

Unraveling the Psalms

September 6, 2026



Vision Statement:

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

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
September 6, 2026 10:00 am

PRELUDE

Judy Widrig

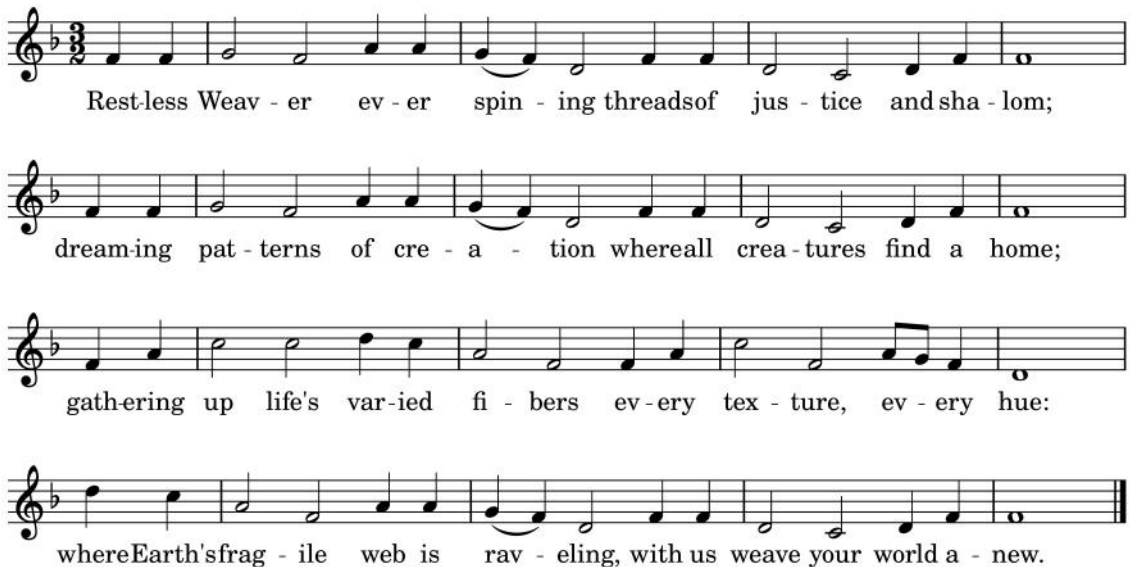
RINGING THE BELL

WE ARE A NURTURING, BELOVED COMMUNITY.

WELCOME SONG

"Restless Weaver"

BEACH SPRING



Rest-less Weav - er ev - er spin - ing threadsof jus - tice and sha - lom;
dream-ing pat - terns of cre - a - tion whereall crea - tures find a home;
gather-ing up life's var-ied fi - bers ev-ery tex - ture, ev - ery hue:
whereEarth'sfrag - ile web is rav - eling, with us weave your world a - new.

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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.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sharon Benton

After Time with Children, children may go with Maya to church school in the social hall or remain in the sanctuary as they choose.

***HYMN 315** (black hymnal)

“O Word of God Incarnate”

MUNICH

COMMUNITY PRAYER

Janet Ott

One Voice: Still-Speaking God, your Word isn’t always clear.

**All Voices: We hear scripture read, and we seek its meaning,
but it comes to us from ancient people
in cultures we can’t fully comprehend.**

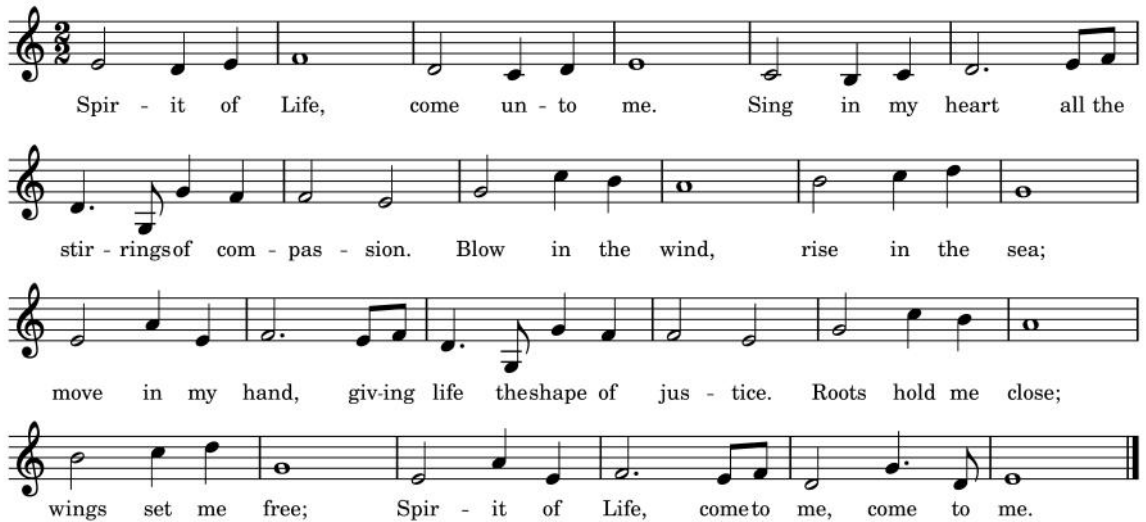
One Voice: Each week we seek wisdom in our Bible
knowing others have found life-giving meaning in its pages.

