

World Communion Sunday

October 1, 2023



*First Congregational Church of Fresno
United Church of Christ
2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.
Fresno, CA 93704*

*Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields
Guest Pastor*

World Communion Sunday

October 1, 2023

Our Gathering

(*Congregation may stand | Responses: Liturgist/**Congregation/all**)

Prelude Hymn-Sing

Scott Horton, organ

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields, Guest Pastor

***Call to Worship**

Pauline Phillips, liturgist

One: We Gather as God's people to celebrate the beauty of our diversity

All: *Let us love each other as God loves us beautifully and wonderfully made in God's image.*

One: We give thanks for who we are, Beloved of God.

All: *Let us open our hearts to God's spirit of love and unity.*

One: We celebrate the gifts of all gathered here today.

All: *Let us worship God with all we are and celebrate the beauty of all God's creation.*

***Invocation**

***Hymn**

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

#28, pew hymnal

Prayer of Confession

Lord Jesus, we confess we have been dishonest in our walk with you. We have not treated others with respect and acceptance and have not cared for the least of these as you have called us to do. We acknowledge that too many times, we have taken the effortless way to our benevolence and have mistreated those in need and with judgment. We ask your forgiveness for all we have done that is not pleasing to you, Oh Lord. We ask your mercy on us. Amen!

Moment of Silence

(Each person can take this moment to confess those things to God; they need to surrender to God privately.)

Words of Grace

Choral Anthem

"Voice of God" - L. Larson

Chancel Choir

Time for Discovery [*children are invited to the chancel steps*]

**Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still;
let this be our song — no one stands alone,
standing side by side. Draw the circle wide.**

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The Lord's Prayer

***Our Creator, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.***

***Communion Hymn of Preparation** “Come to the Table of Grace”

Holy Communion

Invitation to the table

Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields

Leader: Today, on World Communion Sunday, we remember that we are one. Today, we celebrate the Spirit of God that moves throughout God's people across all of creation.

People: *We are one in Christ.*

Leader: Today we remember our responsibility to bear with one another in love, to maintain unity by the bond of peace and to be the body of Christ in the world.

People: *We are one body.*

Leader: Today we recall that, as members of one body, we can make a difference in a world of people in need of the hope of the love of Christ. Today, we recognize this hope that unites us and sustains us.

People: *We are people of hope.*

Leader: Today we celebrate our unity. We set aside the small things that can divide us and remember that, with God, we can overcome all things. Today we are reminded that only with gentleness and humility can we clearly see God's plan for us.

People: *We are people of one Lord.*

Leader: Today, on World Communion Sunday, we acknowledge that we belong to God and to each other. We share the bread and the cup of Holy Communion.

All: *We are people of one God who is above all and through all.*

The Consecration

For centuries, Christians of different customs have gathered to commune with you and each other through the sharing of this feast.

In their partaking, you have been with them,
just as you are with us now.

And so we join with our siblings around the world by remembering that
on the night in which Jesus was betrayed,
he took bread, blessed it, broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
“Take eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.”

God, we remember and give thanks for your Son,
and we ask that you bless and pour your spirit on these simple things, bread and the fruit of the vine:

Make this broken bread whole in our taking.

Make this full cup overflow in our sharing.

With these elements nourish and sustain us,
our way, our truth, our life;
our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sustainer.
Praise be to you, now, tomorrow, and forever.

The Sharing

Communion Music “Festival Prelude on Thaxted” - Holst, arr. Pettit

Robbyn Mosley, cornet & Scott Horton, organ

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We have eaten, we have drunk, we have tasted God’s goodness which lingers
on our palates as a sweet song of salvation.

May this meal we have shared here today fill us with such meaning that we taste the Love which Christ would have us remember. May we go from this table refreshed and replenished, ready to be both recipients of, and agents for, God’s Grace in the world. Amen.

