

We Are Living Christ-Inspired Action.

August 3, 2025



Vision Statement:

We Are a Nurturing, Beloved Community.
We Are Growing Authentic Christian Faith.
We Are Living Christ-Inspired Action.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
August 3, 2025 10:00 am

[F]aith that does not produce justice and peace in the world is simply not the faith of Jesus...Indeed, Jesus has suffered identity theft in America, and it is also time for Christians to come back to the real Jesus. His clear texts and teachings about loving our neighbor—especially those different from us, welcoming “the other,” and finding the truth that will set us free from our ideological captivities—must all be believed and, if not, to no longer call Jesus Lord.
~ Jim Wallis

The revolutionary sees his task as liberation not only of the oppressed but also of the oppressor.
~Steve Biko

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

WELCOME

Sharon Benton

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

*Rise in body or spirit

WE ARE A NURTURING, BELOVED COMMUNITY

WELCOME SONG

"God Welcomes All"

AMEN THEMBA

Energetically

The musical score is written for a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The second measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The third measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The fourth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The fifth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The sixth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The seventh measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The eighth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The second measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The third measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The fourth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The fifth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The sixth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The seventh measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The eighth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The lyrics are: "God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;". The second system also has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The second measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The third measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The fourth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The fifth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The sixth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The seventh measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The eighth measure contains a whole note chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The second measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The third measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The fourth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The fifth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The sixth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The seventh measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The eighth measure contains a whole note chord of F#2, A2, and C3. The lyrics are: "God's love is strong and it ne - ver ends.".

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THE STORY

Sharon Benton

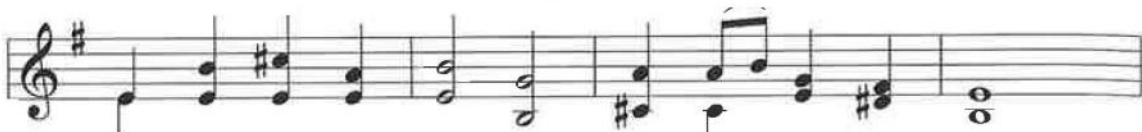
TIME WITH CHILDREN

Maya McEachern

*After Time with Children, children may remain on the pillows, sit with their adults,
or use the coloring tables in the front or by the windows.*



1 Je - sus Christ is wait - ing, wait - ing in the streets;
 2 Je - sus Christ is rag - ing, rag - ing in the streets,
 3 Je - sus Christ is heal - ing, heal - ing in the streets;
 5 Je - sus Christ is call - ing, call - ing in the streets,



no one is his neigh - bor, all a - lone he eats.
 where in - jus - tice spi - rals and real hope re - treats.
 cur - ing those who suf - fer, touch - ing those he greets.
 "Who will join my jour - ney? I will guide their feet."



Lis - ten, Lord Je - sus, I am lone - ly too.
 Lis - ten, Lord Je - sus, I am an - gry too.
 Lis - ten, Lord Je - sus, I have pit - y too.
 Lis - ten, Lord Je - sus, let my fears be few.



Make me, friend or stran - ger, fit to wait on you.
 In the king - dom's caus - es let me rage with you.
 Let my care be ac - tive, heal - ing just like you.
 Walk one step be - fore me; I will fol - low you.

Text: John L. Bell (Scotland) and Graham Maule (Scotland), © 1988 WGRC, Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)
 Music: French traditional, 15th c.; harm. James E. Clemens (USA), © 2001 James E. Clemens

COMMUNITY PRAYER

by John van de Laar

Janet Ott

One Voice: In defiance of corruption and falsehood,
All Voices: **we commit to truth and integrity,
and we pray for honesty and uprightness
to increase in our world.**

One Voice: In defiance of apathy and hatred,
All Voices: **we choose to be proactive in love,
and we pray for understanding and peace
to increase in our world.**

One Voice: In defiance of self-interest and human arrogance,
All Voices: **we celebrate God's salvation,
and we pray for compassion and faith
to increase in our world.**

One Voice: In defiance of all that would oppose God's purpose among us,
All Voices: **we choose again to follow Christ,
and we continue to pray with our actions,
not just now, but at all times. Amen.**

SUNG INVITATION TO PRAYER

"As Colors in the Sky"

(after the prayers, hum 1x through)

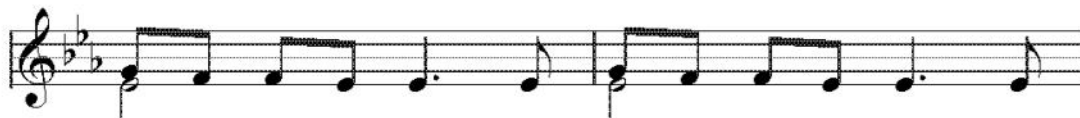
Unison



3 Cre - at - ing God, you dance, you move as one in three. Come



show us, by your rain-bow light, our shared hu - man - i - ty. The



heav - ens and the earth are made new ev - ery day, help



us dis - cov - er by your grace, new truth, new life, new ways.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sharon Benton

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

Matthew 25:31-45

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

"We Are Living Christ-Inspired Action"

Sharon Benton

First Congregational Church Vision Statement sermon series, part 3 of 3

GIFT OF MUSIC

"United"
by Pinkzebra

One Accord

WE ARE LIVING CHRIST-INSPIRED ACTION.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

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.*

The Words of Institution & Prayer of Consecration

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

Communion Music

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

One Accord

Arr. by Lloyd Larson

"Be the Change"

Based on texts by Mahatma Ghandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Matthew 5:15.

Music by Laura Farnell.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERING

You may make an offering either in the plates 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://fcgb.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.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Judy Widrig

***HYMN 581** (black hymnal)

"Lead Us from Death to Life"

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

***BENEDICTION & PASSING THE PEACE**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

Judy Widrig

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

Our pastor is available by appointment virtually or in person. Contact her by email or call the pastoral care line, 360-733-4255.

Sharon **sharon@fccb.net**

Our Chaplain is also available at
chaplain@fccb.net.

Or you can 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:

9:30 am-4:30 pm, M-Th. 10:00 am-2:00 pm, F.

PASTOR: Sharon Benton, she/her

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY LIFE:

Scott Ward, he/him (scott@fccb.net)

CHAPLAIN: Charlene Epp, she/her

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig, she/her

INTERIM MUSIC COORDINATOR:

Dallas Geil, he/him (music@fccb.net)

CHURCH SCHOOL/YOUTH COORDINATOR

Maya McEachern

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR

Moxxy Rogers, she/her

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran, she/her

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE:

Kurt Aagard, he/him

BOOKKEEPER: Eric Bowen, he/him

MODERATOR: Diane Cooper-Schick, she/her

VICE MODERATOR: Jordan Sandoval

CLERK: Janet Malley, she/her

TREASURER: Craig Jennings

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