



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship May 10, 2026 9:30am
Sixth Sunday of Easter

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 & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen Wright

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Unison)

ONE: People of God, the One who made the world and everything in it
is not far from us.

ALL: In God we live and move and have our being.

ONE: Jesus calls us not servants, but beloved friends, and promises we are never
left alone.

**ALL: The Spirit of truth abides with us and within us. Come, let us worship the
living God, who creates us, redeems us, and remains with us in love.**

*HYMN 624

“I Greet Thee Who My Sure Redeemer Art”

TOULON

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art 624

1 I greet thee, who my sure Re-deem-er art,
 2 Thou art the King of mer-cy and of grace,
 3 Thou art the life, by which a-lone we live,
 4 Thou hast the true and per-fect gen-tle-ness;
 5 Our hope is in no oth-er save in thee;

my on-ly trust and Sav-ior of my heart,
 reign-ing om-ni-po-tent in ev-ery place:
 and all our sub-stance and our strength re-ceive;
 no harsh-ness hast thou and no bit-ter-ness.
 our faith is built up-on thy prom-ise free;

who pain didst un-der-go for my poor sake;
 so come, O King, and our whole be-ing sway;
 sus-tain us by thy faith and by thy power,
 O grant to us the grace we find in thee,
 Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure,

I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.
 shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
 and give us strength in ev-ery try-ing hour.
 that we may dwell in per-fect u-ni-ty.
 that in thy strength we ev-er-more en-dure.

The original French text, sometimes attributed to John Calvin, seems to be a Protestant reworking of a Roman Catholic hymn, not a typical practice for him. Yet this text and tune (adapted from GENEVAN 124) clearly date from the early years of the Reformed tradition.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Emily Nelson Dixon

Though God is near to us, we often live as though we are alone. Though Christ calls us to love, we fail to keep his commandments of mercy and justice. Though the Spirit dwells within us, we resist the truth and cling to fear. Yet God does not abandon us. In grace and compassion, God calls us back to life and love. Let us confess our sin before God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

Holy and loving God, you created all people in your image and breathed life into all creation, yet we confess that we do not always honor your presence around us or within us. We have sought security in idols of power, success, and comfort. We have ignored the suffering of our neighbors and failed to love as Christ has loved us. We have closed our hearts to your Spirit, resisted your truth, and chosen fear instead of trust.

Forgive us, O God. Draw near to us again. Open our eyes to your presence in our midst and shape us into people who reflect your love in the world. Through Christ, who does not leave us orphaned, renew us by your Spirit and teach us to walk in your ways. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news: The God who created the world has drawn near to us in Jesus Christ. Christ promises: "I will not leave you orphaned. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are forgiven, renewed, and made alive in God's love. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Through the Window"

Ruth Elaine Schram

Celebration! Singers

Pam Kelly, director

Quartet: Emily Nelson Dixon, Pam Weir, Jim Kelly & Patrick O'Halloran

Angela Krug, Accompanist

*Through the window I can see you; I am playing, you are praying, praying for me,
Praying for my future, praying for my friends, praying for our family,
May those faithful prayers never end.*

*Through the window I can see you; you are playing, I am praying, praying for you,
Faithfully praying, praying for your future, praying for your friends, praying for our family.
May God's hand of blessing always be upon you, guiding you;
may you always follow heaven's ways.
May you grow to be like Jesus; may you live for him all your days.*

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 243

“Be Not Afraid”

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 14:15–21 (NRSVue)

Melanie Townsend

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you. “I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

ANTHEM

“If Ye Love Me”

Peter Niedman

Chancel Choir

Emily Nelson Dixon, solo

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 17:22–31 (NRSVue)

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him — though

indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we, too, are his offspring.'

"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

"Known, Yet Unknown"

Rev. Karen Wright

HYMN 318

"In Christ There Is No East or West"

ST. PETER

In Christ There Is No East or West 318

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

him no south or north, but one great fel - low -
 high com - mu - nion find; his ser - vice is the
 e'er your race may be. All chil - dren of the
 him meet 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 text formed a very small part of an elaborate Christian missionary pageant in the early 20th century, yet it has endured while the grander aspects of that production have faded away. It is set to a simple 19th-century tune that does not get in the way of its message.

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
Traditional English Melody

Sending

*HYMN 12

"Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise"

ST. DENIO

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise 12

1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small.
 4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light.

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might:
 In all life thou liv - est, the true life of all.
 Thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight.

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice, like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove;
 We blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
 All praise we would ren - der; O help us to see

al - migh - ty, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
 thy clouds, which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 then with - er and per - ish; but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

The opening line of this hymn was inspired by the three divine attributes listed in 1 Timothy 1:17 (King James Version), and it continues by considering how God's life exceeds our own finite existence. The text is well set to a Welsh melody shaped by many three-note units.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO ELECT ELDERS

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

“Go Now in Peace”
Celebration! Singers and Ringers
Pam Kelly, director
Angela Krug, accompanist

Natalie Sleeth

*Go now in peace
May the love of God surround you
everywhere you may go*

POSTLUDE

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”
Welsh Folk Tune
Linda Dover, organist

THE ASH GROVE
setting by John Leavitt

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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