



GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship November 10, 2024 9:30am
Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

Gathering

*The prelude, the first act of worship, sets the tone for what is to follow.
So, we invite you as worshipers to gather, to transition from your busy lives
into a sacred place of communion with God and with each other. – Dr. Kimo Smith, adapted*

PRELUDE “Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown” by Dale Wood
Based on the Scottish tune CANDLER
Geri Allcorn, guest organist

*In worship following reflective music, we are requesting a response of quiet or a
contemplative “amen.” Any music that elicits a response of applause is to the glory of God.*

WELCOME Rev. Karen Wright

*INTROIT “God Is So Good” GOD IS SO GOOD
**God is so good; God is so good;
God is so good; God’s so good to me.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: We are called to love the Lord our God

ALL: We are called to love with all our heart and soul

ONE: We are called to love the Lord our God

ALL: We are called to love with all our mind and strength

ONE: We are called to love the Lord our God

ALL: And we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Come, let us love our God and share God’s love in this time of worship!

Stanzas 1, 4, & 5 All Voices ~ St. 2 Low Voices ~ St. 3 High Voices
All Voices Sing the Refrain Each Time

THE CHURCH

301 Let Us Build a House

All Are Welcome

Capo 3: (A7) (D) (A) (D) (G) (A) (Bm)
C7 F C F B^b C Dm

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can
 2 Let us build a house where proph - ets speak, and words are
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter;
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the
 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and

(D) (A) (D) (Bm7) (Em) (A)
F C F Dm7 Gm C

safe - ly live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell
 strong and true, where all God's chil - dren dare to seek
 wine, and wheat; a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground
 wood and stone to heal and strength-en, serve and teach,
 vi - sions heard and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed

(Em) (A7) (G) (D) (F#m) (Bm)
Gm C7 B^b F Am Dm

how hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 to dream God's reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
 where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 and live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the
 as words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and

(Em) (A) (D) (G)
Gm C F B^b

vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the
 wit - ness and as sym - bol of God's grace; here as
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us
 laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace; let this

Although it was written for a church dedication, this text is not about a physical structure but a spiritual one. The building is at best only a vessel for the essential love and hope, life and faith, peace and justice, hospitality and nurture that form the worshipping community.

THE CHURCH

Refrain

love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
 share in Christ the feast that frees us: all are wel - come;
 bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
 house pro-claim from floor to raf - ter:

all are wel - come; all are wel - come in this place.

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(Children ages 4 through 1st grade may go to Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time. Greeters at the back of the Sanctuary will go with children to Room 12 downstairs where parents may pick up their children following worship. Our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children's wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Karen Wright

God saves us despite us being unworthy of that salvation. In response to that grace, let us confess the ways we have fallen short.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

We confess to you, Gracious God, that too often we look on your law as a burden, not a gift; an inconvenience, not a blessing. Rather than seeing your love revealed, we feel our own guilt magnified. Instead of rejoicing in your good news, we focus on our own shortcomings. Turn us around, Redeemer, and do not let our fears have dominion over us. Enlighten us, so that our words and deeds may be acceptable to you. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Christ has come and through the waters of baptism, we have been set free. Free to love others, free from sin, and free to delight in the Lord our God. Let us rejoice that Jesus is the author of our salvation.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

THE CHURCH

Blest Be the Tie That Binds 306

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in
 2 Be - fore our *Fa - ther's throne we pour our
 3 We share our mu - tual woes; our mu - tual
 4 When we are called to part, it gives us
 5 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we

Chris - tian love. The fel - low - ship of
 ar - dent prayers. Our fears, our hopes, our
 bur - dens bear. And of - ten for each
 in - ward pain; but we shall still be
 shall be free; and per - fect love and

kin - dred minds is like to that a - bove.
 aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
 oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
 joined in heart, and hope to meet a - gain.
 friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

*Or "Maker's"

Written to express a pastor's unwillingness to leave a beloved congregation, this hymn is frequently used as an expression of Christian fellowship, especially at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper. The tune is attributed to an influential Swiss musician and publisher.

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Nehemiah 6:1–16 (NRSVue)

Gay Lee Ludwig Bonney

When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates— Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: “Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono.”

But they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?” Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter in which was written:

“It is reported among the nations—and Geshem says it is true—that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem: ‘There is a king in Judah!’ Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us meet together.”

I sent him this reply: “Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head.”

They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.”

But I prayed, “Now strengthen my hands.”

One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut in at his home. He said, “Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you—by night they are coming to kill you.”

But I said, “Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!” I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me.

Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, my God, because of what they have done; remember also the prophet Noadiah and how she and the rest of the prophets have been trying to intimidate me. So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.

When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

ANTHEM

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

arr. Mack Wilberg

Chancel & Exaltation! Singers

Text by Robert Robinson

*Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.*

*Here I raise my *Ebenezer, hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Prone to wander Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.*

*O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.*

*“Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah and named it Ebenezer, for he said, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’” 1 Samuel 7:12 ~ The Hebrew word, Ebenezer, means ‘stone of help.’”

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 10:25–37 (NRSVue)

An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

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

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC “The Gift of Love”
Geri Allcorn, organist

arr. by John Carter

Sending

*HYMN 372

“O for a World”

AZMON

O for a World 372

1 O for a world where ev - ery - one re - spects each oth - er's ways,
 2 O for a world where goods are shared and mis - er - y re - lieved,
 3 We wel - come one world fam - i - ly and strug - gle with each choice
 4 The poor are rich; the weak are strong; the fool - ish ones are wise.
 5 O for a world pre - par - ing for God's glo - rious reign of peace,
 where love is lived and all is done with jus - tice and with praise.
 where truth is spo - ken, chil - dren spared, e - qual - i - ty a - chieved.
 that o - pens us to u - ni - ty and gives our vi - sion voice.
 Tell all who mourn: out - casts be - long, who per - ish - es will rise.
 where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

Everything longed for in this text is a reminder of how far our present world is from what God wants. Yet this is not just wishful thinking; it is a call to action, a summons to participate in the fulfillment of God's desire for all earth's people to live in radical *shalom*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

POSTLUDE

“Rigaudon”
Geri Allcorn, organist

by André Campra

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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