Filled with Thanksgiving

November 22, 2026



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

first congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 22, 2026 at 10:00am

Welcome to Worship

"It's one thing to be grateful. It's another to give thanks.
Gratitude is what you feel. Thanksgiving is what you do."
- Tim Keller

Prelude — *"A Celtic Song of Thanks"*, Words by Diane Hannibal, Arr. by Douglas Nolan — Performed by One Accord

Land Acknowledgment — Laurie Hoyt and Scout Mitchell

All: **We are gathered on the traditional homeland of the Central Coast Salish Straights People, including the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Nation**.

One: We recognize that the systematic, genocidal campaigns perpetuated by governments, churches, and colonizers led to the forceful removal of Indigenous People from their land across North America.

All: **We hold in esteem the strong and resilient sovereign peoples that have survived the dispossession of their homelands.**

One: Those who came before us received the teachings of faith and we acknowledge, with humility, that these acts are directly tied to the intergenerational traumas and the health and economic disparities that exist today.

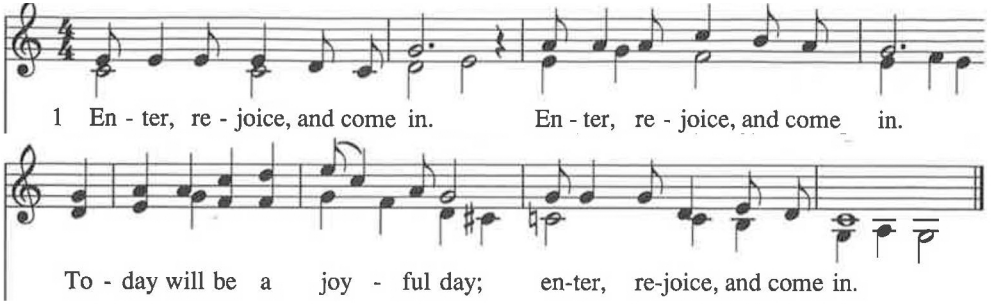
All: **As a Christian community, we are called by God to ally ourselves with tribal nations, to offer educational opportunities, and to support efforts by tribes for repatriation, sovereignty, and stewardship of the land.**
We offer our deepest respect and gratitude for our Indigenous neighbors, the Lummi Nation, the Nooksack Nation, and other Central Coast Salish Straights people, for their enduring care and protection of our shared lands, waterways and the Beings that depend on them.

Ringing the Bell Children of the Church

We Are A Nurturing, Beloved Community

Welcome Song

"Enter, Rejoice, and Come In" Ruspini



Welcome Scott Ward

We love children in worship; their noises and wiggles are welcome, too. There are pillows and a coloring, book, and play area 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 Maya McEachern

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 #422 (Black Hymnal)** *"Come, O Thankful People, Come"* St. George's Windsor

Community Prayer Barbara Mathers-Schmidt

One: Creator and Source of all life, we gather today as one community, bringing all of who we are. From every background, story, and walk of life, we lift our voices in joy and gratitude.

All: We celebrate life and community with gladness. We step into this space with open hearts and songs of hope.

One: We pause to remember that we did not make ourselves. We are deeply connected to You, to the earth, and to one another. We belong to a larger family, held together by grace and care.

