



# GRACE COVENANT

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship September 1, 2024 9:30am  
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

### Gathering

PRELUDE "Shall We Gather at the River?" arr. Gordon Young  
Linda Dover, organist

*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 Rev. Karen Wright

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: This is the day that the Lord has made;

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made the bright, warm sunshine and the freezing-cold snow.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made the little tiny flowers and the great big pine trees.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made the peaceful ponds and the crashing waves.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made the cornfields and the rocky mountains.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made the creeping caterpillars and kicking kangaroos.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

ONE: God made you, and God made me.

**ALL: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**Come, let us praise God for making all things good!**

CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

# 32 I Sing the Mighty Power of God

1 I sing the might-y power of God that made the moun-tains rise,  
 2 I sing the good-ness of the Lord who filled the earth with food.  
 3 There's not a plant or flower be-low but makes thy glo-ries known.

that spread the flow-ing seas a-broad and built the loft-y  
 God formed the crea-tures through the Word, and then pro-nounced them  
 And clouds a-rise, and tem-pests blow, by or-der from thy

skies. I sing the wis-dom that or-dained the sun to rule the day.  
 good. Lord, how thy won-ders are dis-played, wher-e'er I turn my eye,  
 throne, while all that bor-rows life from thee is ev-er in thy care,

The moon shines full at God's com-mand, and all the stars o-bey.  
 if I sur-vey the ground I tread, or gaze up-on the sky!  
 and ev-ery-where that we can be, thou, God, art pres-ent there.

With minimal revision this text brings together six of the eight four-line stanzas in an 18th-century hymn written for children and originally headed "Praise for Creation and Providence." The anonymous German tune provides a fitting sense of breadth and wonder.

## A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

*(Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time, does **not** meet today. 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

Rev. Karen Wright

When humans no longer show God's image, all creation suffers. We have become estranged from God our creator and from one another, therefore, let us confess our sins.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

**God of all creations, you loved us into being, yet we often run away from our place in your creation. We confess that we take advantage of the natural resources you gave us. Forgive our greed which has led to devastation of our planet, our violence toward neighbors, and the brokenness of our world. Restore us O God. Remind us of other ways to live and help us care for the planet you gave us. Remind us that we reflect your goodness as do all whom we meet. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Our world is broken and scarred and still belongs to God. God who is everlasting holds us in the palm of God's hand and has made us new.

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL: And also with you and all others!**

\*HYMN 308 (stanzas 2, 3) "O God in Whom All Life Begins"

## O God in Whom All Life Begins 308

1 O God in whom all life be-gins, who births the seed to fruit,  
 2 U - nite in mu - tual min - is - try our minds and hands and hearts  
 3 Through tears and laugh-ter, grief and joy, en - large our trust and care;

be - stow your bless - ing on our lives; here let your love find root.  
 that we may have the grace to seek the power your peace im - parts.  
 so bind us in com - mu - ni - ty that we may risk and dare.

Bring forth in us the Spir - it's gifts of pa - tience, joy, and peace;  
 So let our var - ied gifts com - bine to glo - ri - fy your Name  
 Be with us when we gath - er here to wor - ship, sing, and pray;

de - liv - er us from numb - ing fear, and grant our faith in - crease.  
 that in all things by word and deed we may your love pro - claim.  
 then send us forth in power and faith to live the words we say.

Although it was written for the installation of a pastor, this text is really about the mutual ministry shared by all members of a worshiping community, both when they are gathered and when they go forth into the world. The tune used here may have Christmas associations for some.

## Equipping

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 139 (NRSVue)

Gay Lee Ludwig-Bonney

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and night wraps itself around me,"  
even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well.  
My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.  
In your book were written  
all the days that were formed for me,  
when none of them as yet existed.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
I try to count them — they are more than the sand;  
I come to the end — I am still with you.

O that you would kill the wicked, O God,  
and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—  
those who speak of you maliciously  
and lift themselves up against you for evil!  
Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?  
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?  
I hate them with perfect hatred;  
I count them my enemies.  
Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.  
See if there is any wicked way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

ANTHEM

“Creation Will Be at Peace”

Music by Anna Laura Page

Chancel Choir

Words by J. Paul Williams

*In the holy mountain of the Lord all war and strife will cease;  
in the holy mountain of the Lord creation will be at peace.  
The wolf will lie down with the lamb, the cow and bear will feed,  
their young will play together; a little child will lead.  
The leopard and goat will graze, the lion will feed on straw.  
They will war no more; a child will lead them all.  
In the holy mountain of the Lord all war and strife will cease;  
in the holy mountain of the Lord creation will be at peace.  
(Based on Isaiah 11:6-9)*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Genesis 1:1–2:3 (NRSVue)

When God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

So God created humans in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And





DEDICATION AND STEWARDSHIP

# God of the Fertile Fields 714

1 God of the fer - tile fields, shap - er of  
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in  
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that  
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your  
 trust from you all that you give; help us in  
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our  
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,  
 love to share, teach us like you to care  
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,  
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - ery land be clothed and fed.  
 for peo - ple ev - ery - where, that all may live.  
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.  
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

Greater awareness has enlarged Christian stewardship to develop new dimensions of concern for people in all parts of the world. Because we believe that it is God's will that the gifts we have received should be shared, this hymn concludes with that phrase from the Lord's Prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

POSTLUDE

Linda Dover, organist

## GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

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