***Hymn** "Jesus, the Joy of Loving Hearts" #329, pew hymnal

Scripture Exodus 17:1-7 Pauline Phillips

Sermon "God's Sustaining Presence" Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields

Sung Call to Prayer

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Lord send your Spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

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Prayers of the Church Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields

Invitation to Generosity Pauline Phillips



Here at the Big Red Church, everyone counts, and every gift counts!

- ⇒ *There are two donation boxes and giving envelopes for your gifts in the Narthex (the area where an usher handed you an Order of Worship).*
- ⇒ *You can also give through the Givelify App by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera.*
- ⇒ *BigRedChurch.org/giving/ has more instructions, links, and information about giving to the church. Thank you for supporting and joining in the ministry of this church.*

Offertory "Let Us Break Bread Together" - arr. Keeney Scott Horton, organ

***Doxology** (Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,

Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God, above, ye heavenly host.

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving** Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields

Announcements Jeannie Hobson, Moderator

***Closing Hymn**

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You ”

#4, pew hymnal

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Celestine Fields

***Blessing Song “Go Now in Peace”**

**Go now in peace, never be afraid;
God will go with you each hour of ev’ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true;
know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world will see
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen. Amen. Amen.**

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Postlude

“Hymn of Joy” - A. Travis

Scott Horton, organ

It is our tradition to be seated for the Postlude.

Please join us for refreshments in the Fellowship Hall

First Congregational Church of Fresno

presents a

BACHTOBER CONCERT

Featuring Baroque Masterworks & the Organ Works of

Johann Sebastian Bach



Sunday, October 15, at 3:00 p.m.

Bachtober Festival Chamber Orchestra

led by John Morrice, violin

&

Scott Horton, organist

Admission Free - Freewill Offering to support the Casavant Pipe Organ

First Congregational Church of Fresno, U.C.C.
2131 North Van Ness Boulevard
Information: 227-8489

This Week at Big Red

Monday, October 2

- ♦ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Tuesday, October 3

- ♦ 6:00pm: M.O.M. - Minturn Chapel

Wednesday, October 4

- ♦ 8:00am: Bible Study - Zoom
- ♦ 4:00pm: Yoga - Room 1
- ♦ 6:00pm: Handbell rehearsal - Music Room
- ♦ 7:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday, October 5

Friday, October 6

- ♦ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Saturday, October 7

Sunday, October 8

- ♦ 9:00am: Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ♦ 10:00am: Worship Service - Rev. Davena Jones, Guest Pastor - Sanctuary
- ♦ 10:00am: "Toucan Sunday" - Sanctuary
- ♦ 11:00am: Coffee Hour



Upcoming Dates to remember

* "Toucan Sunday" - Oct 8th

* Spaghetti Dinner - Oct 13



* Congregational Meeting - Oct 15

* Bachtober Concert - Oct 15

* Halloween Party - October 31



First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Guest Pastor

Rev. Davena Jones

Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Office Administrator

Kymberly Lindsey

Office@bigredchurch.org

Technicians

Karisa Garza

Brad Jenkins

Assisting in Today's Service

Organist: Scott Horton

Liturgist: Pauline Phillips

Ushers: Bruce Owdom, Sue Karibian, Bob McParland

Technician: Brad Jenkins

Acolytes: Addison and Selena

Coffee Hour: Pat Morales

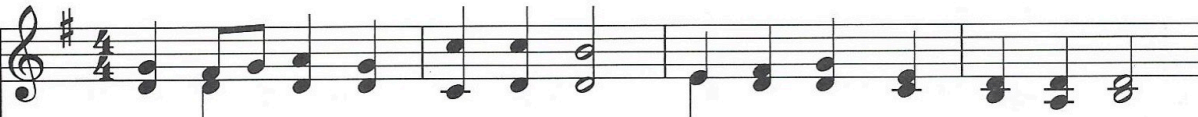
FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us. We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

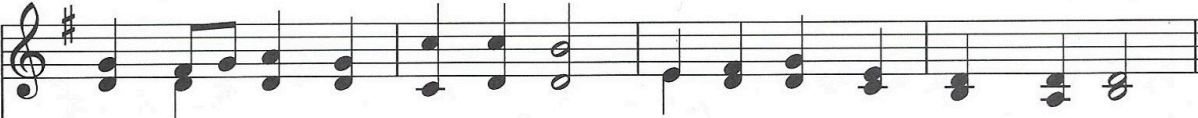
As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.

