

# **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

## **January 28, 2024**



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

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi  
Pastor

## Our Gathering

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

Prelude	Organ Music of Gordon Young	Scott Horton, organ
Welcome		Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
*Call to Worship		Pauline Phillips, Liturgist

Embodied Eternal, what might it mean for us to resonate together? That vibe. That hum. That feeling of flow. That “yes.” On this Health and Human Service Sunday, we come beside you with echoes of care that have lingered in our souls.

***Your service is alive. Let us feel its pulse.***

We know you not only as the Divine Physician, but as the Holy Housing Manager, the Sacred Social Worker, and the Chaplain to the Cosmos, too. Your healing work has no bounds, no set roles or rules, no singular calling.

***Your healing is breathing. Let us feel its flow***

We’ve been here long enough—pulled too many double-shifts and overnights—to know that oppression and despair can spread like wildfire. And yet, in all of those clocked hours, we find ourselves in Kairos time, on God’s time. Here, we measure our calendars by connection, set our alarm bells to attention, and are charged by the speed of sound that made the universe.

***Our service is alive. Let us feel its pulse.***

Come, let us bring our solidarity to ceremony and ritual.

***Our healing is breathing. Let us enter its flow.***

Come, let us worship our God who created us for partnership,

***Who made us for love, to not go it alone. Amen.***

*Hymn	“Great Is Your Faithfulness”	#423, pew hymnal
-------	------------------------------	------------------

Opening Prayer	Pauline Phillips
----------------	------------------

***Scripture tells us that love “binds everything together.” It is how we are held. It is how we exist at all. Let us reawaken ourselves to love’s presence in this community through service. May our worship not be a rote motion, but rather an experience of relationship with you and those gathered here. Open in us what love is requiring of us today, O God, and may we respond in faith. Amen.***

Choral Anthem	“We Will Walk In the Light!” - Besig & Price	Chancel Choir
---------------	----------------------------------------------	---------------

## 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.*

**\*Hymn**

"The Summons"

Insert

**Scripture**

Mark 1:21-28

Pauline Philips

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Liturgist: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God within us, and for the Word of God amongst us.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

## Sung Invitation 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.**

1973, Hope, Publishing CO., All rights reserved.  
OneLicense.net License #A-71173

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

**"Spirit of the Living God"** - D. Iverson

Chancel Choir

**\*Doxology and Dedication**

***We give You but Your own, whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Yours alone, we give it gratefully. Amen.***

**\*Hymn**

"Blessed Be the Tie That Binds

#393, pew hymnal

**Call to Order of the 140th Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

Welcome

Jeanne Hobson, moderator

Establish Quorum

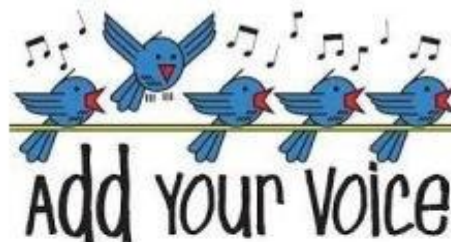
Opening Prayer

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Recess to Fellowship Hall for Lunch

Looking for a New Year's Resolution?  
Want to be active in Church?  
Be around fun and energetic people?  
Love to sing?

You Should Join Our Chancel Choir!!!



We practice on Wednesday evenings and sing in worship most Sundays throughout the program year. It might well be the funnest resolution you make!

Please inquire with Scott Horton, Music Director, at [shtulare@gmail.com](mailto:shtulare@gmail.com), or at church on Sunday, to see how you can get involved.

