

ADVENT 1



Awake with Wonder

What If the Dawn Is
Already Breaking?

November 30, 2025

First Sunday in Advent

**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

TBA

WELCOMING ALL

RINGING THE BOWL

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CALLING IN THE SPIRIT

One: Awake, beloveds of God , the dawn is breaking.

Many: We lift our eyes in wonder, ready to see what new light reveals.

One: God's dream rises before us like a mountain on the horizon,
calling us toward hope.

Many: **We come with open hearts, open spirits, and open imaginations.**

One: Let us look for the Holy the way a child looks at first light,

Many: **curious, expectant, unafraid.**

One: Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Many: **With awe and wonder, we worship the One who makes all things new.**

SINGING TOGETHER

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

NCH 107

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING “Hope”

Scott Taber and Diane Corner

One: As we light the first candle, we remember the wonder with which the earth first awakened, acknowledging the beauty of peace and holiness of standing together in unity. We see a world so full of darkness, especially when we look at Jerusalem today, and wonder how the world will ever come to know the ways of the Prince of Peace. Yet, just as this one candle begins to dispel the darkness around it, simple acts of mercy, learning, and peace can overcome violence. We once again are invited to wonder at the gift of peace as we awake from the enmity present within our world. This gift plants hope in our hearts, and we light the candle of hope knowing what we work, wait, and strive for, a world where peace overcomes violence, strife, and longing.

(Light the first candle.)

Many: **We awake with wonder, God of peace, at your goodness and mercy shown to all things, everywhere, all at once. Your desire for all people to learn your ways from you, your tender love and care, your blessing of new life stirs our hearts to love, wonder, and adoration.**

One: May you find peace in surprising places this week as you awake to the wonder of the love of God that sees the impossibility of peace as the inevitable beginning of justice, love, and life in community.

Candle Lighting Song

Light A Candle Bright and Tall

tune: DIX

Light a candle bright and tall

For the Hope within our world.

Hope that heard the ages' call

**As the stars and planets whirled.
Shine within our hearts today
Come, O Hope, to us, we pray.**

PRAYER FOR GOING DEEPER

One: Let us open our hearts to the God who awakens wonder in, among, and through us. Will you pray with me?

Many: **Holy One of New Light, we confess that our eyes grow heavy with every news flash and social media post about our friends who are struggling and a world that feels in tatters. Our spirits grow tired. We forget to watch for your presence. We forget to hope for what we cannot yet see. We forget that you come to us through the unexpected, the ordinary, and the tender everyday miracles. Forgive us when we lose sight of beauty. Forgive us when fear narrows our vision. Open our eyes again: to awe, to possibility, and to the places where your realm is dawning among us even now.**

Silence is shared...

One: Beloved of God, hear this good news: The night is far spent, the dawn is already breaking, and God's mercy is rising anew right now. In this promise, know that you are forgiven, renewed, and set free.

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: **God of wonder, hear our prayers.***

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.**

LORD'S PRAYER *(please use the words that are most meaningful for you)*

**Our Wonder-filled God, who is in and through and around us all,
Holy and awe inspiring is your name.**

Your kin*dom come, your will be done, in this realm as in all others.

**Give us today the sustenance we need for our bodies, courage for our
hearts, and wonder enough to see your presence in all things.**

**Forgive us when we close our eyes to your light,
as we forgive those who struggle to see us clearly.**

**Lead us toward compassion and away from fear,
and free us from every force that diminishes life.**

**For yours is the kin*dom of expanding love, the power of transforming
hope, and the glory of unending wonder, now and forever. 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.

STORY PAGES FOR KIDS *Let's be Ready*

STORY PAGES FOR ADULTS *Isaiah 2:1-5, Matthew 24:36-44*

MESSAGE *Awake with Wonder: What If the Dawn Is Already Breaking?*

MEDITATION *Morning Has Broken* arr, Stevens, Simeone
Pick-Up Choir

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.uccsaalem.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

***DEDICATION CHORUS** *What Does the Lord Require of Us?* **NCH Back Cover**

***DEDICATING OUR GIFTS**

RECOGNITION OF WORLD AIDS DAY

Jeff Standy

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 TOGETHER**

Come, O Long Expected Jesus

NCH 122 vs. 1 & 4

***BENEDICTION AND BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

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



With Thanks to:

Ushers/ Greeters:

Maya Close and Peggy Farr

Liturgist/Reader:

Rebecca Ralston

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Council meets Monday, December 1, at 6:00 p.m.

Mission and Justice Circle meets Tuesday, December 2, at 1:00 p.m.

Women's Fellowship meets Wednesday, December 3, at 10:30 a.m.

Advent Fun—Join Christian Ed at the big table in Talkington Hall on **December 14th** to make Gingerbread Houses! All supplies will be provided.

Hanging the Greens—On **December 14th** we will also decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Many hands make light work and if we all pitch in we can get wreaths, garland, ornaments, and other decorations up for the final week of Advent and into the Christmas season.

Prayer in Three Breaths

For the World, we pray...

- For indigenous peoples across the US who grieve the genocide that European settlers perpetrated upon them.
- For the families affected by typhoons and deportation.

- 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 16 of our Salem neighbors grabbed by ICE and for their families losing their breadwinners.
- 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...

- Prayers of GRATITUDE for The Choir!!!
- For Denise, who is having difficulty healing and gaining strength after knee surgery.
- For Kim's mom to have peace and healing.
- For Restorative Healing for All, especially a friend with oral surgery last week.
- For Kevin and Omar, as they continue to heal.
- For Dave Gilbert as he recovers from heart surgery.
- For Amy, and for Erin Hull.
- For a member's brother who begins chemotherapy on Thursday.
- For Linda, who is in ICU.
- For Gus and for Tammie's family, to have peace as they mourn her passing.
- For Russell Ware, Communications Strategist for the UCC 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

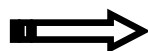
Want to explore your questions and share something of your journey? Pastor Robin welcomes your calls and visits. You may contact her via cell (971)666-3442, at the church (503-363-3660) or email: pastor@uccsalem.org.

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	Rev. Robin Lunn, ext. 312
SEMINARY INTERN	Amy Tobey
ORGANIST	Dr. Marcia Hauff
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR	Lily Walker, ext. 310
SOUND TECHNICIANS	Zanne D'Anna, Kim Colantino, Elijah Gores
CUSTODIAN	Joe Martin

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