

# First Congregational Church of Long Beach

JANUARY 26, 2025 • 10 A.M.

### **Our Mission:**

to be a visible and prophetic presence in the church and in the world, to steadfastly proclaim the radically inclusive love of God, to be open to, and celebrate differences; to honor thinking for oneself, to faithfully work for the inclusion of, and justice for all people, regardless of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, race or national origin, or any particular element of a person's total humanity, and for all of God 's creation.

Please join in where words are shown in bold type. Please stand if you are able for items with an asterisk\*.

Centering ourselves with the sound of the chime and the Land Acknowledgement

Prelude Toccata in G Dr. Marc Dickey

Dennis Eliot

Acolytes: Cecily and Sam Swierenga

**Invocation** The Rev. Wally Hoeger

Introit Mary's Little Boy Child Bellissimo

Jester Hairston Curtis Heard, piano

Arr. by Stan DeWitt

### \*Call to Celebration

Rev. Hoeger and The Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg

One: In the midst of a world aching in pain

Many: We gather together to remember the Good News.

One: The Spirit of the Living God still moves among us today!

Many: When truth breaks through the lies of evil...

One: When the oppressed rise up...

Many: When the complicit awaken...

One: When the hungry, thirsty, and weary are tended with care...

Many: When we recognize each other as beloved...

One: God takes on flesh among us, in ways great and small.

Many: Thanks be to God, who brings us Life.

\*Processional Hymn #70 God Is Here! As We Your People Meet (v. 1, 3, & 4) See page 8

**Welcome and Announcements** 

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

**Passing of the Peace** 

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

### **Welcome Song**

The children are invited to come forward during this song.



Text: David Lohman Music: David Lohman

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### Time with the Children

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

The children are dismissed to their Sunday School classes.

Anthem "Hymn" Sanctuary Choir

Text by Frank Pooler Music by Stan DeWitt

Scripture Luke 4:14-21 Carmen Abbott

The Inclusive Bible

Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and his reputation spread throughout the region. He was teaching in the Galilean synagogues, and all were loud in their praise.

Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. Entering the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was his habit, Jesus stood up to do the reading. When the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, he unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

"The Spirit of our God is upon me:

because the Most High has anointed me

to bring Good News to those who are poor.

God has sent me to proclaim liberty to those held captive,

recovery of sight to those who are blind,

and release to those in prison—

to proclaim the year of our God's favor."

Rolling up the scroll, Jesus gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he said to them, "Today, in your hearing, this scripture passage is fulfilled."

### **Contemporary Reading**

Carmen Abbott

The Way It Is William Stafford

There's a thread you follow. It goes among

things that change. But it doesn't change.

People wonder about what you are pursuing.

You have to explain about the thread.

But it is hard for others to see.

While you hold it you can't get lost.

Tragedies happen; people get hurt

or die; and you suffer and get old.

Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.

You don't ever let go of the thread.

**Special Music** 

# Hear My Song Jason Robert Brown

Megan O'Toole Sanctuary Quartet Curtis Heard, piano

Sermon Rev. Hoeger

\*Hymn #163

Many are the Lightbeams (v. 1 - 3) See page 9

# **Prayers of the People**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

Our Common Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

May the hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the people of the earth!

With the bread we need today, feed us.

For the hurts we inflict on one another, forgive us.

In the time of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For your reign is in the glory of the power that is love,

now and forever.

Amen.

# Offering

Invitation Carmen Abbott

Offertory Trumpet in Dialogue

(Basse et Dessus de Trompette)
Louis Nicolas Clerambault

Scan for our secure online donation site or go to bit.ly/FCCLBGive

Or mail a check to First Congregational Church, 241 Cedar Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802

\*Doxology: Old Hundredth (Hymn No. 7)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God with all the hosts above;

Praise God in wonder, joy and love.



Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

<sup>\*</sup> Prayer of Dedication

\*Recessional Hymn #76 Sent Forth by God's Blessing See page 10 & 11

\*Benediction Rev. Hoeger

\*Benediction Response Peace to All People Sanctuary Choir

Music by Curtis Heard

Words by Tina Datsko De Sánchez

Postlude Dialogue Dr. Dickey

Gilbert M. Martin

One License: 706147-A (in support of our livestream)

The sanctuary flowers this morning are provided by the Morales Family in celebration of the life of Alison's mother, Caroline, and in appreciation for the warm welcome given to Caroline by our First Church family when she attended worship here over the years.

### Parish Concerns

Please remember in your prayers: The Altadena UCC Church whose building burned down in the Eaton fire, Penney Wilson-Borth (mother of Sebastian Jobin-Reyes), Mary Gissel (mother of Doug Gissel), Chris and Jeff (friends of Lisa Bode Heard who lost everything in the Eaton fire), Yesenia Hernandez, Wayne Hester; Joanne Paine; Aida Porteneuve; Kathleen ODaniels, Marion Hinze, Beau Chandler, Ben Rockwell, Dale Whitney.

To submit joys and concerns for inclusion in the bulletin and the newsletter and to subscribe to the newsletter, contact the office: office@firstchurchlb.org.

# Birthdays This Week – Happy Birthday!

- 26 Lindsey Nelson
- 29 Jim Comoe
- 30 Wally Hoeger
- 31 Alex Arias, Andrew Arias, Yesenia Hernandez

# This Week at First Church

Sunday, January 26

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room & Zoom 9 AM All Seasons Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room 9:30 AM Charming Chimes Rehearsal – Bell Room

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

10 AM Service of Celebration – Sanctuary & YouTube.com/1stChurch Sunday School: K-2nd Grades – Vaughn 1; 3rd-5th Grades –

Klar 1; Jr. High - Sacred Space; High School - High School Rm.

11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room

11:30 AM In-Betweeners Group - Off-Site

Parenting Forum: Calming the Chaos - Koinonia Room

1:30 PM Urban Community Outreach Drop-In Center – Patterson Hall

Monday, January 27

10 AM Archives Group – Ramsay Dining Room

7 PM Building, Historic Preservation and Safety Board Meeting – Zoom

South Coast Chorale Rehearsal – Ramsay Dining Room

Tuesday, January 28

7 PM Church Council – Zoom

Wednesday, January 29

5 PM DAYS Safe Passage Meeting – Klar 3

7 PM South Coast Chorale Rehearsal – Ramsay Dining Room

Thursday, January 30

4 PM DAYS Safe Passage Meeting – Klar 2 & 3

5 PM Jubellance Rehearsal – Bell Room

5:30 PM DAYS Leaders LB - Klar 2 & 3

6 PM Bellissimo Rehearsal – Bell Room

7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

Friday, January 31

1:30 PM DAYS Grocery Program – Potholder Lot

Saturday, February 1

9:30 AM Golf Group – off-site

10 AM Urban Community Outreach Food Drive – Maple Way Alley

1 PM PRISM Small Group Meeting – Koinonia Room

Sunday, February 2

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room & Zoom

9 AM All Seasons Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

9:30 AM Charming Chimes Rehearsal – Bell Room

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

10 AM Service of Celebration – Sanctuary & YouTube.com/1stChurch Sunday School: K-2nd Grades – Vaughn 1; 3rd-5th Grades – Klar 1; Jr. High – Sacred Space; High School – High School Rm.

11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room

11:30 AM Board of Stewardship and Finance Meeting – Klar 2

Board of Christian Education Meeting – Ramsay Dining Room & Zoom

Board of Social Justice and Outreach Meeting – Booth Chapel

Board of Parish Life Meeting – Klar 3

Board of Cultural Arts Meeting - Pownall Room & Zoom

1:30 PM Urban Community Outreach Drop-In Center – Patterson Hall

# Calming the Chaos - Workshop for parents of teens and tweens By Rev. Wally Hoeger

Calling all parents of teens and tweens! After church today we will be meeting to learn about ways to connect with our kids while parenting through this unique phase of life. We're planning to have pizza at 11:30am for parents and youth in the Ramsay Dinning Hall and then the youth will head downstairs to play games while the parents will meet with Rachel McBride, an experienced educator who has led parenting presentation for the school district as well as other locations. She specializes in parenting strategies that help parents to bring a sense of peace, playfulness, and connection into their relationships with their children.

