

Again & Again, We Are Reformed
March 21, 2021
#BiggerBalcony



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 14, 2021

10:00 am

#BiggerBalcony

Please sign in to Worship Connect to let us know you're here!

<http://tiny.cc/worshipconnect>

Change, even when welcomed, means death...We could die to some things so that we could live to others, or we could hold onto what is and die with it. Only one of these is a faithful way forward.

Again and again, we are being reformed. The process is uncomfortable, but the status quo is untenable. When change happens with us, what could possibly take root and flourish?

*~Rev. T. Denise Anderson, Coordinator for Racial and Intercultural Justice
with the Presbyterian Mission Agency*

PRELUDE

“Melodies”
by Sergei Prokofiev

Judy Widrig & Clara Kelly

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Sharon Benton

CALL TO WORSHIP

One Voice: Every week is a new week,
Another chance to say:

All Voices: "Here I am. Use me."

One Voice: Every day is a new day,
Another chance to say:

All Voices: "Thank you for yesterday. Thank you for tomorrow."

One Voice: Every hour is a new hour,
Another chance to say,

All Voices: "Again and again, make me new."

One Voice: We do not come to this place to stay the same.

All Voices: We come to this place to be changed.

One Voice: So let us worship holy God,
Who created yesterday, will create tomorrow,
and even now is creating something new.

All Voices: Thanks be to God. Amen.

A READING FROM THE POETS

"Keep Digging"

Amelia Bacon

*I can feel change inside of me.
It's a slow burn.
Change usually starts out hot —
Defensive and angry,
A self-righteous blanket
Of, "I am right and here's why . . ."
I wrap it around my shoulders
Like a barricade.
I fight the temptation to lean forward,
To play the challenger,
To argue with confidence.

But in time,
Almost always,
The heat fades.
The air leaves the balloon.
The audacity of it all
Starts to wear off.*

*And eventually,
What I am left with
Is myself
And a big, open sky.
It's colder here.
It's quieter.
I can hear my thoughts.

And in this big, wide openness
I am able to say out loud,
"Maybe I wasn't right.
Maybe I need to learn.
Maybe it's time for change.
Maybe that's okay."

And if I'm quiet, and if I'm paying attention,
I can usually hear God whisper inside of me,
"Good work, my child. Now keep digging."*

HYMN

"Spirit, Open My Heart"

WILD MOUNTAIN THYME



1 Spir - it, o - pen my heart to the
 2 God, re - place my ston - y heart with a
 3 Write your love up - on my heart as my
 4 May I weep with those who weep, share the



joy and pain of liv - ing. As you love
 heart that's kind and ten - der. All my cold -
 law, my goal, my sto - ry. In each thought,
 joy of sis - ter, broth - er. In the wel -



may I love, in re - ceiv - ing and in
 ness and fear to your grace I now sur -
 word, and deed, may my liv - ing bring you
 come of Christ, may we wel - come one an -



giv - ing,
 ren - der.
 glo - ry. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.
 oth - er.

Words: Ruth Duck, 1947-

Music: Irish melody; arr. Arthur G. Clyde, 1940-, alt.

Words © 1996 The Pilgrim Press
 Music arr. © 1997 The Pilgrim Press

U.S.A./Ireland
 7.8.6.8. and refrain
 WILD MOUNTAIN THYME

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Davi Weasley

Gracious God,
We want to see you.
We want to be known as the people who looked for Jesus;
But not only that, we want to be people who have your covenant written on our hearts.
Why do we feel so far away from that at times?
What went wrong?
Where did we lose our way?
Could you, would you, once again, write on our fragile hearts?
We would be so grateful. Amen.

KYRIE ELEISON

Cantor: Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. ALL: KY - RI - E E - LEI - SON.

KY - - RI - - E,

Cantor: Chri - ste e - lei - son. ALL: CHRI - STE E - LEI - SON.

CHRI - - STE, CHRI - - STE,

Cantor: Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. ALL: KY - RI - E E - LEI - SON.

KY - - RI - - E E - LEI - SON.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Rev. Davi Weasley

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Amelia Bacon

There are several options for giving: 1) Mail checks to First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. 2) Give at our website, <https://fccb.net/giving/>. 3) Use the GivePlus app. Download from your app store, set up an account, and give! 4) Give by text. Text a dollar amount to 208-516-2657, and set up your account. You're ready for easy giving by text! 5) Give by PayPal. Our easy link is [PayPal.Me/fccbucc](https://www.paypal.com/mefccbucc).

MUSICAL MEDITATION

"Clouds"

Amelia O.

by Zach Sobiech. Used with permission.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 12:20-33

Amelia Bacon

New Revised Standard Version

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Amelia Bacon

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

“Again & Again, We Are Reformed”

Rev. Susan Huffman

SONG

“Change”

Sarah Ackers, Zack Hill, &

by Tracy Chapman

Bronwyn Edwards

Thank you to members of Fauntleroy Church, UCC.

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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.

BENEDICTION

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

“Romance in F# Major”
by Robert Schumann

Judy Widrig

Guest Preacher

Susan Huffman is new to our congregation, but not to the United Church of Christ. She is an ordained minister who has served UCC congregations for 42 years. She met her husband, Ted, at church camp while growing up in Montana. Together, they have served churches in North Dakota, Idaho, and South Dakota. Susan is a Certified Church Educator in the United Church of Christ and has written curriculum for “The Inviting Word” and “Seasons of the Spirit.” Susan and Ted retired from First Congregational UCC in Rapid City, South Dakota in 2020 and moved to the Pacific Northwest to be near their son and his family. Susan is looking forward to becoming more involved in our church as time goes on.



