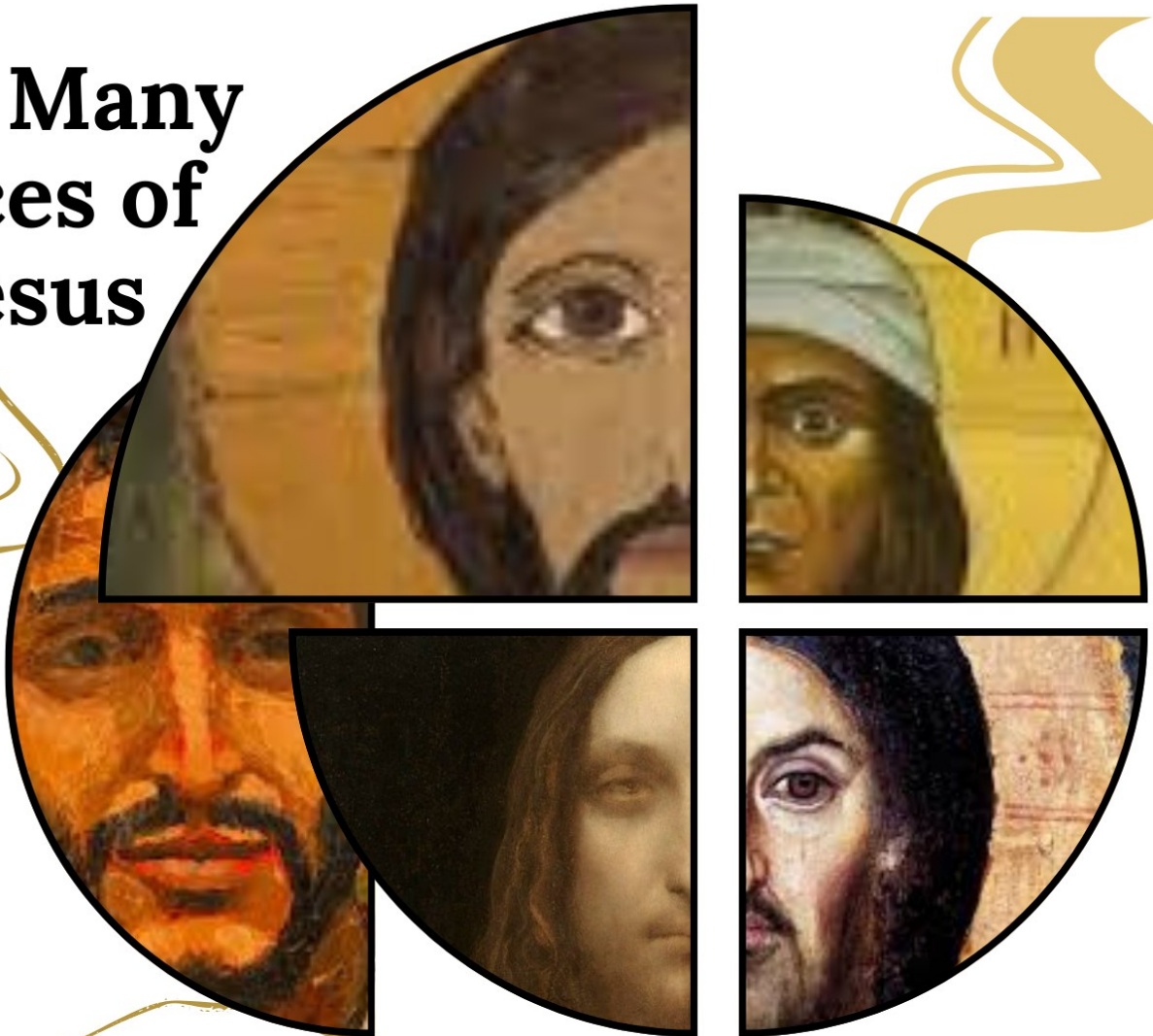


The Many Faces of Jesus



Gospel of Mark

January 4, 2026
Second Sunday in Christmas

**We are an Open and Affirming
and Just Peace Congregation**

*No matter who you are,
Or where you are on your life's journey,
You are welcome here!*



First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Salem, Oregon

**Welcome to First Congregational United Church of Christ in Salem, Oregon.
Whether you come every Sunday or this is your first time,
know that you are belong here!**

Please take a moment during the **welcome** to sign our **Friendship Pad** at the end of the pew. If you are new, we'd love to get your contact info so we can reach out during the week. Let us know if you would like to get on our mailing list so we can share our weekly newsletter with you.

