



First Congregational Church of Long Beach
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MARCH 23, 2025 • 10 A.M.
3RD SUNDAY IN LENT

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

Air (from "Water Music")
George Frideric Handel

Dr. Marc Dickey

Acolytes: Hannah Pearce and Josephine Morales

Invocation

The Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg

***Call to Celebration**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg and The Rev. Wally Hoeger

One: Come, all who are thirsty.

MANY: Come, all who are seeking.

One: Come, all who are waiting.

MANY: Come, all who labor.

One: Come, all who need rest.

MANY: Come, all who dream dreams.

One: Come— whether you're young or old, confident or curious, lonely or hopeful.

MANY: This is God's house. All are welcome here.

One: Come, let us worship our God.

***Processional Hymn**

Come to the Water

See page 7

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Hoeger

Passing of the Peace

Rev. Hoeger

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
ev - 'ry - one in - side. For in God there is a
wel - come, In God we all be - long. May that
wel - come be our song.

Text: David Lohman
Music: David Lohman

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Time with the Children

Rev. Hoeger

The children are dismissed to their Sunday School classes.

Anthem

Come to the Waters
Words by Ruth Duck
Music by Lori True

Sanctuary Choir
Heather Chambers, flute

Scripture

Luke 13:1-9
Common English Bible

Melody O'Keefe

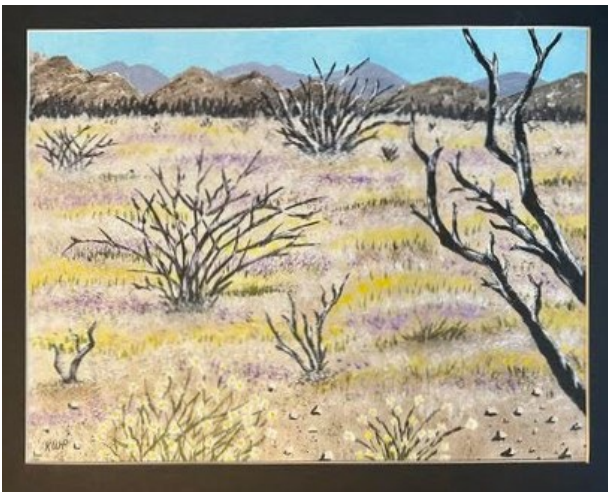
Some who were present on that occasion told Jesus about the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices. Jesus replied, "Do you think the suffering of these Galileans proves that they were more sinful than all the other Galileans? No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did. What about those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think that they were more guilty of wrongdoing than everyone else who lives in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did."

Jesus told this parable: "A man owned a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. He said to his gardener, 'Look, I've come looking for fruit on this fig tree for the past three years, and I've never found any. Cut it down! Why should it continue depleting the soil's nutrients?' The gardener responded, 'Lord, give it one more year, and I will dig around it and give it fertilizer. Maybe it will produce fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'"

Contemporary Artwork

Melody O'Keefe

"Resurrection"
by Kathy Wallace-Phelps



Artist Statement: A number of years ago, I lived in the Antelope Valley where the desert hillsides had been devastated by a wildfire. I was dreading my drive through the hills, but I was greatly surprised by the profusion of wildflowers already bursting through among the charred remains of bushes and trees.

Now that we are living through this devastating time, I'm seeing some signs of life bursting forth out of despair. As we push aside hopelessness and reach out to

encourage each other, we are lifted up and enabled to move toward wholeness.

Special Music	Rock Me on the Water Jackson Browne	Lisa Bode Heard, soloist Curtis Heard, piano
Sermon	“Math and Manure”	Rev. Malleis-Sternberg
*Hymn #502	Dear God, Embracing Humankind (Verses 1, 3 & 4) <i>See page 8</i>	

Prayers of the People Rev. Hoeger

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 to Give Melody O’Keefe

Offertory Hymn Prelude on “King’s Weston” Dr. Dickey
Peter Pindar Stearns

*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.**

* Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. Hoeger

***Recessional Hymn #586** Come to Tend God's Garden
See page 9

***Benediction** Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

Postlude Prelude and Fugue in C minor Dr. Dickey
Johann Sebastian Bach

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

The sanctuary flowers this morning are provided by Charlotte Waldo and she dedicates these flowers to Spring and friendship.

Parish Concerns

Please remember in your prayers: Ayomide Akinragbe, Jane Drinkwalter, Beau Chandler, Kathy Wallace-Phelps, Karen Miller, Wayne Hester, Joanne Paine, the loved ones of Patrick O'Neal, Aida Porteneuve, Kathleen ODaniels, Marion Hinze, 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!

