

First Congregational Church of Long Beach  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**APRIL 28, 2024 • 10 A.M.**  
**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**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**

Dr. Marc Dickey

Folk Hymn Sketch on "I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old" (Sweet Story)

Greek Folk Song

setting, Emma Lou Diemer

**Invocation**

The Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg

**\*Call to Celebration**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg and The Rev. Wally Hoeger

One: The God of our ancestors and our descendants, in love for all creation, invites us to delight in love.

**MANY: Let us open our hearts, connected in the vine of covenant.**

One: May we produce fruit of hope in this vineyard.

**MANY: So that we may proclaim a just world for all!**

One: In gratitude for our Gardener, Creator of all,

**MANY: Let us bear and share the fruit of love.**

**\*Processional Hymn #4**

Joyful, Joyful We Adore You

See page 6

**Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Hoeger

Ministry Celebration

A2A Team

**Passing of the Peace**

Rev. Hoeger

**Welcome Song**

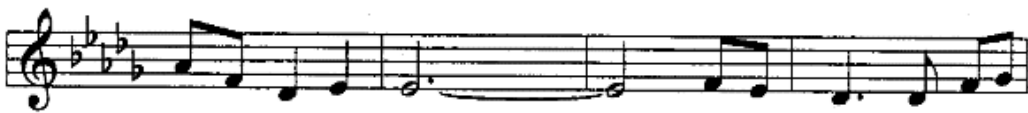
*The children are invited to come forward during this song.*



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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*The children are dismissed to their Sunday School classes.*

**Scripture**

John 15:1-8

Ernie Quiñones

New Revised Standard Version, adapted

Jesus said: "I am the true vine, and God is the vinegrower. God removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit God prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. God is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

**Anthem**

Sing Me To Heaven

words Jane Griner, music Daniel Gawthrop

Sanctuary Choir

**Contemporary Reading**

Ernie Quiñones

Erice Fairbrother, Aotearoa / New Zealand

We gather as people of the Way  
Leaving paths that have brought us this far  
To find new directions,  
discover new stories,  
daring to explore horizons and truth.

On the Way, life meets us, hungry for justice,  
for bread and for peace;  
It calls us to see,  
To hear and to act,  
Finding new words and the courage to speak.

In our meeting together comes strength  
To serve; the least and the little,  
the unseen, the neglected,  
the lost and rejected,  
And love overcoming fear of the cost.

We come celebrating the Way that we teach  
The community created,  
The joy of experience,  
The love we walk,  
And the peace, that never lets us rest.

For the way that stretches in front of us,  
We say thank you.  
For the way that lies behind us,  
We say thank you.  
For the Way that we will become,  
We hope with thankful hearts. Amen.

**Special Music**

Laughed Until We Cried  
By Jason Aldean  
George Carson, baritone  
Curtis Heard, piano

**Sermon**

“Abiding Love”

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

**\*Prayer Hymn No.163**

Many Are the Lightbeams  
*See page 7*

**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

Ernie Quiñones

Offertory "Jerusalem, My Happy Home" (Land of Rest)  
By Anna Laura Page

Dr. Dickey

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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 8 & 9

**\*Benediction**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

**\*Benediction Response**

Hallelujah

**Postlude** Postlude on Sent Forth by God's Blessing (The Ash Grove) Dr. Dickey  
Welsh folk tune, setting, John Leavitt

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

The sanctuary flowers today are provided by Julie Gholson and are dedicated to all the hardworking members and staff of First Church.

## ***Parish Concerns***

Please remember in your prayers: Mary Kay Hoferer & the Clancy family (Elizabeth Whitesell's aunt and friends); Fran Holand; David Nelson (Karen Miller's brother); 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](mailto:office@firstchurchlb.org).*

## ***April & May Birthdays This Week – Happy Birthday!***

29 Margaret Brown 30 Deven Dasgupta-Tsinikas

### **May**

03 Craig Thorsen 04 Miriam Seneviratne 06 Mark Burns, Karen Miller

## 4

## Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

*Ps. 145:10; Isa. 49:13**Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.*

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore you, God of glo - ry, God of love;  
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re - flect your rays,  
 3 You are giv - ing and for-giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blessed,  
 4 Mor-tals, join the might-y cho - rus which the morn-ing stars be - gan;

Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore you, open-ing to the sun a - bove.  
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round you, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!  
 Bound-less love is reign - ing o'er us, re - con - cil - ing race and clan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the storms of doubt a - way;  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,  
 Lov - ing Spir - it, Fa - ther, Moth - er, all who love be - long to you;  
 Ev - er sing - ing, move we for - ward, faith - ful in the midst of strife,

Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, teach us what our praise should be.  
 Teach us how to love each oth - er, by that love our joy re - new.  
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us on - ward in the tri - umph song of life.

