



**September 25, 2022**

Sunday Worship

First Congregational United Church of Christ

945 G Street NW, Washington, DC

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

*(Please prepare your heart and space for worship)*

PRELUDE "Also Sprach Zarusthra" Richard Strauss  
Arranged by Hans Georg Pfluger

WELCOME Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

\*OPENING HYMN "Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit" (page 7)  
Verse 1: all; Verse 2: higher voices; Verse 3: lower voices; Verse 4: choir; Verses 5-6: all

CALL TO WORSHIP Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & SILENT PRAYER Meg Maguire  
**O God, who spoke of old to prophets and apostles, who spoke in Jesus and who is still speaking today, we confess how often we ignore your voice. We hear its echo in the cries of the oppressed, in the yearning of migrants to determine their own future, and from the earth itself which we have abused. We have heard your voice silenced by political paranoia, cultural arrogance, and religious complacency. Voice of God, open our ears to hear and kindle our hearts to act. Amen.**

TIME OF SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE Meg Maguire  
Beloved Community, there is no chasm that cannot be bridged, no loss that cannot be recovered, no mistake that cannot be forgiven, no life that cannot be redeemed through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

PASSING OF THE PEACE OF GOD Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss  
*Please unmute yourself and greet those around you with words such as "The peace of God be with you." Let us bless one another with deep peace across time and space.*

SCRIPTURE READING Polly Gordon  
*2 Samuel 11:2-15*

And it happened near the evening that David rose from his lying-place and went walking about on the roof of the palace and he saw a woman bathing from the roof; the woman was extraordinarily beautiful in appearance. David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "Is not this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" And David sent messengers and he took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. Then she purified herself after her defilement and she returned to her house. The woman conceived, and she sent and had someone tell David, "I am pregnant." So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite," and Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked after the status of Joab, and the status of the people, and the status of the war. Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." Uriah went out of the palace, and after him a gift from David. Now Uriah slept at the entrance of the palace with all the slaves of his lord and did not go down to his house. So David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in temporary shelters and my lord Joab and the slaves of my lord are at the edge of the field, camping. Should I then go to my house, to eat

and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here this day also, and tomorrow I will send you." So, Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Then David called him to dine in his presence and he drank, and David got him drunk. Then in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the slaves of his lord, yet he did not go down to his own house. And it was in the morning that David wrote a scroll to Joab and sent it in the hand of Uriah. Now in the scroll David wrote, "Set Uriah at the frontline of the most intense battle and pull back from behind him, so he will be struck down and die."

#### SCRIPTURE READING

*Matthew 5:21-26*

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder,' and 'whoever murders shall be subject to judgment.' But I say to you all that if you are angry with a sister or brother, you will be liable to judgment, and if you call a sister or brother an idiot, you will be subject to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be subject to the hell of fire. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and you remember that your sister or brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled, and then come and offer your gift. Come to favorable terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way with them or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the court officer, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny."

#### INTRODUCTION OF PREACHER

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

#### SERMON

Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson

#### SPECIAL MUSIC

"Hallelujah"

Leonard Cohen

Eric Olson, piano and vocal

#### OFFERING

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

*As we worship both in person and virtually, we invite you to give in a variety of ways. Place your offering in the offering plate on the way out of the sanctuary, send your check to the office, or give online through our website at [www.firstuccdc.org](http://www.firstuccdc.org), which includes options to give through PayPal or Vanco. Consider signing up for auto-giving to sustain our ministries.*

#### DOXOLOGY

"Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped"  
*Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sustains all creation!  
Sing praise, my soul, in profound and complete adoration!  
Gladsome rejoice—organ and trumpet and voice—  
Joining God's great congregation.*

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

**Our God, 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

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**\* indicates “Please rise in body or in Spirit”**

### **Connect with us!**

If you are worshipping from afar but would like to connect with the First Church community, please [click here](#) to fill out a Visitor’s Card and check out our newsletters on our website [www.firstuccdc.org](http://www.firstuccdc.org). We are so grateful to be extending our reach beyond the DC region and welcome you warmly! With gratitude, we thank Alyx Cheng, Abigail Cipparone, Barry Mills, and Allison Truhlarfor serving as our Zoom moderators each week. Their work makes our worship possible! We also thank Tom Sowers and Graham Marsh, our sound designers in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings.



#### **Note Regarding Translation**

Today’s gender-expansive translation of the biblical texts comes from the Rev. Dr. Wilda C. Gafney, a Hebrew biblical scholar and Episcopal priest, a former Army chaplain, and a congregational pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. This translation hails from her new lectionary *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church*, published by Church World Publishing Incorporated in 2021.



