



First Congregational Church of Long Beach  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MAY 3, 2026 • 10:00 A.M.

PACIFIC ISLANDER ASIAN AMERICAN  
MINISTRIES (PAAM) SUNDAY

**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** Fiesta con Campanillas Bellissimo  
Carol Lynn Mizell

Acolytes: Bethany Morales and Imogen Stewart-Way

**Invocation** The Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg

**\*Call to Celebration** Rev. Malleis-Sternberg and The Rev. Wally Hoeger

One: Do not let your hearts be troubled.

**Many: Holy One, be our rock of refuge and strong fortress.**

One: For your name's sake, lead us and guide us; draw us out from every hidden net.

**Many: Let your face shine upon your servants; hold us in your steadfast love.**

One: In God's house there are many dwelling places.

**Many: Make room in us for the One who comes near; make room among us for one another.**

One: Show us your way; shape us in your truth; breathe your life into us.

**\*Processional Hymn, No. 5**

Praise to God (Japanese Traditional Melody)

See Page 8

**Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Hoeger

**Passing of the Peace**

Rev. Hoeger

**Welcoming of New Members**

ONE: Let us, the members of First Congregational Church of Long Beach, United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry:

**ALL: We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church community. We promise to affirm and celebrate your gifts, and welcome you as companions on the journey. We will share our friendship and prayers as we join together in the way of love and justice, through Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's love.**

**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  
 5 wide. May there be room e-nough for ev-'ry-one in - side. For in God there is a  
 11 wel-come, In God we all be-long. May that wel - come be our song.

music and lyrics by David Lohman ©2007 Lohman Music Permission granted for congregational use

**Time With the Children**

Tracy Halter-Balin

**Anthem**

In Meeting We Are Blessed  
Troy D. Robertson

Sanctuary Choir

*The children are invited to head to Sunday School but will return before communion.*

**Scripture**

John 14:1-14

E.C. Cipriani

From the Common English Bible, adapted

Jesus said: "Don't be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. God's house has room to spare. If that weren't the case, would I have told you that I'm going to prepare a place for you? When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too. You know the way to the place I'm going."

Thomas asked, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to God except through me. If you have really known me, you will also know God. From now on you know God and have seen God."

Philip said, "Lord, show us God; that will be enough for us."

Jesus replied, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen God. How can you say, 'Show us God? Don't you believe that I am in God and God is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don't speak on my own. The One who dwells in me does God's works. Trust me when I say that I am in God and God is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. I assure you that whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. They will do even greater works than these because I am going to God. I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that God can be glorified in the Son. When you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it."

**Reading**

from Book of the Way  
and its Virtues (Daodejing), 2nd half of verse 73

E.C. Cipriani

天之道，不爭而善勝，不言而善應，不召而自來，繹然而善謀。  
天網恢恢，踈而不失。

Heaven's way does not contend, yet it is victorious.  
It does not speak, yet it answers.  
It does not summon, yet things come.  
It seems at rest, yet has plans.

Heaven's net is extremely vast.  
Its mesh is sparse, yet nothing slips through.

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

E.C. Cipriani

Offertory

Spring Song  
Felix Mendelssohn

Curtis Heard

*Scan for our secure online donation site or go to  
[firstchurchlb.org/donate](http://firstchurchlb.org/donate)  
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. Hoeger

Celebration of Communion

**\*Communion Hymn, No. 48** Jesus the Christ Says (Urdu melody)  
*See Page 9*

**Invitation, Prayer, and Words of Institution**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg and  
Rev. Hoeger

**Sharing of the Bread and Cup**

*All are welcome to share in communion by coming forward, or let an usher know and we will come to you. The bread is gluten free and the cup contains grape juice.*

**Music during Communion**

The Wanderer  
Heman Beeftink

Curtis Heard  
Heather Chambers, flute

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Loving God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all your children so that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ in Love. Amen.**

**\*Recessional Hymn, No. 424** Praise Our God Above  
(Chinese tune from Confucian chant)  
*See Page 10*

**\*Benediction**

Rev. Malleis-Sternberg

**\*Choral Response**

Hallelujah  
Abraham Maraire

Sanctuary Choir

**Postlude**

Gigue, *from Partita No. 1*  
J. S. Bach

Curtis Heard

*Worship resources include those adapted from the UCC's PAAM Sunday materials and authors include Rev. Charing Wei-Jen Chen, Dr. Yuki Schwartz, and Rev. Mitchell Young.*

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

*First Church has both assistive listening devices and noise-blocking headphones available to borrow for services. Please see one of the Diaconate, ushering in the entry to the church, to borrow one of these assists or to ask any other questions about available accommodations. Thank you!*

The sanctuary flowers this morning are provided by Chuck Fowler and mark the anniversary of his beloved Jim's (Hardeman) passing.