We Love Kids and Families!

We have created a space in the back of the sanctuary for families and children. It is a space designed for kids to do quiet activates during worship—art projects, legos, reading, etc.—and we have **Busy Bags** as well to help the “*smallers*” share this time with us. If you sit in the back and find the quiet activities are distracting to you we invite you to sit in the main part of the sanctuary. Help us support our intergenerational community by sitting where you can get your needs met.

Thank you for sharing your time and spirit with us this morning!

When you see an asterisk, () please stand in body or spirit as you are able.*

NCH = New Century Hymnal, Black Hardbound Cover

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

We offer the following acknowledgment of the communities of Indigenous People who first lived in the land we call the Willamette Valley. These are the tribes with whom we are walking together even today: the Kalapuya, tribes that include Tualatin (Atfalati), Yamhill (Yamel), Ahantchuyuk (Pudding River), Luckiamute, Santiam, Chepenefa (Mary's River), Chemapho (Muddy Creek), Tsankupi (Calapooia River), Mohawk (Mohawk River, OR; unrelated to the Mohawks of NY), Chafan (near Eugene), Chelamela (Long Tom River), Winefelly (Mohawk, McKenzie and Coast Forks of the Willamette River), and the Yoncalla peoples.

PRELUDE

*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern
(How Brightly Shines the Morning Star)*

Buxtehude

WELCOMING ALL

RINGING THE BOWL

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CALLING IN THE SPIRIT

One: The time is fulfilled. God's reign has drawn near.

**Many: We come with lives in motion— unfinished, uncertain, longing
for good news.**

One: Jesus comes not with delay, but with urgency and invitation.

Many: **Calling ordinary people to leave what binds them and step toward what gives life.**

One: This is a gospel on the move — healing in the margins, hope breaking in where it is least expected.

Many: **We come with our whole selves — our doubts, our hopes, our questions, our courage.**

One: Here, Christ meets us as we are and calls us forward.

Many: **We rise to follow, listening for God’s voice, ready to begin again.**

SINGING TOGETHER

Many Voices Tell the Story

Insert

PRAYER FOR GOING DEEPER

One: Holy One, you call us into a life that moves — Into repentance, trust, and courage. Yet we come aware of the ways we resist that call. Let us name what we carry and turn again toward your mercy.

Many: **We confess that we hesitate when you call us to follow. We hold tightly to what feels safe and delay the risks love requires. We grow accustomed to injustice, silent in the face of suffering, and cautious when compassion asks us to act. We turn away from the urgency of your good news and forget that your reign is already near.**

(Silence is shared.)

One: Hear the good news — God does not wait for our perfection. In Jesus, grace meets us where we are and calls us forward in love. The time is now. God’s reign is near. You are forgiven, freed, and invited again into life.

Many: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

***PASSING THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prayer refrain: “Hear our prayer.”

PRAYER SONG

Come and Find a Quiet Center, v. 1

Come and find a quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
Find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace and simply be.

PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

Holy One,
your reign is near.
Turn us again toward life.
Forgive us as we forgive others.
Heal what is broken among us.
Call us to follow with courage and trust.
Send us out in love.
Amen.

PRAYER SONG

Come and Find a Quiet Center, v. 3

In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,
Let our lives and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain.
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,
In the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare.

GATHERING OUR GIFTS

If you wish to make a financial donation today, you may

- ♦ Text the amount of your donation to **(833) 367-9224**
- ♦ Use the QR code to the right:
- ♦ Give online at www.uccsalem.org by simply clicking on **Donate** button
- ♦ Or you can always leave a check or cash or mail a check to our physical address: First Congregational Church UCC, 700 Marion Street NE, Salem, OR 97301



Thank you to everyone who has made a pledge and who gives through their bank or other electronic portals.

OFFERTORY

There's a Star

Spiritual/arr. Michel

*DEDICATION CHORUS

What Does the Lord Require of Us?