For the Beauty of the Earth


*St. 1-3, Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1864; alt.**St. 4, Miriam Therese Winter, 1993*


1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the splen - dor of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 4 For the good that love in - spires, for a world where none ex - clude,



For the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies,
 Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
 Friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild,
 For a faith that nev - er tires, and for ev - ery heart re - newed,

Refrain



God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

Folliott S. Pierpoint, author of numerous hymns, penned these verses near his native city of Bath, England, on a late spring day when flowers were in full bloom and all the earth seemed to rejoice.

Tune: DIX 7.7.7.7. with refrain
 Conrad Kocher, 1838
 Adapt. William H. Monk, 1861

Come to the Table of Grace 507

Capo 3: (D) (A) (Bm) (D7/A) (G)

F C Dm F7/C Bb

1 Come to the ta - ble of grace. Come to the

(A) (D) (A) (D) (Em)

C F C F Gm

ta - ble of grace. This is God's ta - ble; it's

(D/A) (G) (D/A) (A7) (D) (G) (D)

F/A Bb F/C C7 F Bb F

not yours or mine. Come to the ta - ble of grace.

- 2 Come to the table of peace...
- 3 Come to the table of love...
- 4 Come to the table of hope...
- 5 Come to the table of joy...

The simple, formulaic nature of this song makes it especially suitable for use during the communion portion of the Lord's Supper. Because it can be learned readily and does not require reference to a printed source, it frees people to sing before and after receiving the elements.

