



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship October 26, 2025 9:30am
Twentieth 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

“I Sing the Almighty Power of God”

Linda Dover, organist

FOREST GREEN

arr. David Lowe

*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: The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it — the soil, the seed, the rain, and the harvest.

ALL: We come to worship the God who gives growth.

ONE: Some scatter sparingly, some scatter generously—but in God’s field, every seed has a purpose.

ALL: We come to sow with faith and to reap with joy.

ONE: Let us worship the One who multiplies our small acts of love into a harvest of grace for the world.

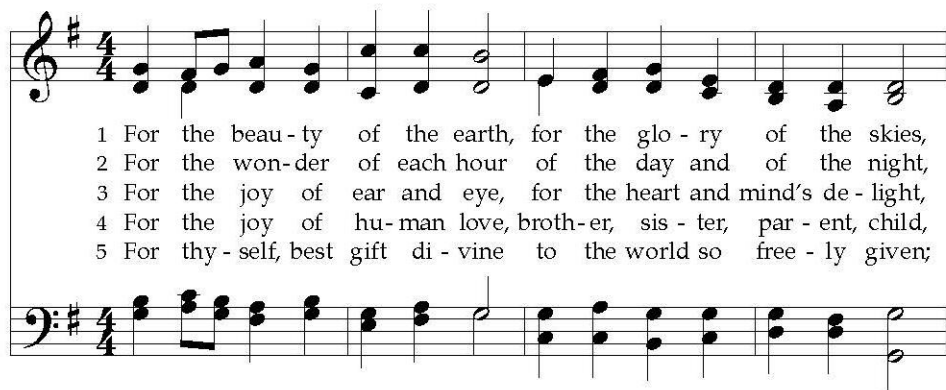
ALL: With open hands and willing hearts, we come to worship the Lord of the harvest!

*HYMN 14

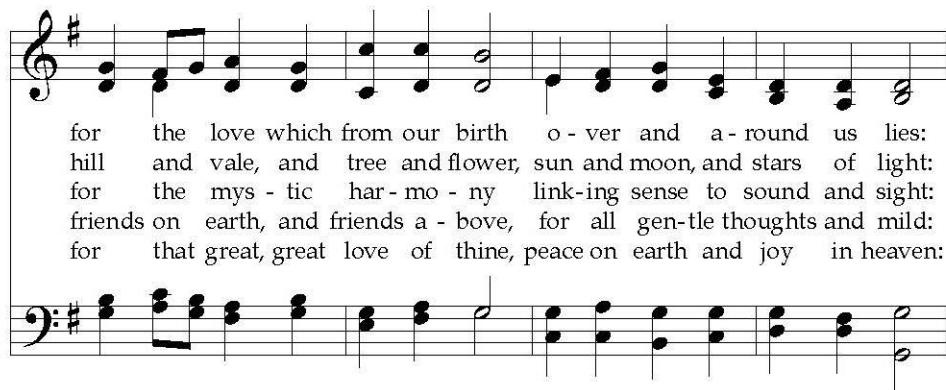
“For the Beauty of the Earth”

DIX

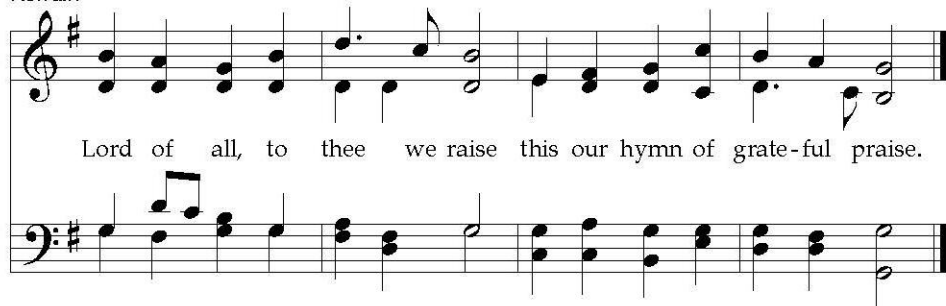
For the Beauty of the Earth 14



1 For the beau-ty of the earth, for the glo-ry of the skies,
 2 For the won-der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de-light,
 4 For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
 5 For thy-self, best gift di-vine to the world so free-ly given;



for the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies:
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
 for the mys-tic har-mo-ny link-ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth, and friends a-bove, for all gen-tle thoughts and mild:
 for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain


Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.

In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

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

When the soil of our hearts grows hard,
when fear keeps us from planting,
and when selfishness chokes out generosity —
God calls us to return and be renewed.
Let us confess the ways we have withheld our gifts
and trust again in the God who makes all things grow.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious Gardener of our souls,
You plant good seed in us,
but we confess that our hearts are not always good soil.
We are quick to give up when growth is slow.
We withhold kindness, fearing we will not have enough.
We let worry and distraction choke out Your word.
Forgive us, Lord.
Loosen the hardened ground within us.
Pull the weeds of selfishness and pride.
Make us generous sowers of love and hope,
trusting that You will bring the harvest
in Your time and in Your way.
Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news: “The one who trusts in the Lord will flourish like a green leaf.” In Christ, our rocky hearts are made fertile ground, our scarcity turned to abundance, our guilt turned to grace.

Thanks be to God! We are forgiven, renewed, and called to grow!

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

DEDICATION AND STEWARDSHIP

692 Spirit, Open My Heart

Refrain Capo 3: (D) (G) (D) (G) (A7)
F B $\flat$ F B $\flat$ C7

Spir - it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of

(Bm) (D/A) (G) (A7) (Bm) (D/A) (Em)
Dm F/C B $\flat$ C7 Dm F/C Gm

liv - ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing

(D) (G) (Em7) (D) (G) (D)
F B $\flat$ Gm7 F B $\flat$ F *Fine*

and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.

