

Loving Corrections

August 31, 2025



Vision Statement:

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

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
August 31, 2025 10:00 am

*Sometimes the mountain
is hidden from me in veils
of cloud, sometimes
I am hidden from the mountain
in veils of inattention, apathy, fatigue...
~ from "Witness" by Denise Levertov*

Ideas that are oppositional to my survival, ideas I have come to overtly disagree with as I have developed my own politic, have still shaped me, and are rooted into me. Only loving corrections have helped me become intentional about who and how I want to be and grow.

~ adrienne maree brown

PRELUDE

Emilie Buhl

RINGING THE BELL

WE ARE A NURTURING, BELOVED COMMUNITY

WELCOME SONG

"God Welcomes All"

AMEN THEMBA

Energetically

The musical score is written for two staves, treble and bass clef, in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and repetitive, using mostly quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;
God's love is strong and it ne - ver ends.

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**Rise in body or spirit*

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.

THE STORY

Sharon Benton

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Amelia Bacon

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.

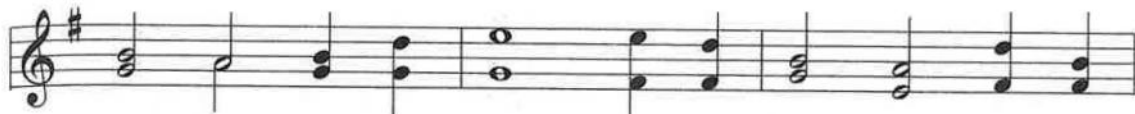
*HYMN

“Ask the Complicated Questions”

McRAE



1 Ask the com - pli - cat - ed ques - tions; do not
2 Seek the dis - con - cert - ing an - swers; fol - low
3 Knock on doors of new i - de - as, test as -
4 For in strug - gle we dis - cov - er truth both



fear to be found out, for our God makes strong our
where the Spir - it blows, test com - pet - ing truths for
sump - tions long grown stale, for Christ calls from shores of
sim - ple and pro - found: in the knock - ing, ask - ing,



weak - ness, forg - ing faith in fires of doubt.
wis - dom, for in ten - sion new life grows.
won - der, dar - ing us to try and fail.
seek - ing, we are o - pened, an - swered, found.

by David Bjorlin. Text: © 2018, GIA Publications, Inc. Tune Austrian Hymn by Joseph Haydn.

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COMMUNITY PRAYER

Barbara Mathers-Schmidt

One Voice: What do you mean I messed up, God?
I was trying my best with what I know!

All Voices: **We sometimes don't realize when we harm another;
we sometimes miss the mark even trying our best.**

One Voice: When did I speak poorly of my neighbor?
When did I use hurtful language or actions?

All Voices: **As the Psalmist cries, "how can anyone know
what they've accidentally done wrong?"**

One Voice: "Clear me of anything I've done not understanding,
and keep me from doing things I know are wrong."

All Voices: **Help us learn that, even when growth is hard,
we are better followers of your Word when we learn.**

One Voice: Then I'm not hopeless? I'm not a terrible person?

All Voices: **We are simply followers of the Way:
always learning, always growing, always trying again. 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

Psalm 19:7-14

Barbara Mathers-Schmidt

Common English Bible

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Barbara Mathers-Schmidt

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

"Loving Corrections"

Sharon Benton

GIFT OF MUSIC

"Psalm 19"
by Jess Ray

Moxxy Rogers, Ukulele
John Green, Cajon

WE ARE LIVING CHRIST-INSPIRED ACTION.

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://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 on the back cover of the bulletin.

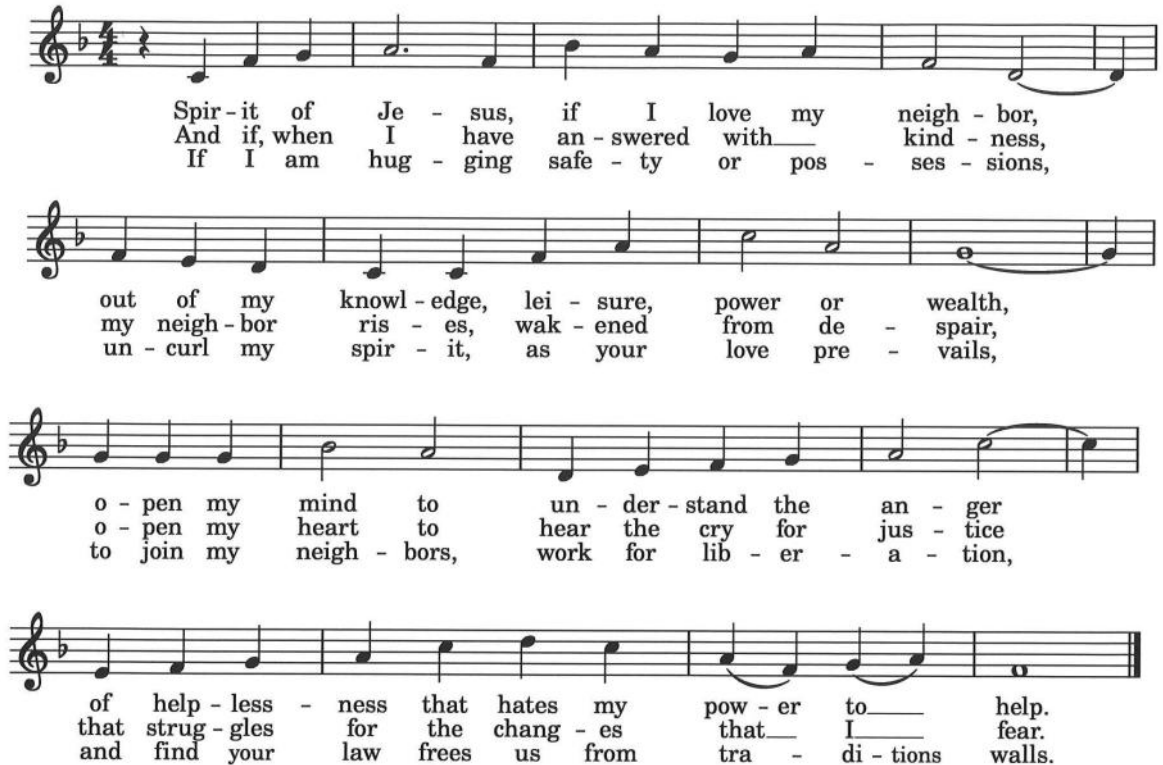
MUSICAL OFFERING

Emilie Buhl

*HYMN

"Spirit of Jesus, if I Love My Neighbor"

CHARTERHOUSE



Spir - it of Je - sus, if I love my neigh - bor,
And if, when I have an - swered with kind - ness,
If I am hug - ging safe - ty or pos - ses - sions,
out of my knowl - edge, lei - sure, power or wealth,
my neigh - bor ris - es, wak - ened from de - spair,
un - curl my spir - it, as your love pre - vails,
o - pen my mind to un - der - stand the an - ger
o - pen my heart to hear the cry for jus - tice
to join my neigh - bors, work for lib - er - a - tion,
of help - less - ness that hates my pow - er to help.
that strug - gles for the chang - es that I fear.
and find your law frees us from tra - di - tions walls.

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***BENEDICTION & PASSING THE PEACE**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

Emilie Buhl

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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