

**Pacific Northwest Conference, UCC**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**April 30, 2023**



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 30, 2023

10:00 am

*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. Their movements back and forth are a joy for us.*

*Masking is encouraged but not mandatory during services. Council supports individuals making the best decisions for their health and for the health of our community and, as always, encourages best practices - hand washing, staying home when unwell, and staying up to date with vaccinations. Please always respect others' choice to mask.*

*The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others.*

*~ bell hooks, Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*

### PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

### INTROIT

"Little Bird in Heaven"  
by Martha Scanlan

Unbroken Circle

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Sharon Benton  
& Rev. Davi Weasley

### RINGING OF THE BELL

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** by enfleshed Rev. Tara Young Brown

One Voice: We gather in the presence of God to encounter  
Love that sets free.

**All Voices: We do not come seeking crumbs of justice  
but a way of life that liberates.**

One Voice: Together, we practice courage in resisting evil  
and rejecting the temptations of complicity  
and complacency.

**All Voices: The Spirit leads us in power and truth.**

One Voice: Our faith is placed in Love Eternal  
that lifts broken spirits and brings new life  
from places of ruin.

**All Voices: With hope that is neither narrow nor fragile,  
we come to follow Christ.**

*\*Rise in body or spirit*

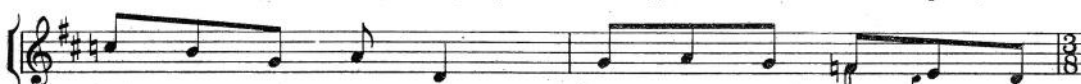


1. Here in this place, — new light is stream - ing,  
 2. We are the young— our lives are a mys - t'ry,  
 4. Not in the dark of build - ings con - fin - ing,



1. now is the dark - ness, van - ished a - way, See, in this space, our  
 2. we are the old— who yearn for your face, We have been sung through—

4. not in some heav - en, light years a - way, but here in this place, the



1. fears and our dream - ings, brought here to you in the  
 2. out all of his - t'ry, called to be light to the  
 4. new light is shin - ing, now is the King - dom,



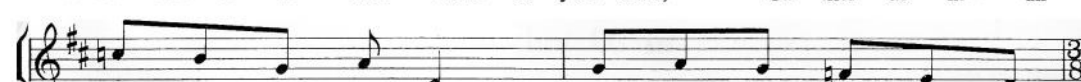
1. light of this day.  
 2. whole hu - man race.  
 4. now is the day.



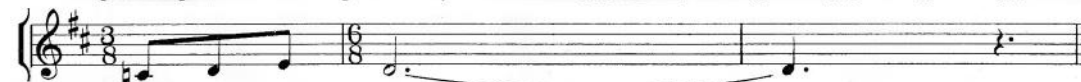
1. Ga - ther us in— the lost and for - sa - ken,  
 2. Ga - ther us in— the rich and the haugh - ty,  
 4. Ga - ther us in— and hold us for - ev - er,



1. Ga - ther us in— the blind and the lame; Call to us now, and  
 2. Ga - ther us in— the proud and the strong; Give us a heart so  
 4. Ga - ther us in— and make us your own; Ga - ther us in— all



1. we shall a - wa - ken, we shall a - rise at the  
 2. meek and so low - ly, give us the cour - age to  
 4. peo - ples to - geth - er, fire of love in our



1. sound of our name.  
 2. en - ter the song.  
 4. flesh and our bone.

*Children are invited to Church School.*

**SUNG RESPONSE**

**"May the Love of God Fill You"**  
by Tom Hunter

May the love of God fill you from your head down to your toes. May it

3  
wig - gle through your fin - gers and dance up - on your nose. May the

5  
peo - ple all a - round you help you live so lov - ing grows. May the

7  
love of God fill you up un - til it ov - er flows.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

by Bob Feeney

Rev. Bob Feeney

One Voice: Holy Mother of the Mountains, Maker of all Creation in whom we live and move and have our very being, you call us into deep connection with one another. In Christ, you show us a way that demands that love and justice be united. Yet we confess, that too often we settle for justice that retaliates, or love that does not demand accountability.

**All Voices: Forgive us, Holy One, for the wounds we inflict on one another. Forgive us when we have asked others to bear their pain in silence. May your Spirit of power inspire in us the courage and compassion to bind one another's wounds, to work for the healing of all, and to imagine a world of love and justice. Through Christ, we pray, amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

by Bob Feeney

Rev. Bob Feeney

One Voice: Beloved Siblings in Christ, God's vision for us is a community of radical reconciliation, healing, and joy—beyond what we can even imagine! God calls us to healing, and to the ongoing work of repair, and God's Holy Spirit falls afresh on every place where we dare to engage in that holy work.