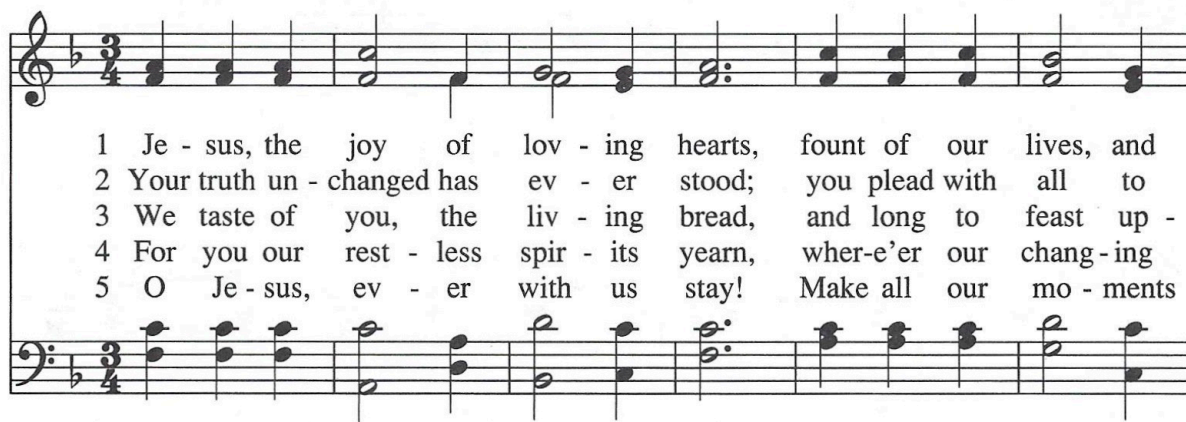
Jesus, the Joy of Loving Hearts

329

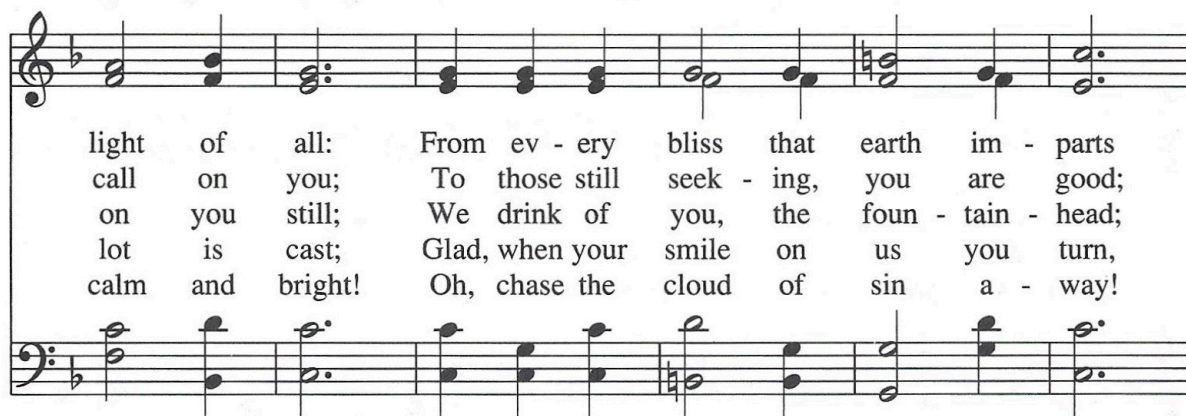
Attrib. to Bernard of Clairvaux, c. 1150

Transl. Ray Palmer, 1858; alt.

John 6:52-58; Heb. 13:8



1 Je - sus, the joy of lov - ing hearts, fount of our lives, and
 2 Your truth un - changed has ev - er stood; you plead with all to
 3 We taste of you, the liv - ing bread, and long to feast up -
 4 For you our rest - less spir - its yearn, wher-e'er our chang - ing
 5 O Je - sus, ev - er with us stay! Make all our mo - ments



light of all: From ev - ery bliss that earth im - parts
 call on you; To those still seek - ing, you are good;
 on you still; We drink of you, the foun - tain - head;
 lot is cast; Glad, when your smile on us you turn,
 calm and bright! Oh, chase the cloud of sin a - way!



we turn, un - filled, to hear your call.
 to those who find you, life is new.
 our thirst - y souls from you we fill.
 blessed, when by faith we hold you fast.
 Shed o'er the world your ho - ly light.

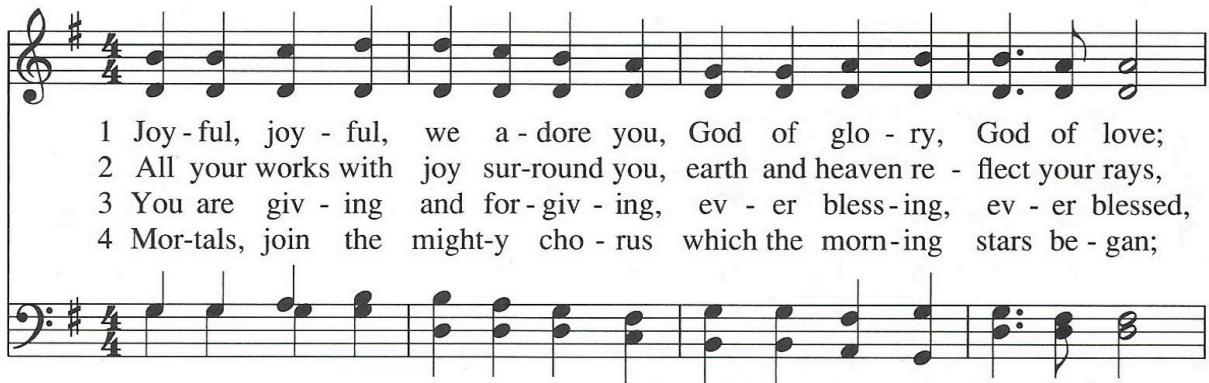
Bernard, founder of the monastery at Clairvaux, was respected by popes and royalty alike. From the forty-two-verse Latin poem, American Congregational minister Ray Palmer freely translated selected verses to create this version.

