



GRACE COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship July 30, 2023 9:30am
9th Sunday After Pentecost

Gathering

SONG TO GATHER

“Hymn of Heaven”

as recorded by Phil Wickham

Praise Team

*How I long to breathe the air of heaven, where pain is gone and mercy fills the streets;
To look upon the one who bled to save me, and walk with him for all eternity.*

*There will be a day when all will bow before him. There will be a day when death will be no more.
Standing face to face with he who died and rose again. Holy, holy is the Lord.*

*And ev'ry prayer, we prayed in desperation; the songs of faith we sang through doubt and fear.
In the end, we'll see that it was worth it when he returns to wipe away our tears.*

*There will be a day when all will bow before him. There will be a day when death will be no more.
Standing face to face with he who died and rose again. Holy, holy is the Lord.*

WELCOME

Kathy Bures

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Sarah Evans

One: In your wisdom, O God, you call us here to worship you.

All: We gather, alive to the Word of God.

One: You call us to be fully alive with your life abundant,
ready to listen and respond with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

All: We listen, alive to the Word of God.

One: You call us to be always watchful for your Word of wisdom,
sometimes startling and unexpected, sometimes still and quiet,
but always dwelling among us.

All: We watch and wait for the Word of God.

*SONG TO PRAISE

“God So Loved”

as recorded by We the Kingdom

All

**Come all you weary, come all you thirsty, come to the well that never runs dry.
Drink of the water, come and thirst no more.**

**Come all you sinners, come find his mercy. Come to the table; he will satisfy.
Taste of his goodness, find what you’re looking for.**

**For God so loved the world that he gave us his one and only Son to save us.
Whoever believes in him will live forever.**

**Bring all your failures, bring your addictions.
Come lay them down at the foot of the cross.
Jesus is waiting there with open arms.**

**For God so loved the world that he gave us his one and only Son to save us.
Whoever believes in him will live forever.
The pow’r of hell forever defeated. Now it is well, I’m walking in freedom.
For God so loved, God so loved the world.**

**Praise God, praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise him, praise him for the wonders of his love. (2x)**

**For God so loved the world that he gave us his one and only Son to save us.
Whoever believes in him will live forever.
The pow’r of hell forever defeated. Now it is well, I’m walking in freedom.
For God so loved, God so loved the world.**

**Bring all your failures, bring your addictions.
Come lay them down at the foot of the cross.
Jesus is waiting ~ God so loved the world.**

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

“The Mustard Seed”

Sarah Evans

(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.)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Lord Jesus Christ,
we remember with gratitude those people
who generously sowed the seeds of faith in our lives.

Pause for a time of reflection

One: Merciful God,
You plant each of us like seeds in the same field and together we are
nourished and nurtured by the sun. We sway in the wind and are refreshed
by the rain. We are blessed by the knowledge that you want us to grow
towards what you call us to be.

When we deprive others of that same opportunity,

All: forgive us.

One: When we want to uproot those whom we believe
do not belong in our part of the field,

All: forgive us.

One: When we label others as good or bad
rather than accept them for who they are,

All: forgive us.

One: When we are reluctant to acknowledge
that we ourselves are a mixture of weeds and wheat,

All: forgive us.

One: When we are afraid to look into the fields of our own lives
to see what is growing there,

All: forgive us.

One: O God, you know us inside and out, through and through.

All: You search us out and lay your hand upon us.

One: You know what we are going to say even before we speak.

**All: So, we pray that you will help us to reach out to the uprooted and rejected,
the lonely and the outcast,
and to develop and grow the good in ourselves, in others and in the world.
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Sarah Evans

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you and all others!

*SONG OF PEACE

“Hymn of Heaven”

as recorded by Phil Wickham

All

**And on that day, we join the resurrection, and stand beside the heroes of the faith.
With one voice, a thousand generations sing worthy is the Lamb who was slain.
Forever he shall reign.**

**There will be a day when all will bow before him.
There will be a day when death will be no more.
Standing face to face with he who died and rose again. Holy, holy is the Lord.**

**So, let it be today we shout the hymn of heaven.
With angels and the saints we raise a mighty roar.
Glory to our God who gave us life beyond the grave.
Holy, holy is the Lord.**

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 13:31–33 (CEB)

Anne Stroud

He told another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. It’s the smallest of all seeds. But when it’s grown, it’s the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds in the sky come and nest in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in a bushel of wheat flour until the yeast had worked its way through all the dough.”

