



THE SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 24, 2022 | 10:00 AM

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

A Pleasant Thought

Florence B. Price

WELCOME

Rev. Lynette Ross

If you are visiting FCC, reach out to Rev. Lynette Ross (lynette@fcc-houston.org), our sabbatical Senior Minister to learn more about the church and its ministries. She would be happy to meet with you via Zoom, in person, or over the phone.

*HYMN NO. 7

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

HYMNT TO JOY

PRAYER

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:22-26

Mariah Brenner

But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment, and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Olivia Sponsler-Sanchez

SUNG RESPONSE

Come, O Lord, and Set Us Free

JOHN BELL

Come, O Lord, and set us free; Give your peo - ple peace. ___

Come, O Lord, and set us free; Come, Lord Je - sus, come. ___

SERMON

"A New Freedom & A New Happiness"

Rev. Lynette Ross

HYMN*Come and Find the Quiet Center*

BEACH SPRING

Come and find the qui - et cen - ter in the crow - ded life we lead,
 Si - lence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,
 In the Spir - it let us trav - el, op - en to each oth - er's pain,
 find the room for hope to en - ter, find the frame where we are freed:
 God it is who speaks and names us, knows our be - ing, touch - es base,
 let our loves and fears un - rav - el, cel - e - brate the space we gain:
 clear the cha - os and the clut - ter, clear our eyes that we can see
 mak - ing space with - in our think - ing, lift - ing shades to show the sun,
 there's a place for deep - est dream - ing, there's a time for heart to care,
 all the things that real - ly mat - ter, be at peace, and sim - ply be.
 rais - ing cour - age when we're shrink - ing, find - ing scope for faith be - gun.
 in the Spir - it's live - ly schem - ing there is al - ways room to spare.

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray (1930-)

MUSIC: Attr. B. F. White (1800-1879), *The Sacred Harp*, 1844**PASTORAL PRAYERS****THE LORD'S PRAYER** (using debts/debtors)

**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 and the power and the glory, forever.
 Amen.†**

BRING FORTH OUR GIFTS AND OFFERINGS Mariah Brenner
Checks or cash donations may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the FCC office. The preferred method of giving electronically is through Zelle. Zelle is available through most major bank apps under transfers and incurs no additional fees to either the donor or FCC for the gift. To use Zelle, enter the following email address: financialsecretary@fcc-houston.org. FCC members can also use the Realm app on their phone or computer to make electronic donations. If you don't have the Realm app, please contact Vicki Shimer at vicki@fcc-houston.org for an invitation.

OFFERTORY

Aria

Paul Manz

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
One God, triune, whom we adore.
Amen. †**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Loving God, we recognize that we lack nothing we really need. We are thankful we can give. Bless the offerings we bring. Amen. †

***HYMN NO. 352**

Go Forth for God

OLD 124TH

***OUR MISSION**

**Welcome all into an inclusive community;
Seek to follow Jesus' teachings;
Search for more truth and light;
Support one another on our faith journeys;
Strive for peace and justice. †**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Procession

Russell Schulz-Widmar

Bold indicates congregational response.

*Please stand if you are able.

† As an inclusive and open faith community, we attempt to convey gender neutral images, terms, and language of God. However, some hymns, anthems, and scriptures from the past will not be changed. See fourth paragraph, page V of Hymns of Truth & Light hymnal for more information.

WORSHIP NOTES:

THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS ON THE COMMUNION TABLE TODAY WERE DONATED BY Heidi Modaro & Bahr Mahony in honor of family time.

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LARGE PRINT BULLETINS & HEARING DEVICES AVAILABLE:

For more information or assistance, please speak to one of the ushers.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The women, people with uteruses, people of color, and people in the LGBTQ+ community who feel despair, anger, confusion, & fear at this time; Wilbur Stilwell, Chuck Stilwell's father; Jim O'Sullivan; Family & friends of Lanell Windham, friend of the Stilwells; Rebecque Demark; Stephanie Fuentes, Amy Stabile's student; Family & Friends of Max Ballock; Patt Ross, Diane Brahm's sister-in-law; Jake Stahl & his family; Family & friends of Carol Riley; Rhonda & Donald Sweeney; Katherine Garcia (Bahr Mahony's sister) Beth Stork; Graces Greves (Heidi Modaro's Niece); Family & Friends of Mary Thomas (Mona Rhines' friend); Vivian Clemons, Jacqueline Lord, & Ethan Beaty (wife, niece, & great-nephew of Chuck Clemons); Sharon Smith, (friend of Diane Brahm); Liz Tucker (daughter of Rachel & Jim Tucker); Brad Gowan (friend of Michael Schafer and Ellen Benninghoven), Family & friends of Shirley Gilford (friend of Joyce Huffman); Jennifer Novak (friend of Janice Vanderbur); Audra Firestone (friend of Naomi Black); Tom Johnson (Martha Johnson's brother); Lindsey Byrd (daughter-in-law of Paul & Mary Byrd); Carlene Shirk; Jade Allen; Lee Menard (friend of Tom O'Neill); Claire Cardwell; Jonathan & Carolyn Hutchison (Naomi Black's brother & sister-in-law); Joel Fokom (father of one of Heather Davis' Brownie Girl Scouts); Jennifer Schafer (Michael Schafer's daughter-in-law); John & Sue Anne Pieroni (Mary Harper's brother and sister-in-law); Jennifer Chapin (Robin Stilwell's friend); John Stroehlein (MaryBeth Baun Pappas' friend); Mark Scallan; Frances Davis (Mary Harper's friend); Jenny Johnston (Kryisia Lynes' friend).

NEXT WEEK: THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sermon: "True Ambition" by Rev. Lynette Ross

Scripture: Matthew 7:7-10,40-42

MASKS IN WORSHIP

Worship is mask optional, but given the rising numbers of COVID cases, we prefer you to wear a mask, even if you are vaccinated.