Tune: HESPERUS L.M.
 (QUEBEC)
 Henry W. Baker, 1854

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Ps. 145:10; Isa. 49:13

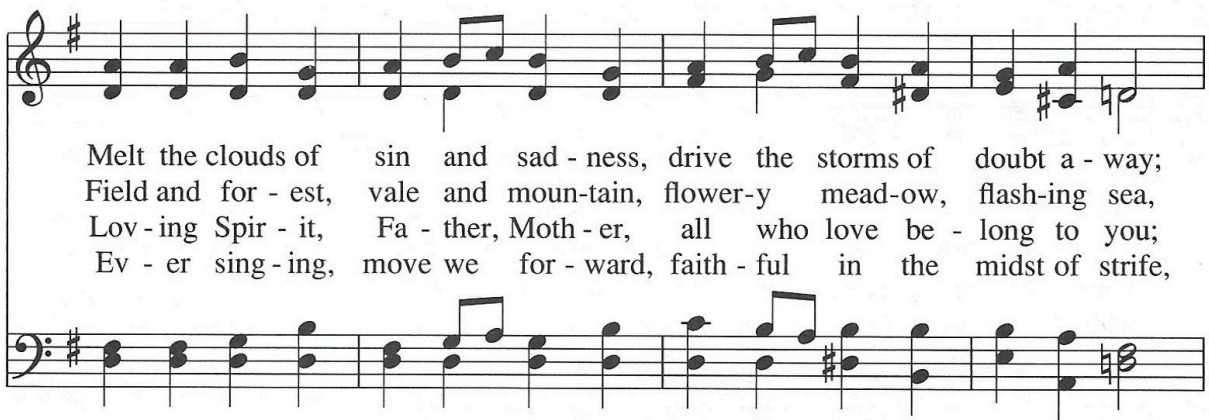
Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.



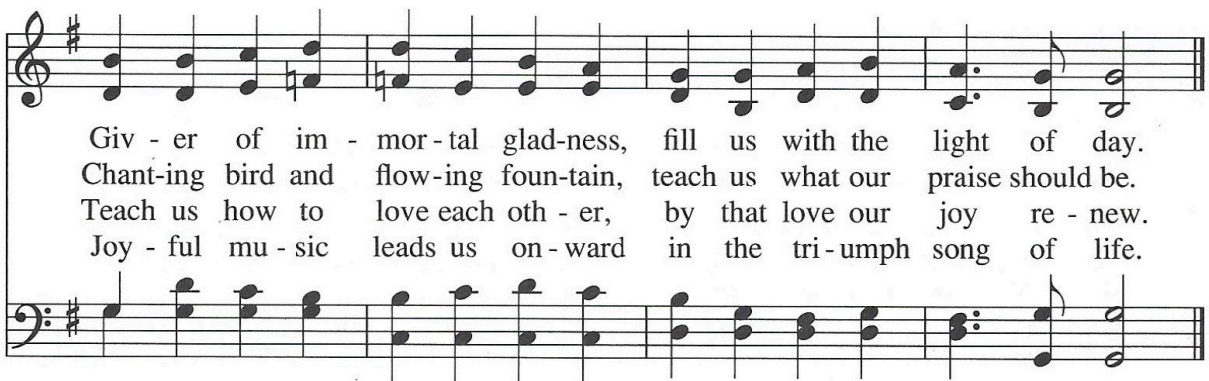
1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore you, God of glo - ry, God of love;
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re - flect your rays,
 3 You are giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blessed,
 4 Mor - tals, join the might - y cho - rus which the morn - ing stars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