### **Parish Concerns**

Please remember in your prayers: Jim Heard, Trisha Pappas, Charlotte Waldo, David McMillin, Dale Whitney, Marion Hinze, Wayne Hester, Joanne Paine, and Aida Porteneuve.

*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).*

### **Birthdays This Week – Happy Birthday!**

03 - Barry Hill	09 - Caleb Aparicio, Jonathan
04 - Miriam Seneviratne	Malleis-Sternberg, Cori Beth
07 - Aleena Martinez	O'Keefe, Scott Ramsay,
08 - Melissa Hill, Ewan Scott	Bethany Morales

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

### **Sunday, May 3**

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room  
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 – Klar 1 & 3, Sacred Space & High School Room  
11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room  
11:30 AM Youth Fundraiser Lunch and Bake Sale – Courtyard  
Board of Christian Education Meeting – Sr. High Room  
Board of Cultural Arts Meeting – Pownall Room & Zoom  
Board of Parish Life Meeting – Booth Chapel  
Board of Social Justice and Outreach Meeting – Klar 3 & Zoom  
Board of Stewardship and Finance Meeting – Klar 2  
1:30 PM UCO Drop-In Center

### **Monday, May 4**

10:00 AM Archives Group – Ramsay Dining Room

### **Tuesday, May 5**

10:00 AM Handmakers Small Group – Koinonia Room  
6:00 PM Personnel Committee – Zoom  
7:00 PM Building & Safety Committee – Zoom

### **Thursday, May 7**

5:00 PM DAYS Leaders LB – Klar 2 & 3

### **Friday, May 8**

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

7:00 PM Landmark Theatre: Side by Side by Sondheim – Sanctuary

**Saturday, May 9**

9:00AM Paddlers' Group – Sunset Beach

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

10:00 AM UCO Food Drive – Maple Way Alley

7:00 PM Landmark Theatre: Side by Side by Sondheim – Sanctuary

**Sunday, May 10**

8:45 AM Adult Education – Pownall Room

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

Sunday School – Klar 1 & 3, Sacred Space & High School Room

11:15 AM Beloved Bells Rehearsal – Bell Room

1:30 PM UCO Drop-In Center

2:00 PM Landmark Theatre: Side by Side by Sondheim – Sanctuary

**Pride is Coming!!**

Long Beach's Pride Parade is Sunday, May 17 and First Church will once again have worship on the bluff at 9:30 am and step off in the parade at 10 am!! Our Pride Parade Team is committed to making our Pride participation as accessible as possible, so please let us know how you will be joining us this year: as a spectator, marcher, rider, or online!



All are encouraged to fill out the Pride RSVP form using the QR Code in order to receive updates up through the morning of the parade!

## Praise to God

5

Nobuaki Hanaoka, 1980; alt.

Rom. 14:11; John 3:16; Eph. 5:16-20; Ps. 68:4, 32

Unison

1 Praise to God, praise to God, for the green - ness  
2 Thanks to God, thanks to God, for the gift of  
3 Sing to God, sing to God, for the grace of

of the trees, for the beau - ty of the flowers, for the bless - ing  
friends in Christ, for the church, our house of faith, for the gift of  
Je - sus Christ, for the love of par - ent God, for the com - fort

of the sky, for the great - ness of the sea.  
won - drous love, for the gift of end - less grace.  
and the strength of the Spir - it, ho - ly God.

Praise to God, praise to God, now and for - ev - er - more.  
Thanks to God, thanks to God, now and for - ev - er - more.  
Sing to God, sing to God, now and for - ev - er - more.

# Jesus the Christ Says

John 6:48; 14:6; 11:25; 8:12; 9:5

Urdu, anon.; alt.

