



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship September 14, 2025 9:30am
Fourteenth Sunday After 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

*“Prelude on **Amazing Grace**”*
Linda Dover, organist

Gordon Young

*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

ONE: Come, beloved of God, weary and burdened, anxious and unsure.

ALL: We come, trusting in the One who says, “There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus.”

ONE: God’s mercy is wider than the horizon, deeper than the sea.

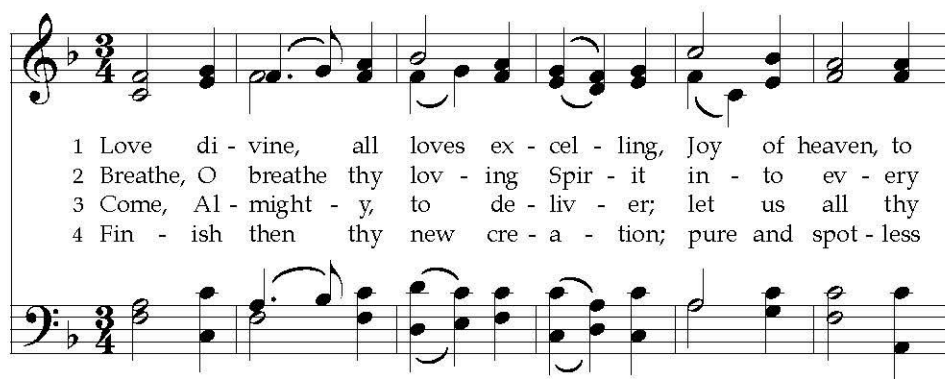
ALL: As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our sins. Let us worship God!

*HYMN 366

“Love Divine All Love Excelling”

HYFRYDOL


366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
 2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less



earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing; all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion;
 find the prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

This text and this tune occur in almost all English-language hymnals (though not always together). The transforming power of love motivates the unending praise of the life to come, and this fine Welsh tune (whose name means "delightful") gives us a foretaste of endless song.

CHRIST'S RETURN AND JUDGMENT



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion; en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.

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

Emily Nelson Dixon

Too often, we are our harshest critics. We rehearse our failures, cling to shame, and forget that God calls us beloved. Let us bring our brokenness before the One whose mercy is new every morning.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we confess that we are quick to show compassion to others but slow to extend it to ourselves. We rehearse old mistakes, carry guilt that You have already lifted, and name ourselves by our failures instead of by Your love. Forgive us, Lord. Cover us with Your mercy like a quilt of grace. Teach us to live as people set free — beloved, forgiven, and whole in Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The apostle Paul reminded the young church in Rome that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free. Friends, believe the good news!

In Jesus Christ we are 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 515

"I Come With Joy"

DOVE OF PEACE

I Come with Joy

515

Capo 3: (D) F (G) B \flat (A) C (D) F (Bm) Dm

1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
2 I come with Chris-tians far and near to find, as all are
3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has

(Asus) (Am) (G) (F#m) (D)
Csus Cm B \flat Am F

free, the life of Je - sus to re - call, in
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the

(Em) (D/F#) (G) (A) (Am7) (D)
Gm F/A B \flat C Cm7 F

love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.
love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text affirms that Christian unity is not achievement but gift, one renewed each time we gather for the Lord's Supper. Each of us enters as an "I" and leaves as part of "we." The unadorned language of this text is well matched to the simple shape note tune that sets it here.

TEXT: Brian Wren, 1968; rev. 1993

MUSIC: American folk melody; arr. Austin C. Lovelace, 1977

Text © 1971, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company

Music Arr. © 1977 Hope Publishing Company

DOVE OF PEACE

8.6.8.6.6

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 103:8–14 (NRSVue)

Sarah Evans

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.

ANTHEM

“An Offering”

Dan Forrest

Chancel Choir
Patrick O’Halloran, director

*O Christ, Who spared not any cost,
Nor any grace withheld,
But poured forth Your redeeming blood
In love unparalleled;
What would you have me offer, Lord?
What must I count as loss
That I may taste the fellowship
That brings me near Your cross?*

*Why should I cling to gifts You give?
Why grasp in foolish pride
What You who gave Yourself for me
Now bid me lay aside?
To know You is my highest gain
Worth any sacrifice,
A treasure worthy to possess
At any earthly price.*

*Yet if behind my open hands,
My heart shrinks from the cost,
Teach me that nothing offered You
Is ever truly lost.
A hundredfold reward awaits
In one glimpse of Your face,
My sacrifice forgotten
In the riches of Your grace.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Romans 8:1–11 (NRSVue)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law — indeed, it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Grace Unto Me”

Rev. Karen Wright

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC

“St. Peter”

arr. Alec Norton

Linda Dover, organist

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

The Great Thanksgiving 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.

The Words of Institution

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Music During Communion

“Adagio”

H.J. Baermann

Bob Dover, clarinet

Prayer after Communion

Sending

*HYMN 436

“God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us”

O QUANTA QUALIA

God of Compassion, in Mercy 436

Befriend Us

1 God of com - pas - sion, in mer - cy be - friend us,
2 Though we are lost, you have sought us and found us,
3 How shall we stray, with your hand to di - rect us,

giv - er of grace for our needs all - a - vail - ing.
stilled our rude hearts with your word of con - sol - ing.
you who the stars in their cours - es are guid - ing?

Wis - dom and strength for each day ev - er send us,
Wrap now your peace, like a man - tle, a - round us,
What shall we fear, with your power to pro - tect us,

pa - tience un - tir - ing and cour - age un - fail - ing.
guard - ing our thoughts and our pas - sions con - trol - ling.
we who walk forth in your great - ness con - fid - ing?

By ending with questions rather than simple affirmations, this text conveys a strong sense of faith in God's presence and guidance without ignoring how much of the future remains unknown. The confidence of the text is well matched by its sturdy 17th-century French tune.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

POSTLUDE

“Trumpet Tune in C”

David Lasky

Linda Dover, organist

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

11100 College Boulevard ♦ Overland Park, KS 66210
Phone (913) 345-1256 ♦ www.gcpc.org

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