23 Tim Mountain, Shelby Johnson	28 Marion Hinze
24 Jerry Mitchell	29 Douglas Emslie, Dan Swierenga
25 J.J. Halter, Erin DeCamp	30 Akiko Dohi
26 Maria Alarcon, Margaret Jacoby, David Cartwright	

This Week at First Church

Sunday, March 23

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room & Zoom

9:30 AM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

10:00 AM Service of Celebration – Sanctuary & Youtube.com/1stChurch

Sunday School – Vaughn 4, Klar 1, Sacred Space & High School Room

11:00 AM Landmark Café Fundraiser – Courtyard and Koinonia

11:30 AM Adult Ed Forum: What the Bible Really Says About Sex, Part 3
– Booth Chapel

Inbetweeners Small Group Meeting – starting in Booth Chapel

1:00 PM Landmark Picasso at the Lapin Agile 1:30 PM UCO Drop-In Center

Monday, March 24

10:00 AM Archives Group – Ramsay Dining Room

7:00 PM A2A Subcommittee – Zoom

Tuesday, March 25

10:00 AM Handmakers Small Group Meeting – Koinonia Room

7:00 PM Church Council Meeting – Zoom

Wednesday, March 26

7:00 PM Sacred Practices – Sacred Space

Thursday, March 27

4:00 PM DAYS Safe Passage

5:00 PM Jubellance Rehearsal

5:30 PM DAYS Leaders LB

6:00 PM Bellissimo Rehearsal

7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Friday, March 28

All Day Intergenerational Spring Retreat (Day 1/3) – Pilgrim Pines Camp

1:30 PM DAYS Grocery Program – Patterson Hall and Potholder Lot

Saturday, March 29

All Day Intergenerational Spring Retreat (Day 2/3) – Pilgrim Pines Camp

9:30 AM Golf Group – Off-site at a local golf course

10:00 PM UCO Food Drive – Maple Way Alley

Sunday, March 30

All Day Intergenerational Spring Retreat (Day 3/3) – Pilgrim Pines Camp

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room & Zoom

9:00 AM All Seasons Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

9:30 AM Charming Chimes Rehearsal – Bell Room

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

10:00 AM Service of Celebration – Sanctuary and [YouTube.com/1stChurch](https://www.youtube.com/1stChurch)
Sunday School – Vaughn 4, Klar 1, Sacred Space & High School Room

11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room

11:30 AM Church History Tour – Begin in Booth Chapel

Poetry Forum: Sharing & Creating Poems – Koinonia

1:30 PM UCO Drop-In Center – Patterson Hall

Come to the Water

♩=88

D G Asus A D G

1. All who are thirst-y__ for jus - tice, all who are thirst-y__ for
 2. All who are thirst-y__ for mer - cy, all who are thirst-y__ for
 3. All who are thirst-y__ for heal - ing, all who are thirst-y__ for
 4. All who are thirst-y__ for beau - ty, all who are thirst-y__ for

Asus A D G Em7 D/F#

peace. All who are thirst - y__ for peace, for jus - tice,
 love. All who are thirst - y__ for love, for mer - cy,
 touch. All who are thirst - y__ for touch, for heal - ing,
 truth. All who are thirst - y__ for truth, for beau - ty

G Em7 G Asus A

come, come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____
 come, come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____
 come, come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____
 come, come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____

E A Bsus B E A Bsus B

5. All who are thirst-y__ for free - dom, all who are thirst-y__ for hope.
 6. All who are thirst-y__ for laugh - ter, all who are thirst-y__ for joy.

E A F#7 E/G# A

All who are thirst - y__ for hope, for free - dom, come,
 All who are thirst - y__ for joy, for laugh - ter, come,

F#m7 A Bsus B E

come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____
 come to__ the wa - ter__ of life. _____

Dear God, Embracing Humankind

502

John Greenleaf Whittier, 1872; alt.

Mark 1:16-20; Matt. 14:22-23; 1 Kings 19:11-12

1 Dear God, em-brac - ing hu - man - kind, for - give our fool - ish
 2 In sim - ple trust like theirs who heard, be - side the Syr - ian
 3 O sab - bath rest by Gal - i - lee! O calm of hills a -
 4 Drop your still dews of qui - et - ness, till all our striv - ings
 5 Breathe through the puls - es of de - sire your cool - ness and your

ways; Re - clothe us in our right - ful mind, in
 sea, The gra - cious call - ing of your word, let
 bove! There Je - sus met you prayer - ful - ly: the
 cease; Take from our souls the strain and stress, and
 balm; Let sense be numb, let flesh re - tire; speak

pur - er lives your ser - vice find, in deep - er rev - erence, praise.
 us, like them, by spir - it stirred, rise up and fol - lowers be.
 si - lence of e - ter - ni - ty, in - ter - pret - ed by love.
 let our or - dered lives con - fess the beau - ty of your peace.
 through the earth - quake, wind, and fire, O still, small voice of calm.