### **In-Betweeners**

By Caleb Aparicio

We made it to 2025, y'all! For our first meeting of the year, we will be walking down to Altar Society Brewing & Coffee Co., located at 230 Pine Ave. I thought this would be a fun way to kick-off the new year, catch up with each other, and talk about what our 2025 goals are! It's always easier to stay on track when you have support We'll meet in the Koinonia room after service, by the couches nearest to the exit to the courtyard, and start walking over at 11:30am.

In-Betweeners is First Church's young adults group for those 20 - 40 years old. All of First Church's Small Groups are open to both church and community members. The groups are organized around themes and designed to foster connection and community.

God Is Here! As We Your People Meet

Fred Pratt Green, 1978; alt.



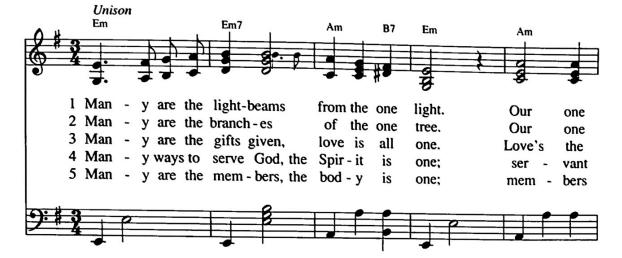
Though he retired in 1969, this distinguished British poet has continued to write hymns. In addition to administering several circuits and local congregations, Fred Pratt Green published plays, translations, and poems. Emory University in Atlanta awarded him an honorary doctorate. Tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7.D. Cyril V. Taylor, 1941

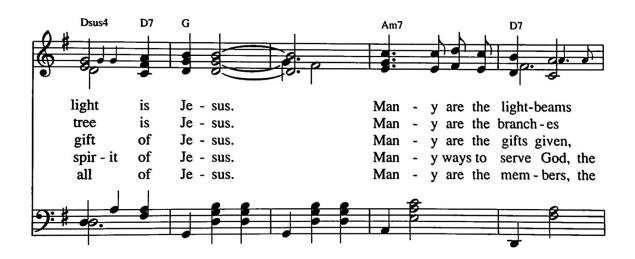
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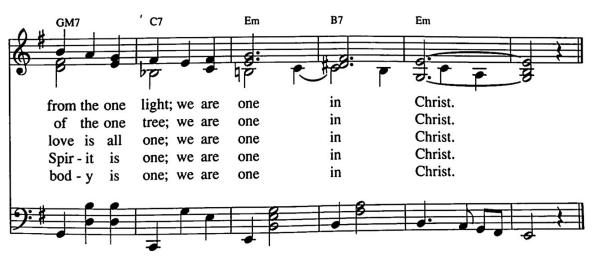
# Many Are the Lightbeams

Cyprian of Carthage, "De unitate ecclesiae," 252 C.E. Swedish paraphr. by Anders Frostenson (b. 1906) Transl. David Lewis, 1983