NCH Back Cover

*DEDICATING OUR GIFTS

STORY PAGES FOR KIDS

STORY PAGES FOR ADULTS

Mark 1:14–20

MESSAGE

The Face of Mark's Jesus

MEDITATION REFRAIN*Jesus, Remember Me*

Insert

SHARING THE LORD'S TABLE**LIFE IN COMMUNITY**

Please read the announcements printed in the bulletin. If you have something to share that is not in the bulletin, please raise your hand and someone will bring the microphone to you. Please remember to fill in your name and contact info in the Friendship Pads and join us for fellowship downstairs.

SINGING TOGETHERThe Summons*

Insert

BENEDICTION AND BLESSING*POSTLUDE***Hymn Fantasia*

Thygerson

During the Postlude, you are invited to leave or remain and quietly listen to the music.

**With Thanks to:**

Ushers/ Greeters:	Susan and Steve Bearden
Liturgist/Reader:	Ann Krier
Worship Team On Duty:	Judith Taussig
Finance Team On Duty:	Rick O'Grady
Communion Set-up:	Helen Krier

About today's organ music: The postlude is entitled "Fantasia," but it could almost be called a "quodlibet." In philosophy and theology, a quodlibet is a discussion or argument about a point, and a musical quodlibet is a composition in which snippets of multiple pieces of music are combined into one, often with hints of humor or parody as the listener puzzles over what they're hearing. After the opening of Thygerson's *Fantasia*, based on "Come, Thou Almighty King," can you recognize the snatches of four other hymns as they go by?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please take a look at the online calendar on the website for upcoming meetings, special events, and more. www.uccsalem.org

Monday Book Group Resumes January 6

Our current book is *Convictions* by Marcus Borg. We will discuss:

- Chapter 4 — “Salvation is more about life than afterlife”
- Chapter 5 — “Jesus is the norm of the Bible”

Everyone is welcome. Mondays, 12:00–1:00 PM, Conference Room.

January Sermon Series — *The Many Faces of Jesus*

The gospels do not give us a single portrait of Jesus. Instead, they reveal many faces—urgent teacher, compassionate healer, mystic, and hidden presence. Together we will explore how different communities told the story of Jesus, and what their diverse voices teach us about faith, justice, and belonging today.

Join us for worship Sundays at 10:30 AM — in person and online.

Whether you are deeply rooted in faith, returning with questions, or simply curious about Jesus beyond easy answers, this series invites you to listen again with openness and wonder.

Companion Adult Education Series — *The Four Witnesses*

Tuesdays in January 2026 • 6:30 PM • Online

Explore the four gospels through *The Four Witnesses* by Robin Griffith-Jones. Each gospel offers a distinctive testimony to Jesus — rebel, rabbi, compassionate visionary, and mystic — shaped by its community and context. Rather than blending these voices into one story, we will listen deeply to each Gospel writer and reflect on how they expand our understanding of who Jesus is and why that question still matters.

No prior experience needed. Curiosity welcome.

2026 Leadership Retreat—January 24th from 9AM to 5PM

If you are an incoming or outgoing leader of a Circle, Team or the Council, please join your fellow leaders as we gather to share insights, learn how to work more effectively (with fewer meetings!) and prepare for the exciting year ahead. Look for more information and a location coming soon.

2026 ANNUAL MEETING *Sunday, February 1; potluck & meeting after worship*

Save the date and come be a part of this year's Annual Meeting. Highlights will include the Shepherding Team's report and proposal for the Resilience Hub; this year's "Have We Told You Lately..." recipient, and much more.

Multi-Congregation Workshops: *Find Your Role in the Social Change Ecosystem*

Sundays: February 8, 15 and 22, 1-3 pm

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem

Join in a three-workshop series around Deepa Iyer's workbook *Social Change Now*, designed to help participants reflect on the 10 roles in the social change ecosystem. Build connections with other people of faith and reflect on the role(s) you can play from Frontline Responder to Healer to Visionary and more. Participants may choose to be part of a group order or to obtain their own copy of *Social Change Now*. Register here with your intent to attend and interest in a group order:

<https://forms.gle/4stMNa3VVgtSoPvw7>

Thank you seems too small a phrase ...

Thank you seems too small a phrase to express the gratitude in my heart for the last year spent with you. We've experienced the best and worst of each other. We've gotten to know our neighbors and asked and answered hard questions about identity, vision, and mission.