Prayers & poetry by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



COVER IMAGE

Written On Our Hearts, by Rev. Lauren Right Pittman
Digital drawing inspired by Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Artist’s Statement, excerpt: *In this image, I drew an anatomical heart with the words, “I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” The heart is surrounded by covenantal imagery—including the stars imaging the vastness of Abraham’s descendants, the parted seas on the journey to the land flowing with milk and honey, and the rainbow signaling God’s promise to all of creation. It creates a beautiful kaleidoscope of stories that define our pilgrimage with God. The common thread throughout these narratives is that when we mess up, God is ready with a promise, again and again.*

AGAIN & AGAIN, history repeats, brokenness finds us, injustices persist. And yet, again & again, God sings a sacred refrain:

"I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair."

This Lent, we'll come to God again & again—with our full selves, with courage, with trust that God is paving a new way.

- Ash Wednesday - 2.17
- Palm Sunday - 3.28
- Maundy Thursday - 4.1
- Good Friday - 4.2
- Easter 4.4



LENT: 2.17-3.27.21

ASH WEDNESDAY

2.17.21 at 7 pm, on [Facebook Live](#)

LENTEN SUNDAYS

2.21.21-3.21.21 at 10 am on [Facebook Live](#)

LENTEN WEDNESDAYS

2.24.21-3.31.21, 6:30 pm—Adult Forum will discuss Entering the *Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week* by Amy-Jill Levine. Zoom meeting link will be in the weekly email.

LENTEN FRIDAYS:

2.19.21-3.26.21, 6:30 pm—Prayer Series, "Prayer: Living Our UCC Covenant." Zoom link in weekly email.

HOLY WEEK: 3.28-4.3.21

PALM SUNDAY

3.28.21 at 10 am on [Facebook Live](#)

MAUNDY THURSDAY

4.1.21 at 7 pm on [Facebook Live](#)

GOOD FRIDAY

4.2.21 at 7 pm on [Facebook Live](#)

EASTER: 4.4.21

6 am: Sunrise Service

10 am: Easter Worship on [Facebook Live](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lent Adult Forums: During we are reading of *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*, by Amy-Jill Levine. For details, see our Full Circle blog: <https://www.fccb.net/blog/february-adult-forums/>.

Lenten Prayer Series: Friday in Lent from 6:30-7:30 pm, Jean Scribner will facilitate a six-week series title For more information, visit <https://www.fccb.net/blog/lenten-prayer-series/>.

WORSHIP:

- **Sundays, 10:00 am**—Worship on Facebook Live. #BiggerBalcony

Upcoming Services:

- **March 21:** Fifth Sunday of Lent, John 12:20-33 (Jeremiah 31:31-34)
- **March 28:** Palm Sunday, John 12:1-19
- **April 4:** Easter Sunday. Sunrise Service, 6:30 pm. Easter Celebration, 10:00 am

WAYS TO CONNECT: For more information about these and other groups and activities, contact office@fccb.net.

- **Monday**
 - ◆ Poetry Writing Group: **1st & 3rd Mondays at 7:00 pm**
 - ◆ Happy Hour: **1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm**
- **Tuesday**
 - ◆ Book Club, **First Tuesday of the month, 9:30 am**
 - ◆ PJs & Storytime **Tuesdays, 6:30 pm**
- **Wednesday**
 - ◆ Adult Forums, **Wednesdays, 6:30 pm**
 - ◆ Faith Formation for Children & Youth **Wednesdays, 6:30 pm**
- **Thursday**
 - ◆ Morning Coffee Group: **1st & 3rd Thursdays, 9:30 am**
 - ◆ Evening Book Club, **6:30 pm weekly**
- **Friday**
 - ◆ Knitting Group, **Fridays, 10:00 am**
 - ◆ Coffee Hour, **2nd & 4th Fridays. 1:00 pm**
 - ◆ Prayer Series, **Fridays, 6:30 pm**
- **Saturday**
 - ◆ Create & Check In, **every other Saturday, 10:00 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.

VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH PASTORAL STAFF

In the before time, our pastoral staff were available by appointment. In COVID-19 time, they are available for virtual meetings by appointment. Contact them by email or call the pastoral care line, 360-733-4255

Sharon: sharon@fccb.net

Davi: davi@fccb.net

Sharry: sharry@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

Office Mobile Phone: 360-303-6806

24/7 Emergency Pastoral Care: 360-733-4255

office@fccb.net • www.fccb.net

Facebook: facebook.com/fccbucc

Twitter: @BhamUCC

Office Hours: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

LEAD PASTOR: Sharon Benton

PASTOR FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS,

& MISSION: David Weasley

MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION:

Sharry Nyberg

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig

NURSERY ATTENDANT: Lisa Harbine

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran

ACCOUNTANT: Renée Relin

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE: Kurt Aagard

CARE ADMIN. SUPPORT: Laura Norton

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE:

Alanna Steele

HEALTH MINISTER: Carol Nicolay

MODERATOR: Bill Henkel

VICE MODERATOR: Beth Tyne

PAST MODERATOR: Caryl Dunavan

CLERK: TBA

TREASURER: Laurie Hoyt

HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller

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