**All Voices: Thanks be to God! Amen!**

**PASSING THE PEACE**

Rev. Bob Feeney

*If you're willing, please share peace with those worshipping online by coming to the microphone and offering "The peace of Christ" or "May God's peace be with you" or some other words of grace.*

## SUNG RESPONSE

"Halle, Halle, Halle"

HALLE HALLE



Tune: Arr. by John L. Bell; © 1990, Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc. Used under OneLicense #A-718199.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. 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/](http://www.fccb.net/contact-us/) to send a message or call the church to talk with a pastor.*

**ANTHEM**

“Here and Now” Pickup Choir & Unbroken Circle  
written by the First Congregational Church Poetry Group,  
to the tune of “Will the Circle Be Unbroken”

*Here we gather, all together,  
people who have heard Your call.  
Let us open hearts in welcome,  
for your children, for us all.*

*We will sing songs from our hist'ry,  
hymns of faith that keep us strong,  
we will holler for true justice,  
hear the angels shout along.*

*May the circle be unbroken,  
here and now, God, here and now.  
Ev'ry day you give us power,  
show us how, God, show us how.*

*Give us strength to tell your story,  
we can't do this work alone,  
help us grow the circle wider  
until all the world is one.*

*There are people who need fairness,  
who are weary and need care.  
We will lead with God's conviction,  
we will be the ones who dare.*

*We are united, one in spirit,  
inspired by God's loving grace,  
may we continue transformation,  
beyond these walls, beyond this place*

**A READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

Acts 2:42-47  
Common English Bible

Rev. Jenn Hagedorn

**SCRIPTURE RESPONSE**

Rev. Jenn Hagedorn

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

“Devoted Community”

Rev. Dr. Cheryl Lindsay

\*HYMN 330

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

LET US BREAK BREAD

INVITATION TO OFFERING & COMMUNION

Invitation

Rev. Sharon Benton

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.*

*If you're joining us from home, gather something to eat and drink;  
the risen Christ will meet us wherever we are.*

**Communion Liturgy** by enfleshed

One: The Holy One be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Open your hearts.

**Many: We open our hearts to you, O God.**

One: Let us give thanks to God, an Abiding Presence.

**Many: To the One who companions us through all things,  
we give thanks and praise.**

One: Faithful One, we come to your table...

In awe and gratitude, we join together in praise of you,  
Source of Abundance:

**Many: Holy, Holy, Holy One**

**God of justice and love**

**Blessed is your presence among us**

One: Since the beginning...we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Many: Christ was birthed among us.**

**Christ was killed among us.**

**Christ rises again among us.**

One: Gracious One, may your Spirit be poured out upon these elements.

May this bread and this cup be for us a revival of hope and a renewal of  
courage as we encounter your presence among the ordinary gifts of life.

Through the grace of your sustenance, may Christ be with us.

*If you're worshiping in person today, you may come forward to receive communion. 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.*

*When you come forward, please bring your offering to lay in the plates.*

*You also give online by scanning the QR code on the inside back page or by texting (360) 205-1297.*

**Communion Music**

**"For This Joy"**

**One Accord**

by Susan LaBarr

**Prayer After Receiving**

One: God of Persistence, though you have been betrayed many times,  
you still do not give up on love. Evil is relentless but so, too, is your belief  
in us. In our ability to be transformed. To turn from dominance.  
To mend and repair where harm has been done.  
May we, too, believe in our potential for co-creating with you a future  
of flourishing for all life. We give thanks for this meal, a reminder of your  
unending grace and abiding companionship. Amen.



For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble, for  
 For all who share life, a place at the ta - ble, re -  
 For those we ne - glect, a place at the ta - ble, a  
 For all who have breath, a place at the ta - ble, a  
 For you and for me, a place at the ta - ble, though  
 For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble, to



ev - ery-one born, clean wa - ter and bread, a shel - ter, a space, a  
 vis - ing the roles, de - cid - ing the share, with wis - dom and grace, di -  
 voice to be heard, a part in the song, the hands of a child in  
 cov - en - ant shared, a wel - com - ing space, a rain - bow of race and  
 wound - ed and sore, with need to for - give, in an - ger, in hurt, a  
 live with - out fear, and sim - ply to be, to work, to speak out, to



REFRAIN

safe place for grow - ing, for ev - ery - one born, a star ov - er - head, and  
 vi - ding the pow - er, for all who share life, a sys - tem that's fair,  
 hands that are wrink - led, for those we ne - glect, the right to be - long,  
 gen - der and col - our, for all who have breath, the cha - lice of grace,  
 mind - set of mer - cy, for you and for me, a new way to live,  
 wit - ness and wor - ship, for ev - ery - one born, the right to be free,



God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and joy, com - pass - ion and peace: yes,



God will de - light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice, jus - tice and joy!

*After worship, join us in the Social Hall for refreshments.*

QR Code for online giving.  
Scan with the camera of  
your smartphone.



Use the dropdown menu to  
select the Annual Meeting  
Fund or another fund of your  
choice. Thank you!

**COMMUNION ELEMENT INGREDIENTS:**

*Communion loaf— whole wheat flour, molasses, yeast, salt. Juice— grape juice, vitamin C.  
Gluten free— sorghum, tapioca, millet & rice flours; sea salt, honey, canola oil, water, ginger ale, egg.*

**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 with masks. 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

Twitter: @BhamUCC

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

LEAD PASTOR: **Sharon Benton, she/her**  
PASTOR FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS,  
& MISSION: **Davi Weasley, they/them**

INTERIM MINISTERS OF FAITH FORMATION:

**Ted, he/him & Susan Huffman, she/her**

MINISTER OF MUSIC: **Lucy Bledig, she/her**

ORGANIST: **Judy Widrig, she/her**

ACCOUNTANT: **Erin Kennedy, she/her**

OFFICE MANAGER: **Cydne Cochran, she/her**

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE:

**Kurt Aagard, he/him**

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:

**Georgia Drost, she/they**

MODERATOR: **Mark Schofield**

VICE MODERATOR: **Scott Ward, he/him**

PAST MODERATOR: **Beth Tyne**

CLERK: **Janet Malley**

TREASURER: **Craig Jennings**

HISTORIAN: **Stacy Miller**

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