#### **September 25 Sermon & Talk-Back with Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson**

On Sunday, September 25th, we look forward to warmly welcoming the Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson back into our pulpit. He will serve as preacher and also lead a talk-back after worship to discuss his sermon. Dr. Hopson holds a joint appointment at Howard University on the faculty of the Department of Psychology and the School of Divinity. He is an ordained clergy in the United Church of Christ and has served UCC churches as Adjunct Pastor, Interim Minister, and Designated Senior Minister. He is also a licensed Clinical Psychologist in the District of Columbia. Dr. Hopson teaches courses in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, psychopathology, addiction, sexuality and the Black church, and the psychology of religion and pastoral care. His most recent work is on progressive preaching within Black church tradition, and the psychological implications of mainline Christian theological ideas such as atonement. He is an associate member of First Church and previously served on our pastoral staff.

#### **Music Notes**

**Also sprach Zarathustra**, *Op.* 30 (German: **Thus Spoke Zarathustra** or **Thus Spake Zarathustra**) is a [tone poem](#) by [Richard Strauss](#), composed in 1896 and inspired by [Friedrich Nietzsche's](#) philosophical 1883–1885 novel [Thus Spoke Zarathustra](#). [2] The composer conducted its first

performance on 27 November 1896 in Frankfurt. (Richard Strauss, 1894) The initial [fanfare](#) – titled "Sunrise" in the composer's programme notes – became well known after its use in [Stanley Kubrick's](#) 1968 film [2001: A Space Odyssey](#). [4]

"...Repetition is important, and Strauss repeats the opening fanfare three times, each time gaining in intensity, until it finally breaks free and arrives at a majestic cadence in the key of C major — the universal key. It has no sharps or flats (it uses only the white keys on the piano), and is enormously resonant. We feel C major in a very primal way as human beings." – Marion Alsop

## Progressive Theology

### **Progressive Theology Series with Rev. Amanda: Oct. 2-16**

Join Rev. Amanda for an education series on progressive theology following worship on October 2, 9, and 16. On October 2nd we will focus on deconstructing the theologies of our childhood--how and why they may have fallen apart and what happens when our carefully constructed theologies meet the challenges of lived experience. On

October 9 we will look to liberation theologies such as womanist and feminist theology, queer theology, and Black liberation theology as examples of progressive theology that honor the lived realities of people experiencing oppression. On October 16 we will explore reconstructing our theologies; the movement from certainty to provocative questions, and how we can remain open to change in our understandings of God and the meaning of the human experience.



### **World Communion Sunday: Bread from Around the Globe**

Join us next Sunday for a special worship service as we mark World Communion Sunday with bread from around the globe. The Worship Commission welcomes your gifts of time and talent in bringing breads that represent the wider world. For example, tortillas (Honduras), naan (India), banana bread (Jamaica), etc. While we will partake of our usual gluten free bread during

communion, we invite those bringing bread to divide it into two portions; one to adorn the worship table during the communion liturgy, and the other half to share during our outdoor coffee hour so folks can take their time to sample breads from around the world. Please [click here](#) to sign up to bring a bread from around the world, perhaps a place you have lived, a place that holds your origins, or a place that is meaningful to you. Scroll on down to October 2nd and type in your name and the kind of bread you will bring as well as the area it represents. Or, email Rev. Amanda to sign up to bring bread.



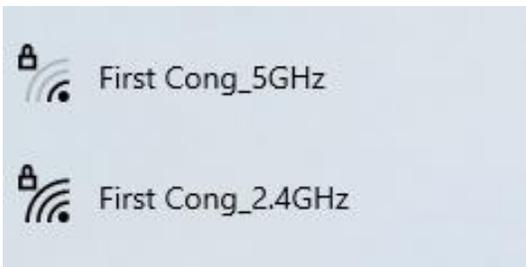
### **Reclaim our Vote Postcard Campaign: Volunteers Needed**

Reclaim our Vote is a non-partisan voter outreach campaign from the Center for Common Ground that aims to empower underrepresented voters and combat voter suppression, one voter at a time. First Church is participating in conjunction with the Potomac Association Justice & Witness Action Network. Volunteers are needed to handwrite postcards to mostly rural, elderly voters of color that have been unknowingly deregistered in voter-suppressed states to assist them in re-registering. Active voters of color also need to be contacted via hand-written postcards to request pledges to vote and to stimulate community organizing. 9 million postcards were distributed in 2020. First Church has 1,000 postcards for the upcoming 2022 elections - please email Michael Hopkins at [michael.hopkins.129@gmail.com](mailto:michael.hopkins.129@gmail.com) if you'd like to be involved.



### **Sign Up as Scripture Reader or Liturgist this Fall**

[Click here](#) to sign up to serve as a scripture reader or liturgist in worship this fall as we launch a new worship theme, "Gathered from the Four Corners of the Earth." We welcome members and friends, local and far-flung, adults, youth, and children to participate. Your voice helps make us who we are, so please take a moment to sign up. Our worship is enriched by your active participation.



First Church Wi-Fi password:

**first1865**

To avoid echo/feedback, please mute your device when taking part in group discussions.

## Prayer List

Prayers of comfort for David Greer, following the death of his beloved father.

Prayers for Rose Berman as she continues to heal  
from her knee surgery and hospitalization.

