

August 16, 2026

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

WE GATHER IN CELEBRATION

Prelude

The Gift of Love

Traditional English Melody, arr. Phillip Keveren

Opening Sentences

One: This is the day that God has made!

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

Centering Words

Opening Song

Draw The Circle Wide (verses 1 & 2)

Words and music on page 5

Call to Worship:

One: Here we can come together, people searching
for healing and hope:

Many: **here we are met by the One
who blesses us with abundant life.**

One: Here we are called to gather as the family of God:

Many: **we may find those who are strangers,
yet are beloved siblings of ours.**

One: Here we discover the truth that God
makes no distinctions among us:

Many: **here we are welcomed and embraced
by the One whose arms are open to all. 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.

Blessing of Children

During the summer months we will not have a Children's Moment during worship.

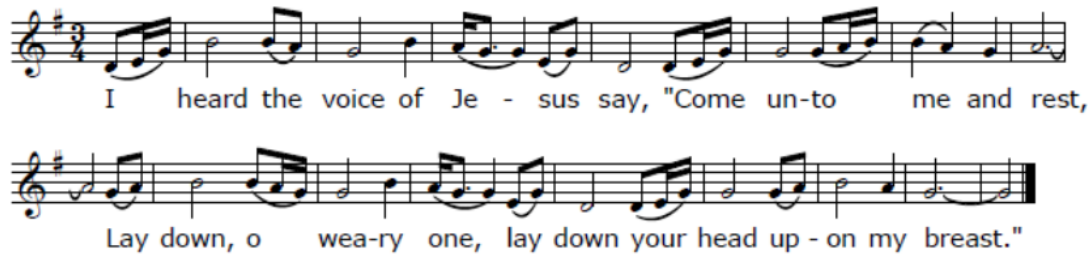
All children are invited to come to the labyrinth for a blessing and then go to their Sunday School experience.

Offertory

WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS

Sung Call to Prayer

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say



Prayers of the People

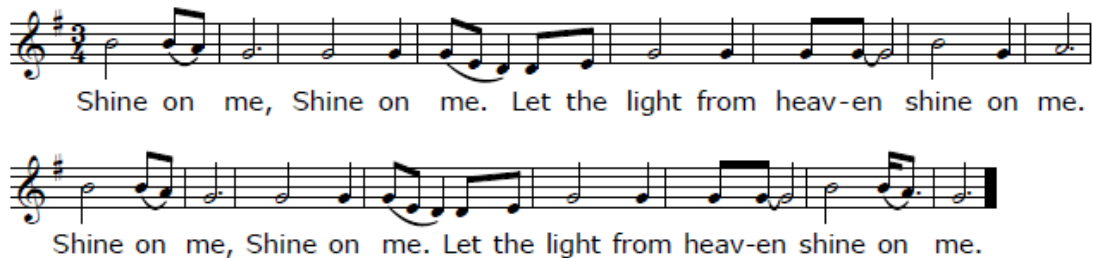
Response: One: God in your mercy,
Many: hear our prayers.

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

Shine on Me



WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WISDOM

Scripture Reading

Matthew 15:10-28

¹⁰Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: ¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." ¹²Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" ¹³He answered,

“Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” ²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” ²⁴He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

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

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon “Going Toe to Toe with God”

Rev. Ann Ralosky

Anthem

Show Us How to Love

Words by Lindy Thompson, music by Mark Miller

WE GO INTO THE WORLD

Announcements

Closing Music

Draw the Circle Wide (verse 3)

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

Postlude

Galliard
By Phil Lehenbauer

SERVICE NOTES

Thank you to our volunteer worship leaders this morning.

Worship Leaders: Rev. Ann Ralosky & Rev. John Rogers

Reader: Quassan Castro

Ushers: Deirdre Nance and Connor Vallee

Coffee Hour Co-Hosts: Deb and Tim Duhamel

Coffee Hour Setup Team: Steve Cutaia and Tim Duhamel

Music Leaders: Julie Morgan and David Salyers

FCC Band: Jania Bibighaus, Daniel Belnavis, Hans Ericson and Ray Lenzini

AV Techs: Brandon Jean-Philippe and Jason Jimson

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

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 ...using our new Church Center service.

