



GRACE COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship October 18, 2026 9:30am
Eighteenth 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

“Canticle for a New Day”

Derek Hayes

Charter Ringers

Celia Nicholas and Chris Krug, co-directors

*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 & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen Wright

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: The Spirit gathers us into a community of faith.

ALL: We come to learn, to worship, and to grow together.

ONE: God is growing something beautiful among us.

**ALL: May the Spirit deepen our roots, strengthen our bonds, and open our
hearts. Come, let us worship the God who calls us into abundant life!**

*HYMN 317

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

MC KEE

317 In Christ There Is No East or West

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no
 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery - where their high com -
 3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what - e'er your
 4 In Christ now meet both east and west; in him meet

south or north, but one great fel - low -
 mu - nion find; his ser - vice is the
 race may be. All chil - dren of the
 south and north. All Christ - ly souls are

ship of love through - out the whole wide earth.
 gold - en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.
 liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
 one in him through - out the whole wide earth.

This setting expands and enhances the thematic inclusiveness of an early 20th-century text by adapting the melody of a traditional spiritual to carry these words. This 1940 pairing marked the first use of African American musical material in a mainline North American hymnal.

TEXT: John Oxenham, 1908, alt.

MUSIC: African American spiritual; *Jubilee Songs*, 1884; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1940

MC KEE

CM

(alternate tune: ST. PETER, 318)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Emily Nelson Dixon

The early church was not a community of perfect people. They were learning how to live together, share what they had, and trust God's abundance. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess the ways we fall short of the life God invites us to share.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

Gracious God, you call us into a life of abundance, but we often live as though there is never enough. We cling to what is familiar rather than opening ourselves to new growth. We focus on ourselves and overlook the needs of neighbors. Forgive us when we take our community for granted. Forgive us when we receive your gifts without sharing them. Grow in us a generous spirit, a deeper trust, and a greater willingness to care for one another. By your Holy Spirit, shape us into a community where all can belong, all can grow, and all can experience the abundant life of Christ. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news: Christ came that we might have life, and have it abundantly. God's grace meets us where we are and invites us into something new. We are forgiven, renewed, and set free to grow in faith and generosity. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and made new.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

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.)

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

*RESPONSE 581

"Glory Be to The Father"

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 10:1–10

Brandon Hearn

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

ANTHEM

“O Sifuni Mungu”

Last Call

Chancel Choir

arr. Roger Emerson

Linda Dover, piano & Gay Lee Ludwig Bonney, bass
Jill Endaya Smith, Keith Langabee, & Miles McDonald, percussion

Viumbe vyo te vya Mungu wetu na Mfalme wetu,
All creatures of our God and King,

Pazeni sauti ilinasi mwimbe,
Lift up your voice, and let us sing!

Watu wote, viumbe vyote, away yote, sifu Mungu!
All men, all creatures, everybody, Praise God!

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 2:42–47

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“The Spirit Grows Us”

Rev. Karen Wright

HYMN 708

“We Give Thee but Thine Own”

SCHUMANN

We Give Thee but Thine Own 708

1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
 2 May we thy boun-ties thus as stew-ards true re - ceive,
 3 The cap-tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,
 4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be;

all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
 and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.
 to teach the way of life and peace: it is a Christ - like thing.
 what - e'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.

Each successive stanza here expands the implications of the familiar affirmation of the first one. Much more than a concern with money, stewardship shapes our relationship with God and with other people. Despite this tune's name, no source has been found in Schumann's works.

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

Stewardship Prayer

**O Lord, all that we have received is from Your hands.
You call us to be stewards of Your abundance,
the caretakers of all You have entrusted to us.
Help us to always use Your gifts wisely
and teach us to share them generously.
Work through us, bringing Your grace to those we serve.
May our faithful stewardship
be an extension of your Spirit working in our lives.
We pray this with grateful hearts, in Christ's' name.
Amen.**

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC

"Come Build a Church"

Ken Medema

Chancel Choir

*God of creation, Maker of all things. We gather in this place to pray.
We do invite you come now among us; Come and build your church today.*

*Come build a church with soul and spirit, come build a church of flesh and bone.
We need no tower rising skyward; no house of wood, or glass, or stone.
Come build a church with human frailty. Come build a church of flesh and blood.
Jesus shall be its sure foundation. It shall be built by the hand of God.*

*Let us see the tongues of fire, let us hear the great wind roar.
Let us know the awe and wonder, that we've only glimpsed before.
Let us feel the strength of passion, which can make us laugh and weep.
Let us know this great awakening. For so long we've been asleep.*

*Let us know the love unceasing, which alone can loose the bounds.
Reaching out across the chasms, bringing walls of hatred down.*

*Let us taste the sweet communion, where the circle never ends.
Hold us in the sweet connection, turning strangers into friends.*

*Guide our feet in peaceful pathways. Teach us peace of heart and mind;
peace with God and all God's children; till we leave our wars behind.
Surely joy will come and find us like a breeze that cools the night;
like the rain upon the desert; like a candle's gentle light.*

Sending

*HYMN 761

“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”

BEECHER

Called as Partners in Christ's Service 761

1 Called as part-ners in Christ's ser-vice, called to min-is-tries of grace,
 2 Christ's ex-am-ple, Christ's in-spir-ing, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
 3 Thus new pat-terns for Christ's mis-sion, in a small or glob-al sense,
 4 So God grant us for to - mor-row ways to or-der hu-man life

we re-spond with deep com-mit-ment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
 let us fol-low, nev-er fal-tering, rec-on-cil-ing folk on earth.
 help us bear each oth-er's bur-dens, break-ing down each wall or fence.
 that sur-round each per-son's sor-row with a calm that con-quers strife.

May we learn the art of shar-ing, side by side and friend with friend,
 Men and wom-en, rich-er, poor-er, all God's peo-ple, young and old,
 Words of com-fort, words of vi-sion, words of chal-lenge, said with care,
 Make us part-ners in our liv-ing, our com-pas-sion to in-crease,

e - qual part-ners in our car-ing to ful-fill God's cho-sen end.
 blend-ing hu-man skills to-geth-er gra-cious gifts from God un-fold.
 bring new power and strength for ac-tion, make us col-leagues, free and fair.
 mes-sen-gers of faith, thus giv-ing hope and con-fi-dence and peace.

This hymn is a celebration of mutuality and diversity as well as a challenge to the Christian community to live out a ministry of reconciliation and inclusion. This 20th-century text is set to a 19th-century tune named for the noted pastor and preacher Henry Ward Beecher.

TEXT: Jane Parker Huber, 1981

MUSIC: John Zundel, 1870

Text © 1981 Jane Parker Huber (admin. Westminster John Knox Press)

BEECHER

8.7 8.7.D

(alternate tune: EBENEZER)

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

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