



## GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship September 22, 2024 9:30am  
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### Gathering

PRELUDE

“Holy, Holy, Holy” (chimes)

“Brother James Air”

arr. Dale Wood

Tune by James Leith Macbeth Bain (1840–1925)

Linda Dover, 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

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God brought the people out of Egypt, that land with a strange language.

**ALL: God made Judah a holy place and ruled over Israel.**

ONE: When the sea looked at God, it ran away, and the Jordan River flowed upstream.

**ALL: The mountains and the hills skipped around like goats.**

ONE: Ask the sea why it ran away or ask the Jordan why it flowed upstream.

**ALL: Ask the mountains and the hills why they skipped like goats! Earth, you will tremble, when the Lord God of Jacob comes near, because he turns solid rock into flowing streams and pools of water.**

\*HYMN 65

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

CWM RHONDDA

## Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah 65

1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim through this  
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, whence the heal - ing  
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but thou art might - y. Hold me  
 stream doth flow. Let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
 fears sub - side. Death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion, land me

with thy power - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - erer, strong de - liv - erer,  
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es

feed me till I want no more; feed me till I want no more.  
 be thou still my strength and shield; be thou still my strength and shield.  
 I will ev - er give to thee; I will ev - er give to thee.

Few Welsh hymns are as well known or loved as this 18th-century text that did not gain its popular tune until the early 20th century. In both its original text and in English translation, it is a stirring hymn of pilgrimage filled with vivid imagery from Hebrew Scripture.

## 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

In spite of God's love for us and gift of love to us, we often act in destructive and hateful ways. We close our hearts to God. Together let us confess our sin.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

**God of the Ages, we feel the pressures of the world coming after us like Pharaoh's army. The news of war, violence, and politics feels like the hundreds of war chariots that will overtake us. We cry out in fear. We beg for earthly leaders to do something. Forgive us when we forget that you are over all things. Forgive us when we trust in ourselves more than we trust in you. Let your Spirit move through us in all things that we may feel your presence and keep our trust in you, for you have led us out of bondage and into freedom. In Jesus Christ we pray. Amen**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

We are never beyond God's love. We are never out of God's reach. We are loved, accepted and forgiven. Thanks be to God.

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

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

\*HYMN 484

"Out of Deep, Unordered Water"  
(Stanzas 1 and 3)

RUSTINGTON

BAPTISM

# 484 Out of Deep, Unordered Water

1 Out of deep, un - or - dered wa - ter God cre -  
 2 Wa - ter on the hu - man fore - head, birth - mark  
 3 Stand - ing round the font re - minds us of the

at - ed light and land, world of bird and beast and,  
 of the love of God, is the sign of death and  
 He - brews' climb a - shore. Life is hal - lowed by the

lat - er, in God's im - age, wom - an, man.  
 ris - ing; through the seas there runs a road.  
 knowl - edge God has been this way be - fore.

There is wa - ter in the riv - er bring - ing life to tree and plant.

By connecting the water in the font with the waters of creation, the parted waters through which the Israelites were set free, and the rivers that sustain life everywhere, this hymn reminds us that baptism incorporates us into God's creative, redemptive, and sustaining activity.

## BAPTISM



## Equipping

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

## Romans 14:1–12

Joy Slayton

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

## ANTHEM

## “The Mind of Christ” Adapted from Philippians 2:5–11

Chancel &amp; Exaltation! Singers

Music by Mark Hayes

*May we have the mind of Christ, who was in very nature God.*

*He laid aside his crown, from glory he came down,*

*Divinity within a human soul. God in the form of a man.  
May we have the mind of Christ, for love he emptied up himself.  
Lord, may we have this same mind. Great was his love.  
Becoming like a slave, to all he freely gave. He stooped to wash the feet of common men.  
May we be more like you, Lord. Lord, may we have this same mind.  
May we have the mind of Christ, who knew the very heart of God.  
He embraced the Father's will and climbed Golgotha's hill,  
obedience for all the world to see, on Calvary, on lonely Calvary.  
Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place. That at the name of Jesus,  
that glorious name, that wonderful name of Jesus Christ.  
Ev'ry knee on earth should bow and ev'ry tongue in heav'n confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord; Let ev'ry heart adore, let ev'ry voice proclaim his name!  
Let ev'ry voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord!*

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

## Exodus 14:19–31

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

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

SERMON

“Awakening to Worship: The Exodus”

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.**

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

There is one body and one Spirit,  
just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,  
**One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.**

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERTORY

“Amazing Grace”  
Karen Wright, trombone

arr. Dr. Irvin L. Wagner

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

\*HYMN 54

“Make a Joyful Noise to God!”

DIX

# Make a Joyful Noise to God! 54

(Psalm 66)

1 Make a joy - ful noise to God! All cre - a - tion sings your praise!  
 2 Come and see what God has done, great the bless - ings to the just:  
 3 Bless the Lord, our ref - uge sure; let our songs of praise be heard!

Great your won - ders here dis - played, un - ex - celled through - out our days.  
 walked the cho - sen through the sea, brought their en - e - mies to dust.  
 By whose jus - tice, we are tried; by whose grace, our guilt de - ferred.

Glo - rious is your sa - cred name, a - ges old, yet still the same.  
 Let us lift a thank - ful voice for God's mer - cies, and re - joice!  
 When our life's sure end shall come, bring us to your heav - en - ly home.

This paraphrase of Psalm 66 maintains a corporate tone more suitable for congregational singing than does the original psalm, which moves to a personal narrative in its latter part. The reference to "all creation" is strengthened by the associations of the tune (see no. 14).



POSTLUDE

“God of Grace and God of Glory”  
Linda Dover, organist

RESTORATION  
Southern Harmony, 1854

## GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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