## ***New Member Brunch***

***Sunday, February 25, 2024***

***11:15am/in the Parlor***

***Come and meet other prospective new members and current congregation members. Chat with Pastor Simon and get to know what First Congregational Church is about. Orientation materials will be provided.***

***If you are interested, please contact  
Kymberly Lindsey in the office  
559-227-8489***

# This Week at Big Red

## **Monday, January 29**

- ♦ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

## **Tuesday, January 30**

## **Wednesday, January 31**

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

## **Thursday, February 1**

## **Friday, February 2**

## **Saturday, February 3**

## **Sunday, February 4**

- ♦ 9:00am: Exploration Hour - Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ♦ 10:00am: Worship - Sanctuary
- ♦ 11:00am: Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

## **Upcoming Dates to remember**

- \* **Ash Wednesday Joint Worship w/Amazing Grace Ministries and Rising Star Baptist Church - February 14**
- \* **1st Annual Big Red Church Bake Sale - February 24**
- \* **New Member Brunch - February 25**

## **First Congregational Church of Fresno**

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

### **Pastor**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi  
simon@bigredchurch.org

### **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 Philips

Ushers: Cliff Dodd, Pat Morales and Teresa Fuentes

Acolytes: Avery and Selena

Technician: Karisa Garza

## **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.

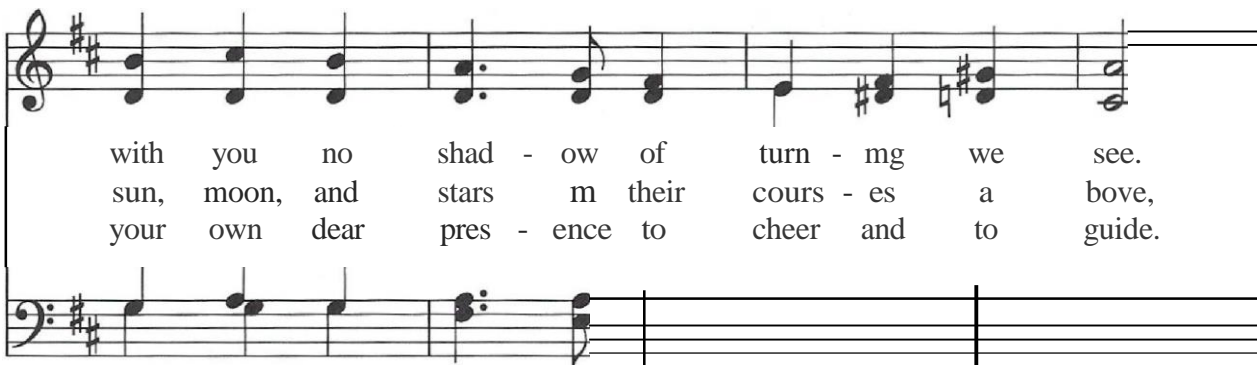
We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

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.

*Lam. 3:22-23**Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923; alt.*


1 Great is your faith ful-ness, O God, Cre - a - tor,\*  
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring-time and har - vest,  
 3 Par - don for sm and a peace so en - dur - ing,



with you no shad - ow of turn - mg we see.  
 sun, moon, and stars m their cours - es a bove,  
 your own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide.



You do not change, your com - pas - sions they fail not;  
 Join with all na - ture m man - i - fold wit - ness  
 Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,



all of your good - ness for ev - er will be.  
 to your great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
 bless - ings all mme with ten thou - sand be - side.



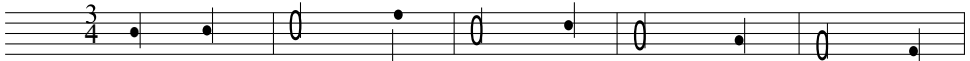
*Refrain*

Great is your faith-ful-ness! Great is your faith-ful-ness! Mom-ing by

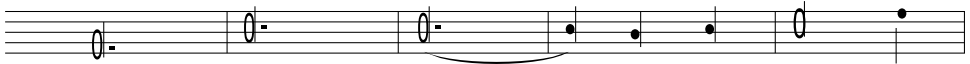
morn-ing new mer - cles I see; All I have need - ed your

hand has pro - vid - ed, Great is your faith - ful-ness, God, un - to me!