**All Voices: We know the prophets instruct justice;
we know Jesus leads with compassion.**

One Voice: Regardless, your message in the words sometimes elude us.

**All Voices: Thank you for still speaking in ways we might hear you.
Thank you for helping us listen and follow. Amen.**

SUNG INVITATION TO PRAYER



Spir - it of Life, come un - to me. Sing in my heart all the
stir - rings of com - pas - sion. Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in my hand, giv-ing life the shape of jus - tice. Roots hold me close;
wings set me free; Spir - it of Life, come to me, come to me.

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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.*

*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 119:33-40
UCC Living Psalms

Janet Ott

UCC Living Psalms

When faithful followers read you
rightly, O Eternal, your laws make a more
heavenly earth.

Give us understanding of your
commandments, so we can live them well.

Help us hear when your decrees have
been twisted to accommodate hate or
exclusion, to maintain power for the
powerful, to project fear from the fearful.

Grant us insight to see your statutes
in action—policies of equity, beloved
community emerging naturally.

When we forget your promise, O
Eternal, hold us gently accountable;
for your word is good, and we long for
loving correction.

Heal our wounds from others' shaming
rebukes—the attempted keeping of your
precepts by broken humanity.

Keep teaching, O Eternal,
and we promise to keep learning.

Common English Bible

LORD, teach me what your statutes are
about, and I will guard every part of them.

Help me understand so I can guard
your instruction and keep it with all my
heart.

Lead me on the trail of your
commandments, because that is what I
want.

Turn my heart to your laws, not to
greedy gain.

Turn my eyes away from looking at
worthless things. Make me live by your
way.

Confirm your promise to your servant—
the promise that is for all those who honor
you.

Remove the insults that I dread, because
your rules are good.

Look how I desire your precepts!
Make me live by your righteousness.

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.**

GIFT OF MUSIC

WE ARE LIVING CHRIST-INSPIRED ACTION.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Communion Song

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

Communion Music

Judy Widrig

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERING

You may make an offering either in the plates or online.

*Your generosity allows us together to 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://fccb.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**

"We Limit Not the Truth of God "

FOREST GREEN

We lim-it not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind, to
Who dare to bind to one's own sense the or-a-cles of heaven, for
E-ter-nal God, In-car-nate Word, Spir-it of flame and dove: en -
5 no - tions of our day_ and place, crude, par-tial and con - fined; No,
all the na-tions, tongues, and climes and all the a - ges given? That
large, ex-pand all liv - ing souls to com - pre-hend your love; And
9 let a new and bet - ter hope with - in our hearts be stirred: O
un - i-verse, how much un-known! that o - cean un - ex - plored!
help us all to seek your will with wis - er powers con - ferred:
13 God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

***BENEDICTION & PASSING THE PEACE**

Sharon Benton

POSTLUDE

Judy Widrig

Flowers this morning are given by Cindy Minkler in memory of her mom, Gwen Minkler.

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:

10:00 am-2:00 pm, M-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

MUSIC COORDINATOR:

Niko F C Pen, he/they (music@fccb.net)

CHURCH SCHOOL/

YOUTH COORDINATOR:

Maya McEachern, they/them

NURSERY ATTENDANT:

Keira Martin, she/her

WORSHIP MEDIA COORDINATOR:

Moxxy Rogers, she/her

CHURCH FACILITY MANAGER:

Eric Whitaker, he/him

MODERATOR: Jordan Sandoval, she/they

VICE MODERATOR: Kate Destler

PAST MODERATOR:

Diane Cooper-Schick, she/her

CLERK: Leigh Hjelmseth

TREASURER: Darlene Mathias

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