



Wherever you are coming from, and wherever you are going, **you belong.**
Whatever your background, your race, or your ethnicity, **you belong.**
Whomever you love, whatever your sexual orientation, **you belong.**
Whatever your gender expression, **you belong.**
Whatever your nationality or legal status, **you belong.**
Whatever your abilities, **you belong.**
Whatever generation you come from, **you belong.**
Wherever you lay your head at night, **you belong.**
Whether you are a long-time Christian, spiritual seeker or a doubter, **you belong.**
If you're here this morning, **you belong.**

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1710 South Foothill Drive • Salt Lake City, Utah
801-487-1357 • www.firstcongregationalslc.org
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Find us on:   

March 16, 2025

Worship Celebration

March 16, 2025

10:30AM

Thought to Guide Meditation

“The reason I don’t have to prove my worth is that I am loved by God no matter what. The reason I can be open to tomorrow is that God is already there.”
—John Ortberg, *All the Places to Go: How Will You Know?*

Prelude

Alan Chavez, Pianist

Welcome and Announcements

Cynthia Gray

Greeting Your Nearby Neighbor

*Hymn

“He Leadeth Me”

#499

Call to Worship

One: Was your week long? Did you struggle to hear God’s voice?

Many: We come to join our voices with all creation!

The joy of the Lord is our strength!

One: Have you looked forward to today?

Many: We know that the Lord is God, and we long to know God better.

God made us and we want to be God’s people!

Let us worship God!

Invocation and Lord’s Prayers (Unison)

Beautiful Lord, heaven and earth speak of Your promises—love no matter what, goodness in the face of evil, forgiveness even for our enemies, Your Presence and power for those who call You Lord. So come, Lord Jesus, and make Yourself at home with us. Through our songs, our prayers and Your Word, help us to hear Your voice, and let You lead us. We pray all these things in the strong Name of Jesus, Who still teaches disciples to pray, saying...“Our Father, 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”

Choir Anthem

“Distant Land”

Devon Bettolo, Director

Scripture Reading

Genesis 12:1–9

May the Lord bless us and help with
our understanding of these words.

Scripture Reading

Mark 2:1–13

Message

“Awakening to the Open Door”

Rev. Doug Gray

***Hymn**

“That’s Why We Praise Him”

Insert

Verse 1

He came to live live a perfect life
He came to be the
living word our light
He came to die
so we’d be reconciled
He came to rise
to show His pow’r and might

Verse 2

He came to live live again in us
He came to be our
conquering King and friend
He came to heal and show
the lost ones His love
He came to go prepare
a place for us

Chorus

That’s why we praise Him
that’s why we sing
That’s why we offer
Him our ev’rything
That’s why we bow down
and worship this King
‘Cause He gave His ev’rything

Interlude

Yeah yeah He gave His ev’rything

Bridge

Halle hallelujah
Halle hallelujah
(REPEAT)

Ending

‘Cause He gave His ev’rything

Joys and Concerns

Silent and Pastoral Prayers

Prayer Response (Unison)

4

*Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me,
Bless God's holy name. Amen*

Invitation to Offering

Offertory

***Doxology**

#34

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn**

“Leaning on the Everlasting Arms”

#496

***Benediction (Unison)**

In the wilderness, Jesus was tested, and as we go into the world, we too will be tested. Will we see God's open doors of grace, and step through with boldness? May we face sacrifice with Jesus' courage, and embrace resurrection with contagious joy. Lord, when You are with us, we are more than enough! Amen!

***Congregational Hymn**

“God Be with You”

#716

*God be with you till we meet again,
By his counsels guide uphold you,
With his sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.*

***Postlude**

*Congregation, please stand, if able

Announcements

Coffee Hour ~ The Outreach Board would like to thank Nancy Strader and Becky Davis for hosting Coffee Hour this week. If you would like to sign up to be a host or assist, a sign-up sheet is on one of the serving tables at the back of the room. We appreciate your help with Coffee Hour!

The Season of Lent ~ Lent is a time of reflection, prayer, and renewal as we journey toward Easter. This season invites us to slow down, seek God's Presence, and open our hearts to transformation. During **Adult Sunday School on Sunday mornings at 9:15am**, we will be discussing *The Tears of Things* by **Richard Rohr**. Join us as we take steps in this meaningful journey together in worship and study. We look forward to sharing this season with you!

Lent Devotionals Available ~ Lent devotionals are now available! Feel free to pick up a copy in the back of St. John Hall and use it as a guide for reflection and prayer throughout the season. **Hot tip:** If you start late, start with the current day's devotions and go forward. If you want extra, then reach back.

