



## GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship June 29, 2025 9:30am  
Third Sunday of 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

“Here I Am, Lord”  
Linda Dover, organist

Dan Schutte  
arr. Mark Hayes

*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

“Joy in the Morning”  
Encore KC! Act II  
Christian Chamberlain, EKC Summer Intern, conducting  
Mary Bertoldie, piano

Natalie Sleeth

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Emily Nelson Dixon

ONE: Come, let us worship the Lord, who has been our help in ages past and our  
hope for years to come!

**ALL: For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever.**

ONE: Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and  
run with perseverance the race set before us.

**ALL: We fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.**

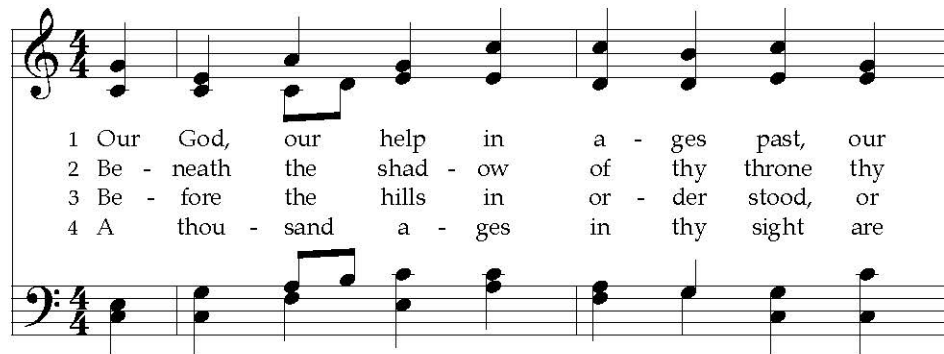
ONE: God’s faithfulness has brought us to this moment.

**ALL: And God’s love will lead us into the future. Let us worship the God who  
is, who was, and who is to come!**

CELEBRATING TIME

# 687 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

(Psalm 90)



1 Our God, our help in a - ges past, our  
 2 Be - neath the shad - ow of thy throne thy  
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or  
 4 A thou - sand a - ges in thy sight are



hope for years to come, our shel - ter from the  
 saints have dwelt se - cure; suf - fi - cient is thine  
 earth re - ceived its frame, from ev - er - last - ing  
 like an eve - ning gone, short as the watch that



storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
 arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
 thou art God, to end - less years the same.  
 ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

- 5 Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
 bears all our years away;  
 they fly forgotten, as a dream  
 dies at the opening day.
- 6 Our God, our help in ages past,  
 our hope for years to come,  
 be thou our guard while life shall last,  
 and our eternal home.

Many people sing this hymn unaware that it paraphrases Psalm 90, partly because this text speaks so immediately to the human condition. Since the middle of the 19th century, it has usually been joined to this tune named for the London parish where the composer was organist.

## A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

*(Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time, is on summer hiatus. 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

Though we are surrounded by signs of God's faithfulness, we sometimes falter in trust, lose our way, or forget the hope to which we are called. Let us come before God in confession, asking for grace to walk forward in faith.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

**Faithful God, You have led us through generations with love that never lets go. Yet we confess we have not always trusted your promises. We cling to comfort instead of stepping forward in faith. We forget the saints who came before us and doubt your call to go ahead. We fear change and resist growth. Forgive us, Lord. Set our eyes again on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Renew our courage, rekindle our hope, and guide us into your good future. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, hear the Good News: God's mercy is new every morning, and Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Through him, we are forgiven and made new. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

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

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

\*HYMN 69

"Here I Am, Lord"

HERE I AM

# 69 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

## Here I Am, Lord

*Leader or All*

G Am D G C G D

1 I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.  
 2 I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.  
 3 I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

G Em C Am7 D G

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save. I, who  
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way. I will  
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Fin - est

Am D G C G D

made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.  
 break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.  
 bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

G Em C Am7 C/G D D7

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?  
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?  
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

*Refrain*  
*All*

G C G D G C G D G

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you

Am7 G Am7 D G C G C

call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you

G C G D G Am7 D7 G Am7 G

lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

The stanzas here need to be understood as representing the voice of God, while the refrain (based on Isaiah 6:8) is the faithful human response to God's call. This becomes clearer if a leader or small group sings the stanzas, with the congregation joining on the refrain.

## Equipping

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Jeremiah 29:4–14 (NRSVue)

Cindy Schendel

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to your dreams that you dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord.

For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

### ANTHEM

“Hope in Me”

Terre Johnson

Encore KC! Act II

Linda Robertson, flute; Bob Dover, clarinet; Mary Bertoldie, piano

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Hebrews 12:1–2; 18–29 (NRSVue)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.”) Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.” This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of what is shaken — that is, created things — so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words  
**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

“Faithfully Running the Race Before Us”

Rev. Karen Wright

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

“Gift of Love”  
Linda Dover, organist

Alec Wyton

[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-que-rs 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-gether 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)

POSTLUDE

“Joyful, Joyful”

Beethoven, Warren, Emerson

Encore KC! Act II

Debbie Stewart, soloist; Rev. Karen Wright, rap

Linda Dover, piano; Keith Langabee, drums

*\*Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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