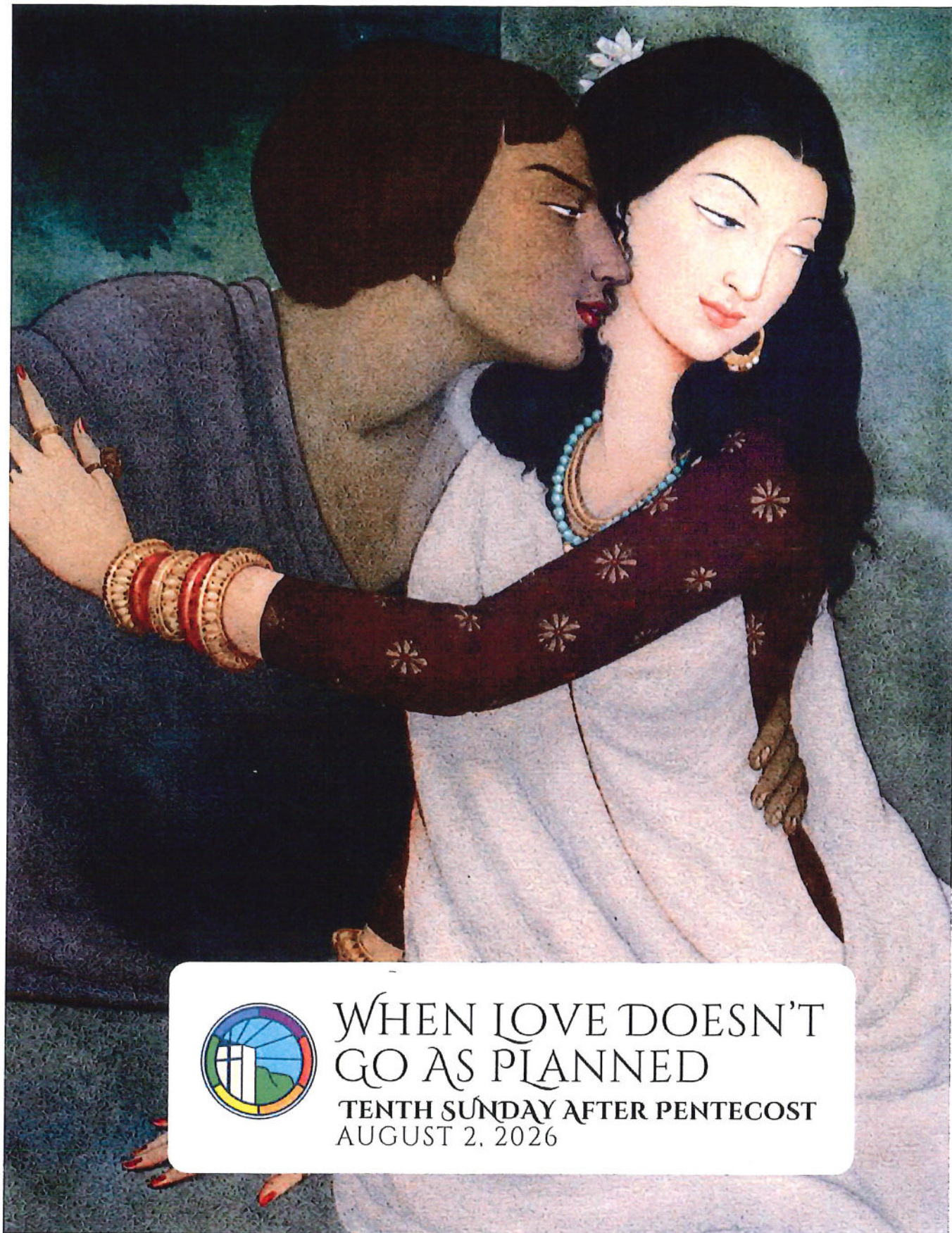




WHEN LOVE DOESN'T
GO AS PLANNED

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 2, 2026

Welcome! At First Congregational United Church of Christ, our mission is to live by faith, embody love, proclaim hope, and seek justice. If you are worshipping with us for the first time, we hope that you will find God’s presence among us. When the Friendship Folder is passed during the announcements, please sign it, and then pass it back toward the center aisle.

All are welcome. Jesus calls us to welcome all into God’s family. Children are not only welcome—they belong here. Activity bags are available next to the Sanctuary’s doors, and a space near the front of the Sanctuary allows children to engage more closely in worship. Our staffed nursery (downstairs) is also available; all childcare workers have undergone background checks. Children will remain in worship and can pick up a worship bag by the doors of the Sanctuary. A restroom for families and all bodies is next to the Chapel.

Livestreaming Notice for Worship. To make worship accessible for all, we livestream our worship services on our YouTube channel (@firstcongolax). Your voice and/or image may be visible in the broadcast, which is publicly available. If you prefer not to appear on camera, we invite you to sit in the Sanctuary’s last six rows.

Please ask an usher if you need assistance, a large-print or sensory-friendly bulletin, or directions—we are glad to help.

Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching.....	Laura Wright
Pianist	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	Beth Moore
Head Usher	Shelby Webb
Ushers	Diane Schumacher, Tom Stolpa
Nursery.....	Zali Stanton
Communion Assistants	Kathy & John Storlie

An asterisk (*) in the order of service indicates all who are able may stand.

