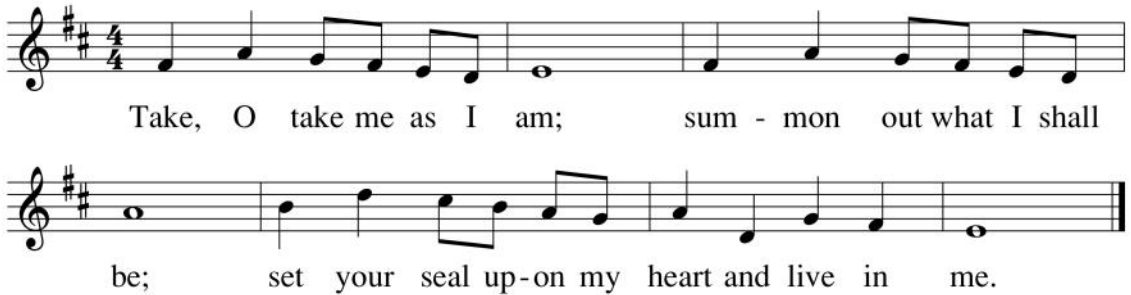
All Voices: How can I believe when I have so many unanswered questions?

One Voice: Help me move beyond easy answers, okay?

All Voices: Will you keep me asking questions and seeking you? Amen.

SUNG PRAYER

"Take, O Take Me As I Am"



Take, O take me as I am; sum - mon out what I shall
be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b.1949
Tune: John L. Bell, b.1949
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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.*

WE ARE GROWING AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN FAITH.

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE selected verses from the Gospels

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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.

INSTANT SERMON “All Questions Considered” Pastors Davi & Sharon
The questions came from you, and the pastors have not read them ahead of time.

MUSICAL REFLECTION “We Are One” One Accord
by Christopher Alexander

WE ARE LIVING CHRIST-INSPIRED ACTION.

BAPTISMS Amara Salomé Perez Reardon & Isla Esperanza Perez Reardon

Covenant Promises of the Congregation

Minister: And do you who witness and celebrate this sacrament make
your covenant with Amara & Isla?

**People: We joyfully welcome you, Amara & Isla, as you are baptized in our
covenant community. We offer ourselves to be your siblings, uncles and
aunts, grandparents, and cousins in Christ. We join in the covenant that
your parents acknowledge this day on your behalf. We offer our
understanding and support as you explore your faith life, and we enfold
you in our love and the love of God as we know it.**

HYMN 327 (black hymnal)

“Jesus Loves Me”
verse 1

JESUS LOVES ME

TESTIMONY

Creation Care Prayer

Green Team

CREATOR GOD,
who multiplies blessings,
bless these symbols
and the actions they represent
as we join with you to heal and protect
our planet from pollution and destruction.

HELP US
to set aside the desire for material riches,
opening our hearts to the myriad life forms
around us and the rich beauty
of this planet that we hold dear.

GUIDE US
as we learn to make sustainable changes
in our everyday lives.

AND BLESS
the scientists, researchers, activists,
and advocates for climate justice
as they multiply the blessings we offer.

WE PRAY
in awe
of the life and the beauty
on this planet that we call home.

AMEN

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERING

Davi Weasley

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://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 below or on the back cover of the bulletin.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Michael Hannon

***HYMN 308** (black hymnal) “At the Font We Start Our Journey”
verses 1, 2, 4

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

***BENEDICTION & PASSING THE PEACE**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE & SHARING

Michael Hannon

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**

Davi's office hours will be on
Sunday, Monday, & Tuesday

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

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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

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

VICE MODERATOR: Diane Cooper-Schick

PAST MODERATOR: Mark Schofield

CLERK: Janet Malley, she/her

TREASURER: Craig Jennings

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