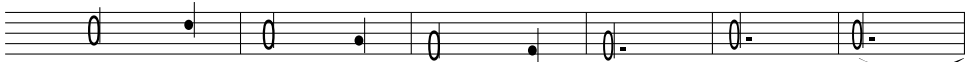
# The Summons



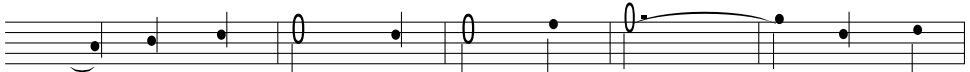
1. Will you come and fol - low me If I but
2. Will you leave your - self be - hind If I but
3. Will you let the blind - ed see If I but
4. Will you love the "you" you hide If I but
5. Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true When you but



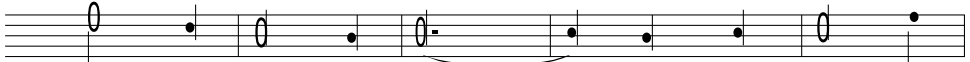
call your name? Will you go where  
 call your name? Will you care for  
 call your name? Will you set the  
 call your name? Will you quell the  
 call my name. Let me turn and



you don't know And nev - er be the same?  
 cruel and kind And nev - er be the same?  
 pris - 'ners free And nev - er be the same?  
 fear in - side And nev - er be the same?  
 fol - low you And nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, Will you  
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare Should your  
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, And do  
 Will you use the faith you've found To re -  
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go Where your



let my name be known, Will you let my  
 life at - tract or scare? Will you let me  
 such as this un - seen, And ad - mit to  
 shape the world a - round, Through my sight and  
 love and foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and



life be grown In you and you in me?  
 an - swer prayer In you and you in me?  
 what I mean In you and you in me?  
 touch and sound In you and you in me?  
 live and grow In you and you in me.

# Blessed Be the Tie That Binds

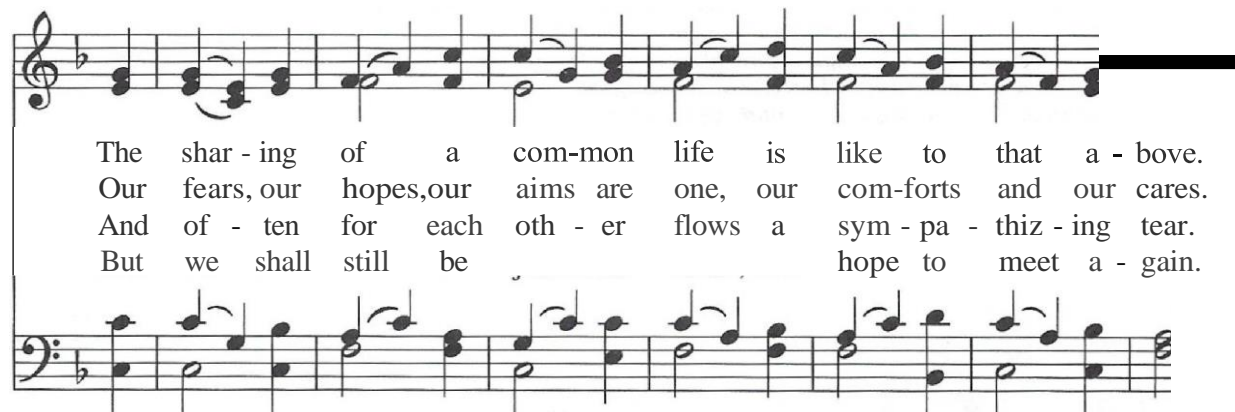
393

John Fawcett, 1782; alt.

Gal. 3:28; 6:2; Col. 3:13-15



1 Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;  
2 Be - fore our God we come and pour our ar - dent prayers;  
3 We share each oth - er's woes, each oth - er's bur - dens bear,  
4 When we are to part it gives us in - ward pain,



The shar - ing of a com-mon life is like to that a - bove.  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com-forts and our cares.  
And of - ten for each oth - er flows a sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.  
But we shall still be hope to meet a - gain.

An English Baptist minister, John Fawcett published a number of poetic works. His entire ministry was spent at a church near Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, where he wrote most of his hymns to follow his sermons.

Tune: DENNIS S.M.  
Melody by Johann G. Niegeli (c. 1768-1836)  
Adapt. Lowell Mason, 1845