



First Congregational Church of Long Beach
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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
Dennis Eliot

Dr. Marc Dickey

Acolytes: Cecily and Sam Swierenga

Invocation

The Rev. Wally Hoeger

Introit

Mary's Little Boy Child
Jester Hairston
Arr. by Stan DeWitt

Bellissimo
Curtis Heard, piano

***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.

O, may our hearts and minds be o-pened, Fling the
 church doors o-pen wide. May there be room e-nough for
 wel-come, In God we all be-long. May that
 ev-'ry-one in-side. For in God there is a
 wel-come be our song.

Text: David Lohman
 Music: David Lohman

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The children are dismissed to their Sunday School classes.

Anthem

“Hymn”
Text by Frank Pooler
Music by Stan DeWitt

Sanctuary Choir

Scripture

Luke 4:14-21
The Inclusive Bible

Carmen Abbott

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

The Way It Is
William Stafford

Carmen Abbott

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
Offertory

Carmen Abbott

Trumpet in Dialogue
(Basse et Dessus de Trompette)
Louis Nicolas Clerambault

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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.**

* Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

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

***Benediction**

Rev. Hoeger

***Benediction Response**

Peace to All People
Music by Curtis Heard
Words by Tina Datsko De Sánchez

Sanctuary Choir

Postlude

Dialogue
Gilbert M. Martin

Dr. Dickey

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](https://www.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](https://www.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 Dining 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.

Verses 1, 3, and 4

70

God Is Here! As We Your People Meet

Fred Pratt Green, 1978; alt.

1 God is here! As we your peo-ple meet to of - fer praise and prayer,
 2 Here are sym-bols to re - mind us of our life - long need of grace;
 3 Here our chil-dren find a wel-come in the Shep - herd's flock and fold;
 4 Sov - ereign God, of earth and heav-en, in an age of change and doubt

May we find in full - er mea-sure what it is in Christ we share.
 Here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit, here the cross has cen - tral place.
 Here as bread and wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.
 Keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel, help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;

wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

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

163

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

Unison

1 Man - y are the light-beams from the one light. Our one
 2 Man - y are the branch-es of the one tree. Our one
 3 Man - y are the gifts given, love is all one. Love's the
 4 Man - y ways to serve God, the Spir - it is one; ser - vant
 5 Man - y are the mem - bers, the bod - y is one; mem - bers

light is Je - sus. Man - y are the light-beams
 tree is Je - sus. Man - y are the branch-es
 gift of Je - sus. Man - y are the gifts given,
 spir - it of Je - sus. Man - y ways to serve God, the
 all of Je - sus. Man - y are the mem - bers, the

from the one light; we are one in Christ.
 of the one tree; we are one in Christ.
 love is all one; we are one in Christ.
 Spir - it is one; we are one in Christ.
 bod - y is one; we are one in Christ.

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

Descant

2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er liv - ing, the

Unison

1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, our true faith con - fess - ing, the
 2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er liv - ing, the

tasks of our ev - ery - day life we will face. Our faith ev - er

peo - ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave. The ser - vice is
 tasks of our ev - ery - day life we will face. Our faith ev - er

shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing, em - brac - ing God's chil - dren of

end - ed, O now be ex - tend - ed the fruits of our wor - ship in
 shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing, em - brac - ing God's chil - dren of

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

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

each tribe and race. With your grace you feed us, with
all who be - lieve. The seed of the teach - ing, re -
each tribe and race. With your grace you feed us, with

your light now lead us, u - nite us as one in this
cep - tive hearts reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for
your light now lead us, u - nite us as one in this

life that we share. Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks -
God and for all. God's grace did in - vite us, and love shall u -
life that we share. Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks -

giv - ing give hon - or to Christ and that name which we bear.
nite us to work for God's realm and to an - swer the call.
giv - ing give hon - or to Christ and that name which we bear.



First Congregational Church of Long Beach
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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