



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Service of Worship January 23, 2022, 9:30am
The 3rd Sunday After Epiphany

Gathering

PRELUDE

“We Gather Together”

Dutch Folk Song
arr. Mark Hayes

“Come, All Christians, Be Committed”

The Sacred Harp, 1844
arr. Mark Hayes

Linda Dover, piano

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We meet one another here today, bringing the whole of who we are as members united in one body. If there were only one, where would the body be? We bring each of our individual gifts, given to us by God to serve. If there were only one gift, how would we be the church? Gather us in, Spirit of Wisdom, so that we may be the one body you have created. For we are many and still one.

*HYMN 301

“Let Us Build a House” (All Are Welcome)

TWO OAKS

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

(D) (G) (F#7) (Bm) (Em) (Bm)
 F B^b A7 Dm Gm Dm

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:

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

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

A TIME WITH STEWART

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Creator God, we know that you have made us to work with one another as one body. But, too often, we find it easier to stay with what feels familiar or comfortable. We set priorities that serve our own interests, dividing the body as we say to other members, “I have no need of you.” When we see pain and injustice, we try not to share in suffering. Yet, we are eager to share in celebrations we have neglected to earn. We cling to our individualism and abandon the call to be generous caretakers of the whole of your creation. Guide us back to the path you have set out for us all to follow. Embolden us to honor both the gifts in ourselves as well as the gifts in others. Strengthen us to live into our discomfort so that we may be the one body you have created us to be. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S LOVE & SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: Though we fall short, God’s forgiveness never ceases. Live into the good news that in Jesus Christ you are forgiven and freed to answer God’s call to live as one body!

Many: Thanks be to God!

You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which *he* has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. If Foot said, "I'm not elegant like Hand, embellished with rings; I guess I don't belong to this body," would that make it so? If Ear said, "I'm not beautiful like Eye, transparent and expressive; I don't deserve a place on the head," would you want to remove it from the body? If the body was all eye, how could it hear? If all ear, how could it smell? As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it.

But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a *part* of. An enormous eye or a gigantic hand wouldn't be a body, but a monster. What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own. Can you imagine Eye telling Hand, "Get lost; I don't need you"? Or, Head telling Foot, "You're fired; your job has been phased out"? As a matter of fact, in practice it works the other way—the "lower" the part, the more basic, and therefore necessary. You can live without an eye, for instance, but not without a stomach. When it's a part of your own body you are concerned with, it makes *no* difference whether the part is visible or clothed, higher or lower. You give it dignity and honor just as it is, without comparisons. If anything, you have more concern for the lower parts than the higher. If you had to choose, wouldn't you prefer good digestion to full-bodied hair?

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.

You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your "part" mean anything. You're familiar with some of the parts that God has formed in his church, which is his "body": apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, healers, helpers, organizers, those who pray in tongues.

But it's obvious by now, isn't it, that Christ's church is a complete Body and not a gigantic, unidimensional Part? It's not all Apostle, not all Prophet, not all Miracle Worker, not all Healer, not all Prayer in Tongues, not all Interpreter of Tongues. And yet some of you keep competing for so-called "important" parts.

But now I want to lay out a far better way for you.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God

ANTHEM (*video*)

“For Everyone Born”

arr. Tom Trenney

Chancel Singers I – Donna Heer, violin

Liz Chandler, Beth Lillian, Terri Monrad, Carol Syers, Sue Trigger, Connie Richards,
Patrick O’Halloran, Darryl Prater, Tom Jennings, Joe Hoffman, & Bob Dover

*For ev’ryone born a place at the table, for ev’ryone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe space for growing, for ev’ryone born, a star overhead,
**and God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace:
yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, justice and joy!***

*For woman and man, a place at the table, revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power, dividing a system that’s fair, **(Refrain)***

*For young and for old, a place at the table, a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled, for young and for old, the right to belong, **(Refrain)***

*For ev’ryone born, a place at the table, to live without fear, and simply to be,
To work, to speak out, to witness and worship, for ev’ryone born, the right to be free,
**and God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace:
yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, justice and joy!***

SERMON

“I’m In!”

Rev. Sue Trigger

Sending

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(Adapted from the Belhar Confession)

We believe in the triune God who gathers, protects, and cares for the church, one universal body called from the entire human family. We believe that unity is both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ and that this unity must be manifest and active in a variety of ways. These include that we love one another; that we pursue and practice community; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; and that we need one another as we share in one faith, one calling, one soul, and one mind. Therefore, we reject any doctrine which causes sinful separation of people, breaks the active unity of the church, or professes unity while alienating one another. We believe that God calls the church to do what is good and to seek the right, to stand by people in suffering and need, to strive against injustice, and to bring about true peace among people.

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

Together We Serve 767

Capo 3: (G) (D) (Em) (Bm7)
 B \flat F Gm Dm7

1 To - geth - er we serve, u - nit - ed by love,
 2 We seek to be - come a bea - con of hope,
 3 We wel - come the scarred, the wealth - y, the poor,
 4 To - geth - er, by grace, we wit - ness and work,

(C) (G) (Am7) (Dsus) (D)
 E \flat B \flat Cm7 Fsus F

in - vit - ing God's world to the glo - ri - ous feast.
 a lamp for the heart and a light for the feet.
 the bus - y, the lone - ly, and all who need care.
 re - mem - ber - ing Je - sus, in whom we grow strong.

(G) (D) (C) (Bm)
 B \flat F E \flat Dm

We work and we pray through sor - row and joy,
 We learn, year by year, to let love shine through
 We of - fer a home to those who will come,
 To - geth - er we serve in Spir - it and truth,

(G) (C) (G) (Am) (D7) (G)
 B \flat E \flat B \flat Cm F7 B \flat

ex - tend - ing God's love to the last and the least.
 un - til we see Christ in each per - son we meet.
 our hands quick to help, our hearts read - y to dare.
 re - mem - ber - ing love is the strength of our song.

The first three words of this text appear in the website address for First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo, California, for whose centennial the hymn was commissioned. The text draws on Ephesians 4:11-16, a passage describing the many gifts and ministries within the body of Christ.

*CHARGE & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“We Are God’s People”

Johannes Brahms
arr. Fred Bock

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

Today’s liturgy was written by Kate Trigger Duffert,
Manager of General Assembly Business and Per Capita

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