

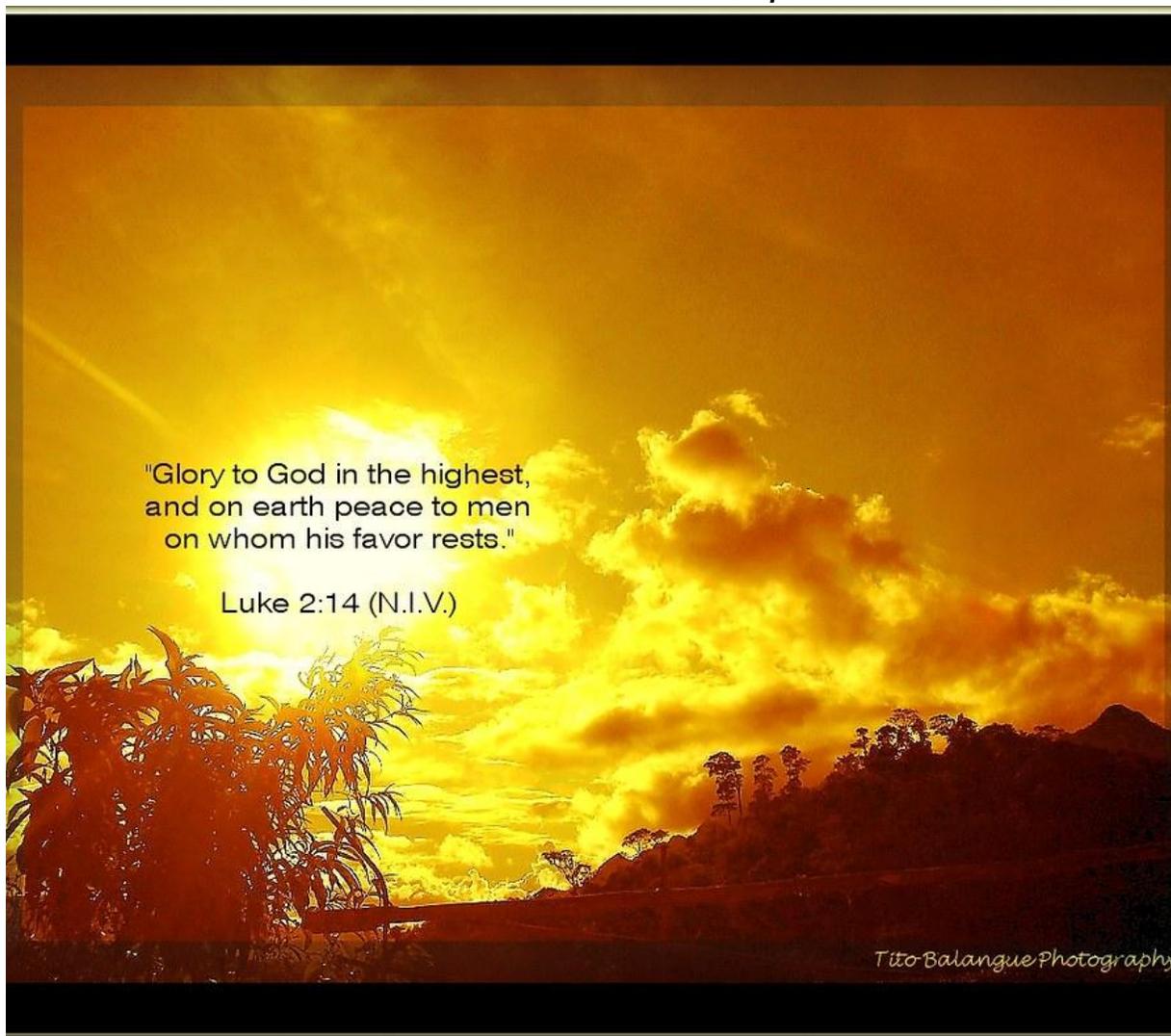
Grace Presbyterian Church

15 May 2022

9:30 a.m.

5th Sunday of Easter

*Rooted in Christ, We Gather in Spirit.
Welcome to Worship!*



We Gather

PRELUDE

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Imagine...

a place where all are welcome

and everyone hears the sound of their name.

Imagine...

everyone has enough food and water

and a home free of hatred and fear.

Imagine...

a place where creativity is valued

and the spirit is nurtured in love.

Imagine...

just imagine

this is that place.

**With one voice, one joy, one faith, and one love
we worship God together.**

OPENING PRAYER

We praise you, O God, for the gift of creation and the surprise of re-creation. Open our eyes to see new things. Open our minds to think fresh thoughts. Open our communities to welcome new partners. Open our spirits to follow your Spirit. Amen.

HYMN* *God the Sculptor of the Mountains*

No. 5

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Into our quiet complacency or our noisy divisions, God suggests another way, breaking down our barriers, crashing through our comfort zones to the heart of what it is to live in God's way.