Come to Tend God's Garden

586

John A. Dalles, 1992

Luke 13:6-9; Gal. 5:22-26

1 Come to tend God's gar - den, seeds of hope to sow, plant-ing fields of
 2 As we tend God's gar - den, from its fur-rows rise stems of fresh be -
 3 May God's gar - den flour - ish, may our toil suc - ceed, may God bless our

*Whenever this repeated figure appears in the bass,
 the organist should tie the eighth notes in the bass part.

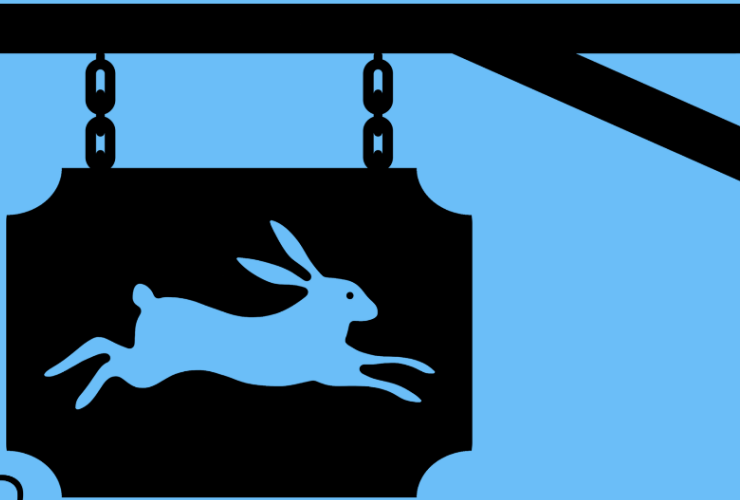
jus - tice, watch-ing mer - cy grow! In an ar - id waste - land,
 gin - nings, stretch-ing toward the skies! Gra-cious-ness, our mead - ow,
 ac - tions, ev - ery word and deed! Serv-ing Christ each sea - son,

spread a ver - dant heath! In a land of tu - mult, cul - ti - vate God's peace!
 joy - ful - ness, our root, u - ni - ty, our fo - liage, righ - teous - ness, our fruit!
 with God's di - a - gram, chart - ed by the Spir - it, for the task at hand!

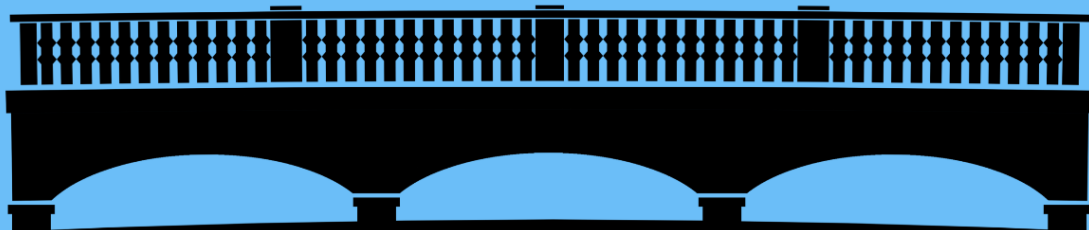
John Dalles is the author of more than 200 hymn texts. This one was written for the 275th anniversary of the Synod of the Trinity (Pennsylvania), where Dalles has served as a pastor at Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh.

Tune: KING'S WESTON 6.5.6.5.D.
 Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1925
 For another setting see 255

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HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
LONG BEACH

You are invited to join in community this Holy Week and Easter.

Palm Sunday, April 13

10:00 am **Celebration and Palm Procession**

Maundy Thursday, April 17

7:00 pm **Worship and Communion** with Bells and Choir

Easter Sunday, April 20

9:00am **Easter Breakfast**, Patterson Hall

10:00am **Easter Celebration Service**, Sanctuary

11:15 am **Easter Reception**, Courtyard and Koinonia

SHEDDING &
CULTIVATING





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Minister, pmsternberg@firstchurchlb.org

Rev. Wally Hoeger, Associate Minister,
whoeger@firstchurchlb.org

MUSIC STAFF

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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

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