ONLINE: Scan the QR Code below or go to <https://fccmtc.churchcenter.com/giving>

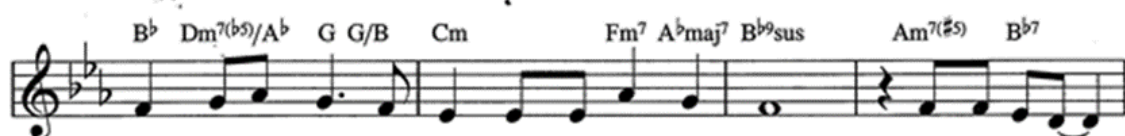
CHECK: If you give by check it must be made out to "First Congregational Church," (not "FCC") and can be put in the offertory basket, or mailed to:
40 So. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, NJ, 07042. *Thank you.*



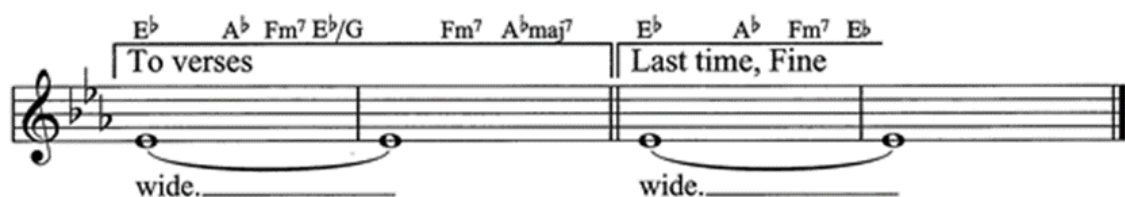
Draw the Circle Wide



Draw the cir-cle_ wide. Draw it wid - er still. Let this be our_



song, no one stands a - lone, stand-ing side by side, draw the cir-cle_



wide.

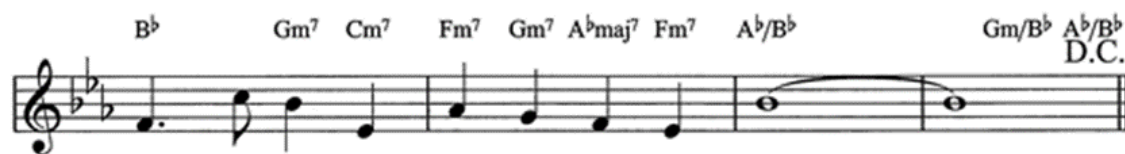
wide.



1. God the still - point of the cir - cle, 'round whom all cre -
 2. Let our hearts touch far hor - i - zons, so en - com - pass
 3. Let the dreams we_ dream be larg - er, than we've ev - er



- a - tion turns; noth - ing lost, but
 great and small; let our lov - ing
 dreamed be - fore; let the dream of



held for - ev - er in God's gra - cious arms.
 know no bor - ders, faith - ful to God's call.
 Christ be in us, o - pen ev - 'ry door.

Want to sing in the choir on Sunday mornings?

All summer, the anthem after the sermon will be a song that we put together on that same Sunday morning, before service. (There's no weekday rehearsal.)

We'll meet at 9:30 in the sanctuary to learn/practice it, and then sing it in the worship service.

I'll let folks know in the few days before Sunday what the song will be, and if I can send an audio clip as well, I do so.

If you'd like to join us any week, just email me (Julie) at jmorgan@mastervoices.org. We'd LOVE to have you with us, any week!

-- Julie, David, and the FCC Choir

Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE:

September 13 – Welcome Back Sunday Picnic

The Hospitality Ministry will need your help and we will be emailing you soon.

Ongoing Events

Full Spectrum Spirituality (FSS) LGBTQ+ Gathering

We chat about life, spirituality, and whatever else comes up! If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Jordan at fullspectrum@fccmtc.com.

Green Team Ministry (2nd Sundays) after worship, in the FCC Library

Learn about FCC's creation care and climate justice initiatives, be part of planning our activities, and live out your faith by taking action for the planet.

On Hiatus Until September

- **Weekly Wednesday Labyrinth Walks 11am—1pm - returns September 9**
- **The Searcher's Bible Study on Zoom each Thursday Eve at 7pm**
- **"Women of a Certain Age" - FIRST Fridays, 11am-1pm in the FCC library**
- **Underground Church Worship Service—Usually 3rd Saturdays, 10:30am in the Sanctuary (*Back in October*)**

For more details check the calendar on our "Upcoming Events" page:

<https://fccmontclair.org/upcoming-events-at-fcc/>

Curious About Volunteering at FCC?

Please email our Volunteer Coordinator, Barbra Murtha, at volunteercoordinator@fccmtc.com to explore one-time or ongoing opportunities.