SONG TO REFLECT

“Thank God I Do”

as recorded by Lauren Daigle

Praise Team

*I’ve seen love come and I’ve seen love walk away. So many questions; will anybody stay?
It’s been a hard year, so many nights in tears;
All of the darkness, trying to fight my fears, alone, so long alone.*

*I don’t know who I’d be if I didn’t know You ~ I’d prob’bly fall off the edge.
I don’t know where I’d go if you ever let go, so keep me held in Your hands.*

*I’ve started breathing, the weight is lifted here. With You it’s easy, my head is fin’lly clear.
There’s nothing missing when You are by my side.
I took the long road, but now I realize I’m home with You, I’m home.*

*I don’t know who I’d be if I didn’t know You ~ I’d prob’bly fall off the edge.
I don’t know where I’d go if you ever let go, so keep me held in Your hands.
I don’t know who I’d be if I didn’t know You ~ Thank God, I do.*

You’re my safe place, my hideaway. You’re my anchor, my saving grace.

You're my constant, my steadiness. You're my shelter, my oxygen.

*I don't know who I'd be if I didn't know You ~ I'd prob'ly fall off the edge.
I don't know where I'd go if you ever let go, so keep me held in Your hands.
I don't know who I'd be if I didn't know You ~ Thank God, I do.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

I Kings 3:5–12 (CEB)

The Lord appeared to Solomon at Gibeon in a dream at night. God said, “Ask whatever you wish, and I’ll give it to you.”

Solomon responded, “You showed so much kindness to your servant my father David when he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and with a heart true to you. You’ve kept this great loyalty and kindness for him and have now given him a son to sit on his throne. And now, Lord my God, you have made me, your servant, king in my father David’s place. But I’m young and inexperienced. I know next to nothing. But I’m here, your servant, in the middle of the people you have chosen, a large population that can’t be numbered or counted due to its vast size. Please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help.”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had made this request. God said to him, “Because you have asked for this instead of requesting long life, wealth, or victory over your enemies—asking for discernment so as to acquire good judgment — I will now do just what you said. Look, I hereby give you a wise and understanding mind. There has been no one like you before now, nor will there be anyone like you afterward.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Kingdom of Heaven”

Sarah Evans

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: For all the blessings of this life,
we give thanks to You, Creator God.
For families, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and strangers,
who nurture us, that the love of God may grow within.
That Your love, your Word, like a seed,
may grow to produce in us, good fruit.

All: May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

One: For the leaders of various nations and cities,

that they may lead with strong hearts and gentle hands and generous spirits,
with compassion and mercy, with wisdom and grace.

May they reflect your will guiding all their actions and decisions.

All: May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

One: For those who serve in harms way,
those who live in dangerous places,
those who live in areas of war and strife,
those who live in fear,
and struggle just to find dignity in life.

May your grace bring peace and safety to all people, one to another.

All: May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

One: For those who suffer from any illness or dis-ease—
of mind, body, or spirit.

Restore these, and all those we carry in our hearts, to fullness of health—

May your mercy shower each of us with healing mercy and love.

All: May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

One: Send forth your comforting love.

Give solace to those who mourn.

Console those who grieve.

May your grace surround us
like a mantle upon our heads,
a shawl upon our shoulders,
a hand, to hold our hand.

All: May your love, be like a seed, taking root and growing strong. Amen.

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

Sarah Evans

SONG FOR GIVING

“Let Your Kingdom Come”

by Bob Kauflin

Praise Team

Your glorious cause, O God, engages our hearts. May Jesus Christ be known wherever we are.

We ask not for ourselves, but for your renown.

The cross has saved us so we pray, “Your kingdom come.”

Let your kingdom come, let your will be done, so that ev’ryone might know your name.

Let your song be heard ev’rywhere on earth, til your sov’ reign work on earth is done.

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Evans

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*SONG TO SEND

“God So Loved”

as recorded by We the Kingdom

All

Praise God, praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise him, praise him for the wonders of his love.

For God so loved the world that he gave us his one and only Son to save us.

Whoever believes in him will live forever.

The pow’r of hell forever defeated. Now it is well, I’m walking in freedom.

For God so loved, God so loved the world.

Bring all your failures, bring your addictions.

Come lay them down at the foot of the cross.

Jesus is waiting ~ God so loved the world.

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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