All: We belong to one another and to the One who created us. None of us walks alone.
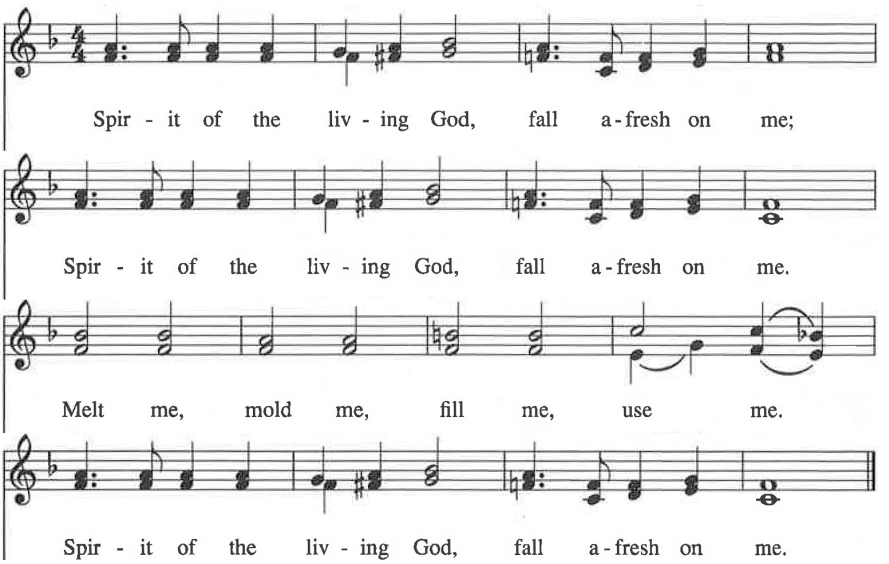
One: In this time together, we set down our worries and open our hands in thankfulness. We are grateful for the gift of breath, for the neighbors beside us, and for the strength to serve our community with love.

All: We come into this space with gratitude and praise. We give thanks for every good gift in our lives.

One: Because love is at the center of it all. Your goodness does not run out, and Your faithfulness stays steady through every season and every generation.

All: Your goodness is constant, Your love is everlasting, and Your truth holds strong for all generations. Amen.

Sung Prayer *"Spirit of the Living God"* Iverson



Prayers of the People Charlene Epp

The Prayer of Jesus - We invite you to use language for God that is most comforting for you: "Our Creator, "Our Father "or "Our Mother."

All: **Our Creator**
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kindom 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 kindom,
And the power,
And the glory,
Forever and ever.
Amen

We Are Growing Authentic Christian Faith

A Reading from Scripture — Psalm 100, Inclusive Bible — Barbara Mathers-Schmidt

Scripture Response
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.

Moments of Gratitude — Scout Mitchell, Charlotte and Evelyn Simon, Cathy Belben, Raya Douglas, Jordan Sandoval

Gift of Music — *"We Come to Say Thank You" by Pepper Choplin* — Performed by One Accord

We Are Living Christ-Inspired Action

Announcements & Offering — Scott Ward

Your generosity allows us together to nurture beloved community, grow authentic Christian faith, and live Christ-inspired action. Thank you!
You are welcome to put an offering in the basket during worship. Or, if you prefer, you may:

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		Handbell Choir
***Hymn #419** **Black Hymn**	"Now Thank We All Our God"	Nun Danket
***Benediction & Passing the Peace**		Scott Ward
Postlude		Judy Widrig

Appointments with Pastoral Staff

While our pastor is on personal leave, our pastoral care line remains active and staffed by our Chaplain, Charlene Epp.
You can reach Charlene by email at chaplain@fccb.net, or by calling the pastoral care line: 360-733-4255.
You can also email our Admin Assistant: office@fccb.net

Sermon Notes, Reflections, Doodles

Open and Affirming (ONA):
As an Open and Affirming congregation believing in a loving God, we welcome all people 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
While our pastor is on personal leave, our care line remains active, staffed by Chaplain Charlene Epp.

Contact Charlene by email: Chaplain@fccb.net.

Pastoral care line: 360-733-4255
You can also email the church office: office@fccb.net.

24/7 Emergency Pastoral Care:
360-733-4255
office@fccb.net

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
An Open & Affirming Congregation
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Church Office: 360-734-3720
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PASTOR: Sharon Benton, she/her
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CHAPLAIN: Charlene Epp, she/her (chaplain@fbccb.net)
ORGANIST: Judy Widrig, she/her
MUSIC COORDINATOR: Niko F C Pen, he/they (music@fccb.net)
CHURCH SCHOOL/ YOUTH COORDINATOR: Maya McEachern, they/them (churchschool@fccb.net)
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CHURCH FACILITY MANAGER: Eric Whitaker, he/him (Facility@fccb.net)
CUSTODIAN: Karen Russell, she/her (custodian@fccb.net)

MODERATOR: Jordan Sandoval, she/they
VICE MODERATOR: Kate Destler
PAST MODERATOR: Diane Cooper-Schick, she/her
CLERK: Michael Bunitsky
TREASURER: Darlene Mathias

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