Prayers of healing for Joshua Hinzman, son of Carol Malone,  
as he recovers from a heart attack.

Prayers of strength for Monica, daughter-in-law to Diane Brenneman  
and wife of Sara, after a recurrence of cancer.

Prayers of healing and peace for Bonnie Rickert, Courtney McCaffrey's mother.

Prayers of healing for James Ross.

Prayers of mercy for the people of Afghanistan  
and Afghan families resettling in the U.S.

Prayers for Monte Hillis and her husband Bert, as she faces  
the rapid onset of dementia.

Prayers of peace and liberation for Ukraine, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Haiti.

Byron Adams' niece, Valerie, undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

All those who mourn the loss of a beloved one.

Families struggling to eat and make ends meet.

People's UCC, our sibling congregation.

Emmanuel Okorie-Dunn and Ellen Bushmiller, who serve as nurses.

Rev. Laura Johnson and Rev. Diana Gomez de Molina, who serve as chaplains.

# Stars and Planets Flung In Orbit

1 Stars and plan - ets flung in or - bit, gal - ax - ies that  
 2 Skies a - domed with sun - set splen - dor, si - lent peaks in  
 3 Life in won - drous, wild pro - fu - sion, seed and fruit, each  
 4 Hu - man - kind, earth's deep - est mys - tery, born of dust but

swirl through space, Pow - ers hid with - in the at - om,  
 calm re - pose, Gold - en fields a - wait - ing har - vest,  
 flower and tree, Beast and fish and swarm - ing in - sect,  
 touched by grace, Torn a - part by tongue and col - or,

cells that form an in - fant's face: These, O God, in  
 foam - ing surf and fra - grant rose: Earth, its boun - ty  
 soar - ing bird, re - joic - ing, free: These, your crea - tures,  
 yet a sin - gle, striv - ing race: We, in whom you

si - lence praise you; by your wis - dom they are made.  
 clothed with beau - ty, ech - oes all cre - a - tion's praise.  
 join in cho - rus, prais - ing you in word - less song.  
 trace your im - age, add our words to na - ture's song.

- 5 Gra - cious God, we bring be - fore you gifts of hu - man life a - lone,  
 Truth that throbs through song and sto - ry,  
 vi - sions caught in paint and stone:  
 These, O God, we glad - ly of - fer,  
 gifts to praise the Giv - er's name.
- 6 Christ, the Word be - fore cre - a - tion  
 as cre - a - tion's fin - al goal,  
 Once you came for earth's re - demp - tion;  
 by your Spir - it make earth whole.  
 Then, O God, the new cre - a - tion  
 will your praise for - ev - er sing.

# O God of Earth and Altar

1 O God of earth and al - tar, bow down and hear our cry;  
2 From all that ter - ror teach - es, from lies of pen and voice,  
3 A - wak - en us to ac - tion and forge us in - to one,

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The treble staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics underneath. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

Our earth-ly rul - ers fal - ter, our peo - ple drift and die;  
From all the eas - y speech - es that make our hearts re - joice,  
de - fy - ing sect and fac - tion; O God, your will be done!

The second system continues the musical notation with the same treble and bass staves. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

The walls of gold en - tomb us, the swords of scorn di - vide;  
From val - ue's pro - fan - a - tion, from hon - or sac - ri - ficed,  
Op - pres - sive sys - tems snare us; our ap - a - thies in - crease.

The third system continues the musical notation with the same treble and bass staves. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

Take not your thun - der from us, but take a - way our pride.  
From sleep and from dam - na - tion, de - liv - er us, O Christ!  
Great God, in mer - cy spare us for jus - tice and for peace!

The fourth system concludes the musical notation with the same treble and bass staves. The lyrics are aligned with the notes in the treble staff.

We are an Open & Affirming congregation, welcoming all LGBTQ+ individuals and families into the full life and leadership of our church.



a just  
world  
for all  
[ucc.org](http://ucc.org)

Welcome to First Congregational UCC. We were founded in 1865 by abolitionists as the first racially integrated church in Washington, D.C. In 1867 our mission committee played a prominent role in the founding of Howard University. The church has been located at its present site at 10th and G Streets NW since 1868. In more recent years, the church affirmed its vision as an Open and Affirming (ONA) Church (1987), a Just Peace Church (1985), Multiracial/Multicultural Church (2003), and an Anti-Racist Church (2021). Our new building, constructed according to Gold LEED standards, was dedicated in 2012. First Church continues to follow its faith journey into the future and to be a prophetic voice for the Spirit in the nation's capital. If you would like to know more about First Church or would like to make it your spiritual home and community, please contact [churchoffice@FirstUCCDC.org](mailto:churchoffice@FirstUCCDC.org) or 202.628.4317.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**



Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church  
Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss  
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran  
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams  
Director of Music Ministry – Leela Koilpillai  
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Trista Dunlap  
Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez  
Members in Discernment – Lynaya Morris, LaTayna Purnell

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