(D) (G) (D) (G)
F B $\flat$ F B $\flat$

1 God, re - place my ston - y heart with a heart that's
2 Write your love up - on my heart as my law, my
3 May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of

(A7) (Bm) (D/A) (G) (A7)
C7 Dm F/C B $\flat$ C7

kind and ten - der. All my cold - ness and
goal, my sto - ry. In each thought, word, and
sis - ter, broth - er. In the wel - come of

(Bm) (Em7) (D) (G2) (G)
Dm Gm7 F B $\flat$ 2 B $\flat$ *to Refrain*

fear to your grace I now sur - ren - der.
deed, may my liv - ing bring you glo - ry.
Christ, may we wel - come one an - oth - er.

The pace and diversity of modern life often hinder us from remaining vulnerable to our emotions and to the humanness of other people. This prayerful text to be open to such joys and pains draws on Ezekiel 11:19 and 36:26 in stanza one and echoes Jeremiah 31:33 in stanza two.

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Proverbs 11:24–29 (NRSVue)

Katie Hearn

Some give freely yet grow all the richer;
others withhold what is due and only suffer want.
A generous person will be enriched,
and one who gives water will get water.
The people curse those who hold back grain,
but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.
Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,
but evil comes to the one who searches for it.
Those who trust in their riches will wither,
but the righteous will flourish like green leaves.
Those who trouble their households will inherit wind,
and the fool will be servant to the wise.

ANTHEM

“A Thousand Storms”

Heather Sorenson

Chancel Choir

Herb Frombach

Esme Dixon, alto ~ Linda Dover, pianist ~ Angela Krug, synthesizer
Stephen Wing, guitar & Miles MacDonald, bass

*The rain, it slaps and stings my face
The storms seems stronger than before
I call to You and seek Your grace
I sink beneath life's cruel downpour*

*The rain, it brings me to my knees
I cry out louder to be heard
I seek Your calm and soothing voice
I long to hear Your healing word*

*Bring the rain
Of a thousand storms
It cannot wash away my worth
Nor drown the praise for You in my heart
Holy are You, Lord
Of heaven and earth*

*The rain, it floods my aching heart
My strength is waning, breath is weak
I pray Your love will not depart
Your love and grace I surely seek*

*Bring the rain
Your promise is greater than the storm
Even now, as I'm swallowed up
You give me hope of a life, transformed*

*Your promise is greater than any storm
Holy are You Lord
Of heaven and earth.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 13:3–9, 18–23 (NRSVue)

And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. If you have ears, hear!”

“Hear, then, the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Sowing for the Future”

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.

STEWARDSHIP MINUTE/PLEDGE DEDICATION

Keith Langabee

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC “Love Grows Here”

Don Besig

Esme Dixon, McKenna Sullenger, Chloe Kautio & Janie Baker
Patrick O’Halloran, guitar

*Take a look around you, tell me what you see
People here to worship the Lord, just like you and me
Some have come in gladness, some have come with fear
But all have come because they know that love grows here*

*Yes, love grows here
And all of us can share
the wonder and joy that it can bring
For God is near
Teaching us to care
And showing our hearts
How to sing*

*Some of us are lonely, some have many friends
Some lives just beginning, some are near the end
Yet we come together, knowing he is near
Once again reminding us, that love grows near*

[Sending](#)

*HYMN 275

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

EIN FESTE BURG

275 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul-wark nev - er
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be
 3 And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un -
 4 That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a -

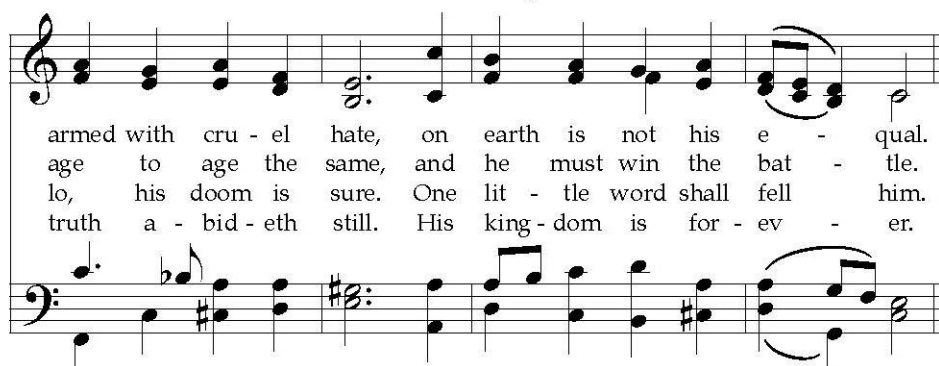
fail - ing. Our help - er he, a - mid the flood of
 los - ing, were not the right man on our side, the
 do us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his
 bid - eth. The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through

mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing. For still our an - cient foe doth
 man of God's own choos - ing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ
 truth to tri - umph through us. The Prince of Dark-ness grim, we
 him who with us sid - eth. Let goods and kin - dred go, this

seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great, and
 Je - sus, it is he. Lord Sab - a - oth his name, from
 trem - ble not for him. His rage we can en - dure, for
 mor - tal life al - so. The bod - y they may kill; God's

Long before Isaac Watts began to Christianize the Psalms, Martin Luther had already done so when he created the text and tune for this, his most famous hymn, which is based on Psalm 46. Luther encouraged metrical versions of psalms as well as chanted psalms and new hymns.

JESUS CHRIST: ASCENSION AND REIGN



CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

POSTLUDE

"Psalm XIX"
(The Heavens Declare the Glory of God)
Linda Dover, organist

Benedetto Marcello

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

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GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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