Unison

C G/B C Dm/F

1 Je - sus the Christ says, I am the bread, the bread of life for the  
 2 Je - sus the Christ says, I am the way, the way and the truth and the  
 3 Je - sus the Christ says, I am the light, the one true light of the  
 4 Je - sus the Christ says, I am the life, the res - ur - rec - tion and the

C/G G C Dm/F G

world am I. The bread of life for the world am I, the  
 life am I. The way and the truth and the life am I, the  
 world am I. The one true light of the world am I, the  
 life am I. The res - ur - rec - tion and the life am I, the

Am Em G/D D G C G/B

bread of life for the world am I. Je - sus the Christ says,  
 way and the truth and the life am I. Je - sus the Christ says,  
 one true light of the world am I. Je - sus the Christ says,  
 res - ur - rec - tion and the life am I. Je - sus the Christ says,

C Em Am Dm G7 C

I am the bread, the bread of life for the world am I.  
 I am the way, the way and the truth and the life am I.  
 I am the light, the one true light of the world am I.  
 I am the life, the res - ur - rec - tion and the life am I.

THANKSGIVING

424

Praise Our God Above

Matt. 6:25-33; Deut. 8:1-3, 6-10

Tzu-chen Chao, 1931

Transl. Frank W. Price, 1953; alt.


Unison

1 Praise our God a-bove, Source of bound-less love: spring wind,  
2 God's care like a cloak wraps us hum - ble folk, makes all

sum - mer rain, then the har - vest grain; Pearl - y  
green things grow, rip - ens what we sow. Through God

rice and corn, fra - grant au - tumn morn.  
we are strong; sing our har - vest song.

Though our work is hard, God gives us re-ward.  
Sing praise, field and flower, praise God's might - y power.



# SideBY SideBY SONDHEIM

## MEET THE CAST



Anna  
Shimanek



Briana  
Bonilla



Brooke  
Wittenmeier



Caron  
Lowe



Cole  
Whiter



Corey  
Shaw



Doug  
Emslie



Eliot  
Winkler



Emily  
Morgan



George  
Carson



Heather  
Chambers



Jade  
Dodgen



Jazzia  
Kopp



Jocelyn Thalia  
Sanchez



Lauren  
Chambers



Lily  
Penner



Lisa Bode  
Heard



Malakai  
Howard



Mark  
Bruce-Casares



Mark  
Waters



Mark  
Wheeler



Martha  
Duncan



Matt  
Winkler



Matt  
Kopp



Melody  
O'Keefe



Sia  
Carter



First Congregational Church of Long Beach  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## CHURCH OFFICERS

**Doug Emslie**, Moderator  
**Charlotte Waldo**, Vice Moderator  
**Julie Gholson**, Treasurer  
**Kirsten Pickus**, Secretary

## BOARD CHAIRS

Building, Historic Preservation & Safety:

Pam Chapin, Dorothy King

Christian Education:

Elena Legeros

Cultural Arts:

Julie Ford & Tim Mountain

Diaconate:

Harold Sutherland & Bill Peck

Parish Life:

Alison Mitchell & Don Donan

Social Justice and Outreach:

Jenn Tafel

Stewardship & Finance:

Jane Hansen & Randy King

## AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cathy Chambers, Heather Chambers &  
Sebastian Jobin-Reyes

## COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE

Curtis Heard

## POET-IN-RESIDENCE

Tina Datsko de Sánchez

## HISTORIAN

Bob Kalayjian

## BOOKKEEPERS

Melody O'Keefe & Heather Chambers at  
Privity CPA Partners, LP

## 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)

## MUSIC STAFF

**Curtis Heard**, Director of Music

**Tracy Halter-Balin**, Associate Director of  
Music

**Dr. Marc Dickey**, Organist

**Megan O'Toole**, Soprano Soloist

**Lisa Bode Heard**, Alto Soloist

**Charlie Carlos**, Tenor Soloist

**George Carson**, Bass Soloist

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

**Tracy Halter-Balin**, Director of Christian  
Ed.

**Eric Peterson**, Business Manager

**Rhyan Humphrey**, Office Manager

**Preston Andres**, Lead Custodian

**Richie Muhammad**, **Yesi Urrea Castro**,

**Sebastian Lytwynec**, **Mercy Torres**,  
Sunday School

**Oscar Ramirez**, **Elijah Brown**, **Joel**

**Gantt**, **Cassie Jordan**, Custodians

**Julianne Fung**, Audio Technician

**Abby Zidonis**, Video Technician

## CLERGY IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Rev. Jerry Stinson**, Senior Minister  
Emeritus

**Rev. Katy Hyman**, Director of Pediatric  
and Adult Palliative Care, MemorialCare