March Outreach ~ Christmas Box House

Have you heard about The Christmas Box House? Well, you will because it is the Outreach focus for March. The Christmas Box House, despite its name, provides services year-round to children caught up in the foster care system. These children are often removed from their homes because parents are caught in cycles of drug addiction, legal issues and even homelessness. The Christmas Box House provides immediate shelter for children who are removed from their homes, but it does not stop there. They work closely with the state agencies to identify more permanent placements for the children, and to fill the gaps in what the state can provide. The Christmas Box House focuses on what the children need and tries to meet their emotional needs for stability, along with the basics of food and shelter. The Christmas Box House provides children with new clothes and toys like stuffed animals. This is often the first new thing the children remember having ever been given. There is much more to tell about The Christmas Box House. The Outreach Board will have more information available throughout the month of March.

Bell Choir Rehearsals Begin April 1 ~ We are excited to announce that **Bell Choir Rehearsals** will begin on **Tuesday, April 1, at 6:30pm in St. John Hall**. Rehearsals will be held every Tuesday. Cynthia Gray will be leading the group as we prepare fun and meaningful new music for our **worship services, special events, and holiday celebrations**.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Cynthia at graycb516@gmail.com. We look forward to making beautiful music together—join us for this wonderful opportunity to share your gifts! 🎵 🔔

Sandwich Making Today After Worship! ~ Please join us upstairs after worship with All Saints Episcopal Church to make sandwiches for those in need. This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and service—many hands make light work! We appreciate your help and look forward to working together to make a difference. See you there! 🥪 ❤️




Holy Week Schedule ~ As we have entered the sacred season of Lent, we invite you to join us in reflection, prayer, and preparation for Easter. Below are key dates to mark your calendar:

- **Palm Sunday – April 13 at 10:30am**
Celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
- **Maundy Thursday – April 17 – Agape Feast at 6pm in St. John Hall**
Commemorate the Last Supper and Jesus' commandment to love one another.
- **Good Friday – April 18 at 7pm**
Shared with All Saints Episcopal Church (upstairs)
A solemn remembrance of Christ's crucifixion and sacrifice.
- **Easter Sunday – April 20 at 10:30am**
Rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of new life!

We encourage you to participate in these meaningful observances and our Lenten Sunday services at 10:30am as we journey together through Lent toward the joy of Easter.

Visit Our Website! ~  www.firstcongregationalslc.org

Stay connected and check it out today:

-  Upcoming events & announcements
-  Community news & volunteer opportunities
-  Sermons, devotionals & faith resources

Weekly Calendar

March 16 – Sandwich Making following worship

March 16 – Taizé Service@7pm

March 18 – Council Meeting@1:30pm

March 19 – Clarion article deadline

March 20 – Choir Rehearsal@7pm

March 21 – Friday Bible Study@Noon

Looking Ahead

March 23 – Adult Formation@9:15am

March 23 – Choir Rehearsal@9:30am

March 23 – Worship Service@10:30am

April 1 – Bell Choir Rehearsal@6:30pm

Kristi's Office Hours

Monday – Office Closed

Tuesday – 8am–4pm

Wednesday – Remote Hours

Thursday – 8am–4pm

Friday – Remote Hours

Doug's Office Hours

Monday – 9am–4pm

Tuesday – 9am–4pm

Wednesday – Off

Thursday – 9am–4pm

Friday – 9am–4pm

Please note: We strive to hold regular office hours, however, before visiting the office, we kindly ask that you contact us in advance, as occasional errands or remote work may take place for Rev. Doug or Kristi.

Would you like to be added to our church directory and email list?

Do we have your email yet? As we strive to strengthen our church community and ensure effective communication, we are in the process of updating our church directory and email list. If you haven't already done so, we kindly ask you to consider adding your contact information to our church directory and email list. To be added to our church directory and email list, please email Kristi at the church office.

First Congregational
Church

@FirstCongregational-Church-1



Exciting Update: Venmo Payment Option Available!

We are pleased to announce that in addition to our current PayPal payment option, you can now use Venmo!

Both platforms are available to make your contributions or payments as seamlessly as possible. Thank you for your continued support! If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us.



Notice: Photography and Video Recording in Progress

We're excited to capture moments from today's event!

Photos and videos taken may be used for:

- **Social media posts, church website, and YouTube Channel**

If you prefer not to be in photos or videos, please inform Kristi or Doug.

Thank you for being part of our vibrant community!