

February 23, 2025
10:30am—11:45am

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

WE GATHER IN CELEBRATION

Prelude

Alleluia II
By Andrea Aleotti

Opening Sentences

One: This is the day that our God has made!

Many: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Centering Words

Centering Song

Open Our Hearts

O - pen our hearts, o - pen our minds.
O - pen our lives to you, O lov - ing God. O - pen our
God.

Call to Worship:

One: We come, those who seek to trust in God.

Many: **We commit ourselves to do as Jesus would do for those around us.**

One: We come, delighting in all the wonders God provides for us.

Many: **We resist worry, but open ourselves to God's heart.**

One: We come, waiting patiently for God to speak.

Many: **We will be still, listening for God's words of hope, of peace.**

Opening Hymn

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love (Verses 1—3)

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

John 13:1-20; Gal. 5:13-14

Tom Colvin, 1969; rev. 1994

Refrain
Unison

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show

us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you. *Last time, end*

1 Knelt at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their
2 Neigh-bors are rich and poor, var - ied in col - or and
3 These are the ones we should serve, these are the ones we should
4 Lov - ing puts us on our knees, show - ing our faith by our
5 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their

feet, Je - su, you act - ed as ser - vant to them.
race, neigh-bors are near and far a - way.
love; all these are neigh-bors to us and you.
deeds, serv - ing the neigh-bors we have from you.
feet, this is the way we should live with you. *to Refrain*

Shared Prayer of Affirmation

One: In the midst of hunger and war,
Many: **we celebrate the promise of plenty and peace.**

One: In the midst of oppression and tyranny
Many: **we celebrate the promise of service and freedom.**

One: In the midst of doubt and despair
Many: **we celebrate the promise of faith and hope.**

One: In the midst of fear and betrayal
Many: **we celebrate the promise of joy and trust.**

One: In the midst of hatred and death
Many: **we celebrate love and life.**

**ALL: In the midst of darkness and struggle on every side
we celebrate the living light of Christ. AMEN.**

Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ is with each of you.
Many: **And also with you!**
Please share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Children's Moment

Rev. Karma Cloud

Offertory

WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS

Sung Preparation for Prayer *Deep Within Our Hearts (on next page)*

There's a song deep with-in our hearts, There's a light burn-ing in our souls,
And a path in the dark-ness lit from a-bove; God, help us sing your song,
Spir-it to shine your light, Je-sus, to live your love.

Prayers of the People

Response: One: God in your mercy,
Many: **Hear our prayers.**

Lord's Prayer

ALL: Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kin-dom come.
Your will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kin-dom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sung Response to Prayer *The Universe is Bending*

The u-ni-verse is bend-ing. stretch-ing long and
stretch-ing out and it's lead-ing t'ward whole-ness by the
shin-ing Light of God.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, with a triplet of eighth notes over 'stretch-ing long and'. The second staff continues the melody for the second line of lyrics. The third staff shows the final phrase of the response, ending with a double bar line.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WISDOM

Scripture Lesson

Luke 6-27-38

27“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 36Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

37“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38give, and it will be given to you.

A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

One: May God’s wonder be revealed to us through the mystery of these words.

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon “No Way Becomes the Highway” Rev. Dr. Victor Peterson

Anthem *I Choose Love* Dean Tarriff, soloist
By Mark Miller

WE GO INTO THE WORLD

Announcements

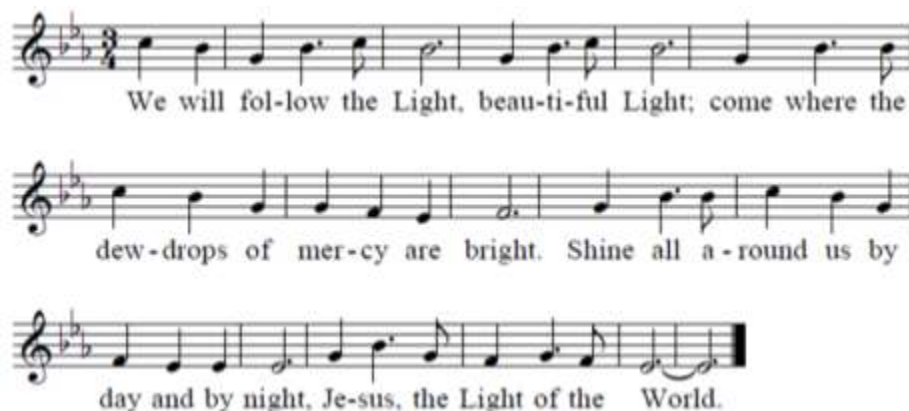
Closing Hymn *Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love* (Verses 4—5)

The Closing Commission

One: The spirit of God is upon us.