I have had the privilege of watching you define who you are and whose you are. Your dedication to generosity, collaboration, and living your faith astounds me. Your acceptance and willingness to learn with me humbles me.

This past Sunday, you reminded me what it is to have a community of care around me. The leaving is bittersweet. The commute and juggling of the last year has taken its toll. The work we have done together is incomplete. Yet I will carry this time with you in my heart as a foundation for the years ahead.

What's next was a question many of you asked me. I am still finishing my **Masters of Divinity at Pacific School of Religion**. I expect to graduate on *May 24, 2026*. The Central Pacific Conference requires 1 unit of **Clinical Pastoral Education** (learning how to do the work of chaplaincy in a supervised environment) for ordination. I hope to complete this in the summer. The rest is in God's hands.

Thank you seems too small a phrase. You live in my heart. Thank you for your prayers, your listening ears, your teaching hearts, and your patience with me. Thank you for teaching me what it means to minister. The seeds you have planted in me will grow. Until we meet again, may God keep and bless you.

With all my love, Amy LeiLani Tobey

Prayer in Three Breaths

For the World, we pray...

- For those experiencing the vulnerability of aging.
- That the people of the United States of America have the sustained determination to fight for our democracy, to prevail, and to guarantee our peace and our rights.
- That we may calm our hearts and minds to find gratitude, and comfort others rather than hate. Include all you can.

For the world we share—its pain, its beauty, its longing for justice—we breathe in hope and breathe out peace.

For Our Community, we pray...

- For our Hispanic/Latin-X neighbors who are struggling to keep their businesses going in this very dangerous time.
- For all of those facing surgeries, or dealing with chronic health issues.
- Prayers for all living with Alcoholism. Pray for them that they may have hope.
- That all those living outside as the nights get cold, that they find shelter, warmth, compassion, and an opportunity to heal.

For our community—its workers, its dreamers, its weary and its bold—we breathe in compassion and breathe out courage.

For Our Beloveds, we pray...

- For all who are in need of healing: Denise, Dave, Linda, Kim's mom, Kevin and Omar, Amy, Diane, Deb and Erin Hull.
- For those in cancer treatment: a member's brother who began chemotherapy recently, and Randy.
- For those living with HIV/AIDS, especially Jeff Standy.
- For all who are grieving, especially Gus, and for Tammie's family; elders who live with so much loss; for Amy Tobey, whose grandmother recently passed.
- Prayers and blessings for the friends and family of Charlie Wallace, who recently passed away. Charlie was a beloved professor, chaplain, teacher and friend.
- Prayers of hope for Robert, who is looking for a house in Salem.
- For all the UCC churches that make up the Central Pacific Conference.

For our beloveds—those near and those far, those with us and those we remember—we breathe in love and breathe out gratitude.

Do you have a special need for prayer and support? If you would like to be on our weekly prayer list, please contact the church office: office@uccsalem.org

WE ARE A JUST PEACE AND OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

This church welcomes everyone without regard to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, economic class, marital status, or physical/mental abilities and encourages all to share in the full life and leadership of this congregation.

PASTOR ROBIN'S OFFICE HOURS

- ♦ Monday and Tuesday - 1 PM to 4 PM
- ♦ Wednesday - 9 AM to 1 PM
- ♦ Other times by appointment

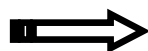
Want to explore your questions and share something of your journey? Pastor Robin welcomes your calls and visits. You may contact her via cell (971)666-3442, at the church (503-363-3660) or email: pastor@uccsalem.org.

If you prefer to meet outside, she is always up for a walk and talk!

Friday and Saturday are Pastor Robin's Sabbath days.

GET CONNECTED: The **Weekly Word**, our email newsletter which comes out every Thursday will keep you up to date on all that is happening at FCCUCC. Links to the livestreaming worship as well as the bulletin are included. To subscribe, find the link on our webpage www.uccsalem.org, or email the office—office@uccsalem.org. Our phone number is **503-363-3660**

webpage QR



CHURCH STAFF

DESIGNATED TERM PASTOR
ORGANIST
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR
SOUND TECHNICIANS
MUSIC COORDINATOR
CUSTODIAN

Rev. Robin Lunn, ext. 312
Dr. Marcia Hauff
Lily Walker, ext. 310
Zanne D'Anna, Kim Colantino, Elijah Gores
Quincy Summerlin
Joe Martin

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