*Henry van Dyke was a noted church leader, U.S. ambassador, Navy chaplain, and prolific writer. Many people associate this hymn with Beethoven's ninth symphony, but few are aware of the original poem by the German classicist F. Schiller (1759-1805) that inspired Beethoven.*

Tune: HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7.D.  
 Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824  
 Adapt. and harm. Edward Hodges, 1846

# 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

Em Em7 Am B7 Em Am

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

Dsus4 D7 G Am7 D7

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

GM7 C7 Em B7 Em

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 Widstrand (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.

# ***This Week at First Church***

## **Sunday, April 28**

- 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  
Bake Sale – Kilsby Courtyard  
11:30 AM Planning Forward Forum: Financial Planning – Koinonia Room  
12 PM Confirmation Class – High School Room  
1:30 PM Urban Community Outreach Drop-In Center – Patterson Hall

## **Monday, April 29**

- 10 AM Archives Group – Ramsay Dining Room  
7 PM South Coast Chorale Rehearsal – Ramsay Dining Room

## **Tuesday, April 30**

- 6 PM DAYS Leaders LB – Klar 2 & 3

## **Wednesday, May 1**

- 7 PM Diaconate Meeting – Zoom

## **Thursday, May 2**

- 5 PM Jubellance Rehearsal – Bell Room  
6 PM Bellissimo Rehearsal – Bell Room  
DAYS Leaders LB – Klar 2 & 3  
7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

## **Friday, May 3**

- 6 PM Parents' Night Out – Patterson Hall  
7 PM Documentary Showing, "1946" including Q & A with Director –  
Sanctuary

## **Saturday, May 4**

- 9:30 AM Golf Group – off-site  
10 AM Urban Community Outreach Drop-In Center – Patterson Hall

## **Sunday, May 5**

- 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 & Confirmation – Sanctuary & YouTube.com/1stChurch  
 Sunday School: K-2nd Grades – Vaughn 1; 3rd-5th Grades – Klar 1

11 AM Confirmation Sunday Reception – Patterson Hall

11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room

11:30 AM Board of Cultural Arts – Pownall Room  
 Board of Parish Life – Klar 3  
 Board of Social Justice & Outreach – Booth Chapel  
 Board of Stewardship & Finance – Klar 2 & Zoom

12 PM Board of Christian Education – Ramsay Dining Room

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

**Order Your New First Church T-Shirts TODAY!!!**

Place your order for new t-shirts at the table in the courtyard after service today! All orders have to be collected by today to allow for production and distribution before the Pride Parade. The cost is \$25, a wide range of sizes is available, and you get to choose between white or black shirts.

First Congregational Church of Long Beach  
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**GET YOUR VERY OWN FIRST CHURCH T-SHIRT!**  
**ONLY \$25.00 EACH**  
**YOUTH SMALL TO ADULT 5X SIZES AVAILABLE**  
**AVAILABLE IN WHITE OR BLACK**

CONTACT KIRSTEN PICKUS  
 KPICKUS@GMAIL.COM

**Sunday, May 19** is the Long Beach Pride Parade! Our church will have worship on the bluff again this year at 9:30 am, next to the staging area for the parade before it begins. And we are working on fun ideas for the parade and will have a sign-up if you are interested in a shuttle option to our staging spot. More details to come, but you can start planning your outfit now!





## CHURCH OFFICERS

**Ruth Keller**

Moderator

**Randel King**

Vice Moderator

**Steve Crow**

Treasurer

**Kirsten Pickus**

Secretary

## BOARD CHAIRS

Building, Historic Preservation &  
Safety: Dorothy King and

Victoria Bryant

Christian Education: Tim O'Keefe

Cultural Arts: Doug Emslie

Diaconate: Julie Ford and

Robert Stapp

Parish Life: Perry Ellwood

Social Justice and Outreach:

Judy Dodgen

Stewardship and Finance:

Cathy Chambers

## AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pat Kalayjian, Terry McKiernan,

Sebastian Jobin-Reyes

## POET-IN-RESIDENCE

Tina Datsko de Sánchez

## COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE

Curtis Heard

## HISTORIAN

Bob Kalayjian

## CLERGY

**Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg**, Senior Minister,

[pmsternberg@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:pmsternberg@firstchurchlb.org)

**Rev. Wally Hoeger**, Associate Minister,

[whoeger@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:whoeger@firstchurchlb.org)

## 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

## 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

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**Eric Peterson**, Business Manager

**Alejandra Perez**, Office Manager

**Preston Andres**, Lead Custodian

**Hannah Anderson-Hale**,

**Brian Owen**, **Oscar Ramirez** Custodians

**Ricardo Escalante**, Audio Engineer

**Doug Gissel**, Video Technician

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