Many: **God has anointed us
to bear good news to the afflicted,
to bind up the broken hearted,
to proclaim freedom to the captives,
to open the prisons of those who are bound.
Let us go forth in the name of Christ to bring
peace into broken relationships, healing to
alienated persons, action to protect our planet,
and justice into oppressive structures. AMEN.**

Benediction Sung Benediction Response *Jesus the Light of the World* (Refrain)



We will fol-low the Light, beau-ti-ful Light; come where the
dew-drops of mer-cy are bright. Shine all a-round us by
day and by night, Je-sus, the Light of the World.

Postlude *They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love*
By Fr. Peter Scholtes, arr. Gail Smith

Upcoming Events

TODAY:

Support Palestinian Farmers on Sunday, February 23, 12:15pm in the Sanctuary

Join us as we learn more about how we can support Palestinian farmers from Lana Mustafa, the founder of Roots of Resilience. Coffee Hour will be held in the Sanctuary.

Interested in becoming a member of FCC? Join our Spring New Members' Inquiry class!

Even if you missed our first class you are welcome to join for our Zooms at 7:30 on 2/26 and 3/6. See Rev. Ann to sign up!

"Dorothy Day: Radical Devotion" Author Talk, February 26, 7 pm in the Guild Room!

Author Jeff Korgen Presents New Graphic Novel. "Dorothy Day: Radical Devotion" introduces readers to the amazing life of Dorothy Day, reviews her impact on the church and peace and justice movements, and provides an informative understanding of the process of canonization.

Ongoing Events

Weekly Labyrinth Walks, Wednesdays 11am-1pm in the sanctuary.

All are welcome!

Slow Motion Bible Study will be returning Thursdays, beginning February 6, at 7pm on Zoom!

New FCC member, Rev. Victor Peterson, will lead an engaging exploration of our scriptures each Thursday evening on Zoom.

"Women Of A Certain Age" Gathering - Every First Friday 11am-1pm in the FCC Library

An informal gathering of women 65 and over who would like to develop friendships and share conversation. They will meet **every first Friday** in the FCC library. Bring a bag lunch if you like! For more information, please contact Rev. Heather Cherrey at revheather@fccmtc.com.

Underground Church (monthly—usually Third Saturdays,) 10:30am in the Sanctuary—Next Date is March 15

An intimate and interactive worship experience that hearkens back to the early church.

Full Spectrum Spirituality (FSS) - LGBTQ+ Gathering -Sundays Weekly During Coffee Hour in Room 5 (Parents Room)

We will meet to introduce ourselves, hang out, and chat about life, spirituality, and whatever else comes up! Led by Lex Lourenco and Jasmin Vrban. If you are interested in joining this group, please text Lex at 856-332-7448.

*For more details check the calendar on our "Upcoming Events" page:
<https://fccmontclair.org/upcoming-events-at-fcc/>*

SERVICE NOTES

Thank you to our volunteer worship leaders this morning.

Worship Leader: Rev. John Rogers

Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Victor Peterson

Liturgist: Phyllis Stone

Reader: Phyllis Stone

Ushers: Saija Autrand & Rev. Heather Cherrey

Coffee Hour Host: Hospitality Ministry

Coffee Hour Setup Team: Tim Duhamel, Steve Cutaia and Mike Harney

Music Leaders: Julie Morgan and David Salyers

AV Techs: Brandon Jean-Philippe and Siobhan Morello

An anonymous gift has been made to the food bank to feed the hungry.

Gratitude to the Iona Community for some of our worship language.



*Scan this QR Code
with your camera or
scanning app to
quickly donate
online!*

You can make a donation or sustaining gift online at any time!

There are many ways to give to FCC each Sunday. You can easily set up your sustaining gift, your Sunday Offering, or a one-time contribution.

ONLINE: Scan this QR Code or go to www.fccmontclair.org/giving.

TEXT: You can text a donation to 877-346-1045 followed by a space, and then the amount of your donation (follow the one time set up instructions.)

CHECK: If you give by check it must be made out to "First Congregational Church," (not "FCC") and can be put in the offertory basket, or mailed to 40 So. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, NJ, 07042.

Thank you.

The Mission & Vision of First Congregational Church

Mission Statement:

We are a progressive, open and affirming Christian church. We welcome people of all ages and identities to grow spiritually in a safe and engaging community. Inspired by God's love, we bring peace, healing and justice to the world by serving our neighbors and each other.

Vision Statement:

We imagine a world in alignment with Jesus' vision for peace, love and justice, where there is nourishment for those in need, radical hospitality, and sanctuary for all seekers.

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