COFFEE, TEA, & CONVERSATION

Please join us in the Assembly Room after worship for fellowship & refreshments.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY

There will be Children's Sunday School this Sunday for youth ages 5-13. If your child has not attended Sunday School in the past, please be sure to see Olivia in the Narthex before service to sign them up, or email olivia@fcc-houston.org.

ST. PETER UNITED SHOE DRIVE • NOW - JULY 31

We are collecting new or gently used shoes for the St. Peter shoe drive! Shoes will be distributed to entrepreneurs in developing countries who need inventory to open local shoe stores. These stores will supply their families with income, provide employment opportunities, and place shoes on the feet of children and adults in their communities. Please drop off any shoes in the bin in the Narthex now through July 31 or stop by the church office from 10 AM - 2 PM, Monday - Friday. For questions about dropping off shoes, contact Olivia at office@fcc-houston.org. For questions about the project or to make a monetary donation, please contact St. Peter United at shoes@stpeterunited.com.

MAM BACK TO SCHOOL FUNDRAISER DONATION MATCH, NOW - AUGUST 14

Do you remember how excited you were to go shopping for new clothes to wear heading back to school? Having well-fitting clothes or in many cases a required uniform helps students to feel confident and approach the school year with optimism. For many years Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM) has helped foster this effort in area districts including Spring Branch, CyFair, Aldine, and HISD. Up to 5,000 students identified by their schools will receive a \$50 gift card to Old Navy so that their family can go shopping for clothing.

Most of you know that First Congregational Church was one of the small number of westside faith communities that came together in 1983 to create MAM, believing that together we can do more than we can individually. Now, there are over 30 faith communities who are members of the MAM Council.

Your contribution made to FCC via check or online to this effort will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$2,000 if your contribution is received by August 14. We hope to help 5,000 children - that means \$250,000! Please consider making a donation in any amount to this worthy cause over the next two months. You can write a check with the memo "MAM Back to School" or give electronically with the same memo using the instructions in the offering section. For more information about the Back to School fundraiser, email Linda Kuhnen at cwk49lfk@gmail.com.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL • THURSDAY - SATURDAY, JULY 28 - 30

This summer, we are collaborating with St. Peter United UCC to put on Vacation Bible School! At VBS, your kids can get curious about the gifts God has given them, what they can learn from others, and how they can spend time with God.

VBS will take place at St. Peter United UCC (9022 Long Point Road, Houston, TX), and will include children who are potty-trained all the way through 12 years old. Youth ages 13 and up are strongly encouraged to participate by volunteering, especially with putting on skits! Friends are invited to register as well.

As part of a mission component, we will be collecting new or gently used shoes to distribute to developing country entrepreneurs who need inventory to open local shoe stores. For more information, see the shoe drive announcement above.

Thank you to all those who have signed up to volunteer! We have been blessed with a full volunteer roster. If you would still like to get involved, we are seeking people to put together craft packs on Tuesday & Thursday of next week. If you have questions or would like to register/volunteer, please contact Olivia at olivia@fcc-houston.org or fill out the back of your connection card. Get ready for a great VBS!

PEACE CAMP HOUSTON • AUGUST 1 - 5

The Church in Society Board (CIS) is announcing the upcoming Peace Camp session for grades 7-12 from August 1-5 at Houston Mennonite Church. Peace Camp is a day camp for students in grades 1-6 and 7-12 sponsored by the Houston Peace and Justice Center. While the session for students in grades 1-6 from July 18-22 was cancelled due to low registration numbers, other programs for younger children may still be organized for later in the Summer, and updates will be given as soon as possible. Details regarding registration, dates, and tuition can be found at hpjc.org/peace-camp/. Scholarships are available. If you have further questions, call Janet Rexroad at 832-877-2813 or Robin Stillwell at 713-702-9448.

UCC SOUTHERN REGIONAL WOMEN'S RETREAT • OCTOBER 14 - 16

Greetings to the UCC Women of the Florida, South Central, Southeast, and Southern Conferences! You are invited to attend the Southern Regional UCC Women's Retreat at Camp Weed and the Cerveny Conference Center in Live Oak, Florida October 14-16, 2022. You will value the inspiration, camaraderie, making new friends and reconnecting with old ones, learning new skills, and listening to God in a natural setting. Visit the website at <https://www.uccfla.org/meetings> for more information.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

If you would like to make an announcement, please email your submissions to office@fcc-houston.org **before 2 PM** on Wednesdays. All submissions received after this time will be considered for publication the following week.

Upcoming Board Meetings

Monday, August 1

- **Church in Society Board Meeting**

- 7 PM via Zoom

For meeting links, please refer to the newsletter. If you do not have access to the newsletter, email office@fcc-houston.org.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HOUSTON

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The Reverend Lynette Ross, *Senior Sabbatical Minister* | lynette@fcc-houston.org

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Maggi Tucker, *Minister of Music Emerita* | hymnal@fcc-houston.org

Church Officers:

Moderator: Pat Rickey | moderator@fcc-houston.org

Vice Moderator: Robin Stilwell | moderator-elect@fcc-houston.org

Treasurer: Shawn Gleason | treasurer@fcc-houston.org

Clerk: Rebecque Demark | clerk@fcc-houston.org

Church Council Members:

At-Large Member: Eric Toskey | daddyeric@me.com

At-Large Member: John Fosseen | fosseen@sbcglobal.net

Board of Christian Education: Elizabeth Thonney | christianed@fcc-houston.org

Board of Communications: David Pelton | communications@fcc-houston.org

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In case of emergencies, contact Rev. Lynette Ross at 281-235-5394.



FCC is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We joyfully welcome everyone regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.