



# GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship    April 27, 2025    9:30am

## YOUTH SUNDAY!

GCPC Youth: Morgan Krug, Natalie Walker, Alex DeVries, Conor Schesser,  
Bradley Stromberg, Esme Dixon, Xander Circo, Melo Circo, Nini Circo,  
Harrison Stromberg, Ethan Stromberg, Caitlin Hussey

### 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

“Big Yellow Taxi”

Counting Crows

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

*(Based on Genesis 1 (CEB), adapted by our youth group)*

ONE: When God began to create the heavens and the earth, God said,

**ALL: “Let there be light.”**

ONE: And light broke through the deep. There was evening, and there was morning.

**ALL: And God saw that it was good.**

ONE: God shaped the sky and poured out the oceans, spread the land wide, and whispered life into soil—seeds and stems, fruit and flower, growing and reaching.

**ALL: And God saw that it was good.**

ONE: God filled the seas with swimming things, and filled the skies with flying wings. Wilderness came alive with every kind of creature; crawling, walking, leaping, lounging.

**ALL: God smiled and said: It is good.**

ONE: Then God said: “Let us make humanity in our image, to reflect our creativity, to bear love, to live in community, to care for creation as I have cared for you.”

**ALL: And so we were made—beautiful, beloved, bold— every color, every kind, every one—we were made for good.**

ONE: We were not made to dominate, but to nurture. Not to consume, but to cultivate. Not to take, but to tend. We were made with purpose—to be caretakers of this world and of one another.

**ALL: So today, we come to remember who we are—created in God’s image, called good, and commissioned to care.**

ONE: Let us worship the One who created all things, who called it all good, and who calls us still—

**ALL: To live with love, to serve with joy, and to rise into the sacred work of being human. Let us worship God!**

\*HYMN 15

“All Creatures of Our God and King”

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN—GROWING in God’s Love

*(Awakening to Worship does not meet today. 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

We were made in the image of God—called good, called caretakers, called beloved. But sometimes we forget. We take more than we give. We ignore the cries of the earth and the pain of our neighbors. We rush past beauty. We act like it’s all about us. But here’s the good news: God doesn’t give up on us. God invites us back—again and again—to reflect, to return, to renew. So, let’s take a breath, and let’s tell the truth, and let’s trust in God’s mercy together.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

**Creator God, we confess that we have not cared for your creation as we should. We have polluted the air, the waters, and the soil. We have filled our lives with stuff instead of meaning. We have ignored the warning signs — from melting ice to burning forests to unheard voices.**

**We confess that we have forgotten our purpose: to love, to serve, to protect what you called “very good.” We have turned away from wonder, and we have chosen convenience over compassion.**

**Forgive us, O God. Remind us that your Spirit still hovers, that new creation is always possible. Help us to live like we believe the earth is sacred, and that so are we. Amen.**

#### ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Here’s the truth: God is not done with us. From the first breath on Earth to the breath you just took — God has never stopped loving us. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. We are set free to begin again, to live lighter, to walk gentler, to love deeper — and to care for creation like we were always meant to. So be at peace. You are forgiven. You are free. Now, let’s live like it!

#### SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

**ONE:** May the peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL:** **And also with you and all others!**

\*HYMN 14

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

DIX

### Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalms 104:24–30 (CEB)

Caitlin Hussey

“Lord, you have done so many things!  
You made them all so wisely!  
The earth is full of your creations!  
...All your creatures depend on you  
to give them their food at the right time.  
When you give it to them, they gather it up;  
when you open your hand, they are filled completely full.  
But when you hide your face, they are terrified;  
when you take away their breath,  
they die and return to dust.  
When you let loose your breath, they are created,  
and you make the surface of the ground brand-new again.”

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

Colossians 1:16–17 (CEB)

“All things were created by him: both in the heavens and on the earth, the things that are visible and the things that are invisible... All things were created through him and for him. He existed before all things, and all things are held together in him.”

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

**Thanks be to God!**

## SERMON

“Let It Grow”

Emily Nelson Dixon

## REFLECTIONS FROM A GCPC SENIOR

Molly Lafferty

## 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 FUN! “Mother Earth Says”

[Sending](#)

\*HYMN 80

“You Shall Go Out with Joy!”

THE TREES OF THE FIELD

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

“Let It Grow”

from *The Lorax*

*\*Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

***Join us for a cookie reception in Heartland Hall as we thank our youth for leading us in worship today and to celebrate our graduates!***

*GCPC Graduates: Connor Chaffin, Andrew Cox, Jacob Cummings, Lily Frye, Molly Lafferty*

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**GRACE COVENANT**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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