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling"

Nancy Allen, Piano
arr. Vandall

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us today. Please pass the Friendship Folder, fill out the information you wish to share, and note those worshiping near you so you can greet them by name.

Prelude Music

"Jesus Loves Me"

Nancy Allen, Piano
arr. Williams

*Call to Worship

One: We come carrying the stories of our lives —
some joyful, some complicated, none exactly as we imagined.

Many: **We come seeking the God who walks beside us through it all.**

One: When love surprises us, when plans unravel, when life takes an
unexpected turn, God's promises remain steadfast.

Many: **We trust the God who brings blessing from broken dreams
and hope from unexpected beginnings.**

One: Let us sing to the God whose love is always greater than our plans:



mf We are
stand - ing on ho - ly ground, And I
know that there are an - gels all a - round. Let us praise
Je - sus now; We are stand - ing in God's
pres - ence on ho - ly ground.

A Moment for Silence

Take this moment of silence to become still and attentive to God.

*Hymn 612 (All join in singing the hymn.)

"When Love Is Found"

GIFT OF LOVE

*Sharing the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Share Christ's peace with one another with a wave or a bow and words such as:

"Peace be with you. / And also with you."

Listening

for the Still-speaking God

The Word for Children

Children are invited to join the minister at the front of the Sanctuary for The Word for Children. Following the children's message, they will remain in worship with their families this Sunday.

Acclamation (Sung by all.)

SPIRITUAL

All:



1. This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,
This lit - tle light of mine
I'm gon-na let it shine; This lit - tle light of mine
I'm gon-na let it shine. Let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine.

The First Lesson – Page 26, first half of the Pew's Bible
Genesis 29:15-28

Beth Moore

The Psalter

Psalm 105:1-6 (*Reading is based on The Common English Bible.*)

One: Give thanks to the LORD;

Many: **call on God's name;**

make God's deeds known to all people!

One: Sing to God;

Many: **sing praises to the LORD;**

dwell on all God's wondrous works!

One: Give praise to God's holy name!

Many: **Let the hearts rejoice of all those seeking the LORD!**

One: Pursue the LORD and God's strength;

Many: **seek God's face always!**

One: Remember the wondrous works God has done,

Many: **all God's marvelous works, and the justice God declared –**

One: you who are the offspring of Abraham, God's servant,
and the children of Jacob, God's chosen ones.

The Gospel – Page 16, of the second half of the Pew's Bible

Matthew 14:13-21

Sermon

"When Love Doesn't Go as Planned"

Reese Boorn-Nederloe

Responding

with the voice of hope

***Hymn 446** (*All join in singing the hymn.*)

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

ST. MARGARET

The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the People

Leader: God, in your love,

All: **hear our prayer.**

The Prayer of Jesus (*Said by all. Please pray using the language for God that is most meaningful to you.*)

Our (Father / Mother / 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

∞ Thanksgiving

for the gifts of God

Stories of Generosity

Music at the Offertory

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

Nancy Allen, Piano
arr. Schrader

***As the Gifts Are Presented: Sing to the tune of OLD 100TH (Hymn 34).**

(All who are able are invited to stand and sing.)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Praise God, for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One!



Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Great Thanksgiving

One: May the Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift your hearts.

Many: **We lift them to God.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.

Many: **It is right to give God our thanks and praise.**

One: It is indeed right and our joy and delight

to give you thanks and praise, Creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image, breathed into us the breath of life,
and called us your beloved. Again and again, when we wandered,
you remained faithful, speaking through prophets,

guiding your people with love, and calling us back to lives of justice, compassion, and peace. And so, with all your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending song:

All:

1 Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al-might - y!

ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to

thee; ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and

might - y! God in three per-sons, bless-èd Trin - i - ty!

The Congregation may be seated.

One: On the night before Jesus was betrayed, Jesus knew the powers of this world would come for him. Still, he gathered with his friends — those who followed with deep faith and those who struggled to understand — and he shared a meal. ... And so, with all who have walked this journey of faith before us, with those who are certain and those who are still learning, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died;**

Christ is risen;

Christ will come again.

One: O God of Resurrection, pour out your Spirit on us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Meet us here, O God, in our questions and in our faith. Transform us, O God, as you transformed the cross into life,

as you transformed ordinary people into disciples. Make us a community that nurtures faith, that walks alongside one another, and that lives your love in the world – both now and forever. Amen.

Sharing Communion

This is the table of Jesus Christ, not of this church alone. All are welcome and encouraged to join in the sharing of communion at Christ's Table, regardless of age or tradition, for it is this meal which binds all of us together, different as we are.

All bread is gluten-free to welcome all at the table of Christ. Please come to the front of the church by way of the center aisle and return by the side aisles. Take the bread and then dip it in the cup. If you need to receive communion where you are seated, please let an usher know.

Thanksgiving after Communion

Going

to be messengers of good news

***Hymn 59** *(All join in singing the hymn.)*

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

HYMN TO JOY

***The Blessing**

Postlude Music

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"

Nancy Allen, Piano
arr. Vandall

Acknowledgments: Hymns and music reprinted and streamed with permission under OneLicense.net #A-728014. The cover image, "Jacob and Rachel," was painted by Frank Wesley, who was born in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh to a fifth-generation Christian family of Hindu and Muslim descent. His painting reflects the influences of the Chughtai School in India at the turn of the century. His work has been exhibited at the Vatican, and he designed the urn for Gandhi's ashes.

*Flowers today are given by Diane and David Schumacher
in memory of loved ones.*