John 8:12; 9:5; 15:1-5; 1 Cor. 12:4-27; Gal. 3:28





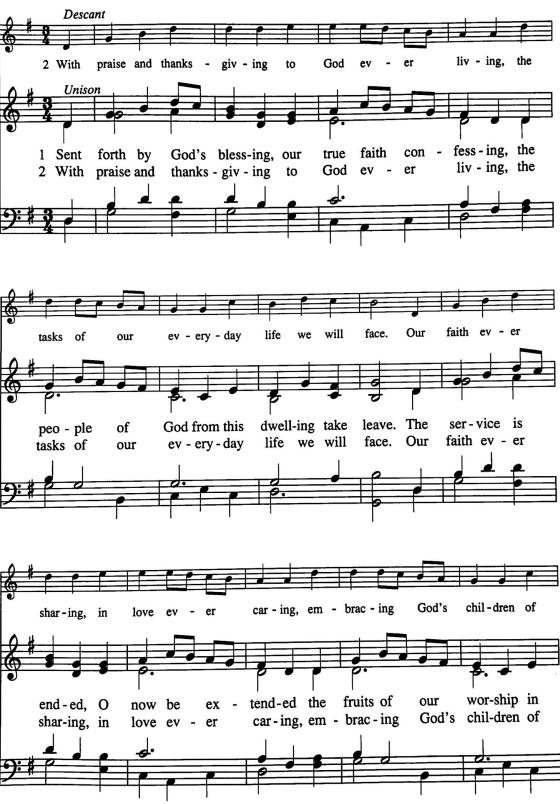


The text upon which this hymn is based is by a bishop of the early church, Cyprian of Carthage. It was paraphrased from his 252 C.E. work, "De unitate ecclesiae" (Of church unity). He was martyred in Carthage c. 258.

Tune: LIGHTBEAMS Irr. Olle Widestrand (b. 1906) Arr. Darryl Nixon, 1987

# Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Omer Westendorf, 1964



Omer Westendorf, author of numerous hymns, compiler of several hymnals, and founder of World Library Publications, included this hymn in People's Mass Book, 1964, the first vernacular Roman Catholic hymn and service book to implement the decrees of Vatican II.

Tune: THE ASH GROVE 6.6.11.6.6.11.D.

Welsh folk melody

Harm. Leland Sateren, 1972

Descant, The New Century Hymnal, 1993





### **CHURCH OFFICERS**

Randel King, Moderator Doug Emslie, Vice Moderator Julie Gholson, Treasurer Kirsten Pickus, Secretary

### **BOARD CHAIRS**

Building, Historic Preservation & Safety: Victoria Bryant & Pam Chapin Christian Education: Elena Legeros Cultural Arts: Tim Mountain and Julie Ford

Diaconate: TBD

Parish Life: Alison Mitchell

Social Justice and Outreach: Chris Bobo Stewardship and Finance: Olivia Esteves

### AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Terry McKiernan, Sebastian Jobin-Reyes, Heather Chambers

### POET-IN-RESIDENCE

Tina Datsko de Sánchez

#### COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE

Curtis Heard

#### HISTORIAN

Bob Kalayjian

### **BOOKKEEPER**

Melody O'Keefe and Heather Chambers at Heather R. Chambers, CPA, Inc.

### **CLERGY**

Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg, Senior Minister, pmsternberg@firstchurchlb.org Rev. Wally Hoeger, Associate Minister, whoeger@firstchurchlb.org

#### **MUSIC STAFF**

Curtis Heard, Director of Music Tracy Halter-Balin, Associate Director of Music and Youth

Dr. Marc Dickey, Organist
Megan O'Toole, Soprano Soloist
Lisa Bode Heard, Alto Soloist
Charlie Carlos, Tenor Soloist
George Carson, Bass Soloist

### PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Tracy Halter-Balin, Director of
Christian Education
Eric Peterson, Business Manager
Preston Andres, Lead Custodian
Sebastian Lytwynec, Mercy Castillo
Torres, Yesi Urrea Castro, Marley B.
Frederick, Sunday School Staff
Justin Strawther, Oscar Ramirez,
Homero Salgado, Custodians
Álvaro Cáceres-Muñoz, Audio Engineer
Abby Zidonis, Video Technician

### **CLERGY IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**Rev. Jerry Stinson**, Senior Minister Emeritus

**Rev. Katy Hyman,** Director of Palliative Care, Long Beach Memorial Medical Center

**Rev. Laverne R. Joseph**, Retired from Retirement Housing Foundation