So, we pause and ponder the inclusion we feel, the exclusion we create, the easy friendships, the like-minded gatherings, and the many left outside. Yet what might seem unclean is precious to God. What looks ungodly is counted worthy. Sinners made saints, and outsiders pulled in to be warmed at the hearth – the walls of the community pushed out to make room.

Forgive us then the narrow-mindedness that excludes others. Forgive us the tendency to disapprove and judge, and open our hearts and arms to the life you promised. Open our doors to make room for those you would welcome.

PRAYER OF AFFIRMATION:

The house of God is our home: a place of comfort, familiarity, easily held opinions, common causes, and shared values. A community that affirms our beliefs, traditions, and understandings of the world. God came to live among us – broke through every barrier of sense, wisdom, and experience to forge a new people, to build a new community without borders or boundaries.

QUIET REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

Though we wander from the path, though we step out of the light, though we embroider the truth, though we deny the fullness of life – despite all this, Christ comes bearing life, light, truth, and new life to us all.

We are made whole through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Called to be one in Christ Jesus, we are made to love one another in unity and grace.

Peace be with you!

And also with you.

HYMN *Spirit of the Living God* No. 288 (repeated 2xs)

PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION & PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR:

Lord in your mercy/in thanksgiving,
Hear our prayer.

Let there be visions again – signs and wonders of how life might be, a brief glimpse into the mind of God that sees what our eyes fail to see; the particular, strange beauty of folk like you and so different from me.

Let there be dreams again – voices and pictures of a world renewed, heaven and Earth blessed and beautified, fit for God, made ready to be something, something that lacks violence, hatred, and division, where folk like you and folk like me find a way to be together.

Let there be miracles again – healings and sharings of all that we are or might become, a weaving of the world's many strands, differences of race, color, creed telling creation's story in all its

splendor that all folk whoever they are witness to the wisdom and wit of God.

Let there be peace again – brothers and sisters bonded across the seas, weapons left to rust, words of hate left in the past the will of God for all humanity, lived, not whispered, spread abroad to all folk for the greening of Earth.

Let there be a new heaven and a new Earth – the former things passed away, no more mourning or crying or pain for God makes all things new. As we pray together, saying;

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth and 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**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Send forth your Holy Spirit now, we pray, That, as we hear the ancient story, we may hear you speak among all the violence and silences of the world. Keep us all one, even as you prayed we would all be one, and fill us with the strength to abide with you and minister unto others, even in the chaos and challenges of this immense world.

This we ask in Christ, through Christ, with Christ to whom be all honor and glory and dominion now and forevermore. Amen.

A TIME FOR CHILDREN & THE YOUNG AT HEART

1st NT SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 11: 1-18

2nd NT SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 21: 1-6

SERMON

Rev. Donald Pitches

Life Takes Another New Direction

HYMN*

We are One in the Spirit

No. 300

WE RESPOND

RESPONSE TO THE SCRIPTURES

Once, we believed in "us" versus "them."
Now we know that all are one in Christ.

Behold, a new heaven, and a new earth!

Once, we believed everyone had to be the same.
Now we know that all are one in Christ.

Behold, a new heaven, and a new earth!

Once, we believed in status and money.
Now we know that all are one in Christ.

Behold, a new heaven, and a new earth!

Once, we believed in divide and conquer.
Now we know that all are one in Christ.

**Behold, a new heaven, and a new earth! Christ makes
all things new. Amen**

God has a dream for everyone. One day, long ago, John saw and heard that dream and knew that God wanted him to tell everyone about this wonderful dream for our world.

"John, I dream that there will be no more sadness."

"Yes," John said. "I will tell everyone."

Alleluia! Alleluia!

"I dream that there will be no more sickness."

"Yes," John said. "I will tell everyone."

Alleluia! Alleluia!

"I dream that everyone will have a home."

"Yes," John said. "I will tell everyone."

Alleluia! Alleluia!

"There will be no more hungry people."

"Yes," John said. "I will tell everyone."

Alleluia! Alleluia!

OUR GIFTS OF SACRIFICE and THANKSGIVING

We live in the wonderful reality of God's promise.

We live in the joyous hope of God's new day. Let us give thanks to God as we share our gifts and make an offering.

Thanks to all those whose gifts and offerings have sustained the church during these difficult times. Plates are available in the sanctuary to receive your offering. You can give online by visiting the church website.

Musical Meditation

Vince DiMura

*Doxology**

God, We Honor You

No. 709

Prayer of Dedication

Giver of Life, we share what we have received. We dedicate these gifts as we rededicate ourselves to preparing the way for a new heaven and renewed Earth, where all people and all creation know the full measure of your peace. May these gifts reflect praise and gratitude for the work of your spirit, drawing us ever deeper into the richness of the relationship upon which we all depend. **Amen.**

WE ARE SENT

HYMN* *We are Marching in the Light of God* No. 853

Blessing before Departing:

Jesus said, "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." So go out in love, and find ways to love all whom you meet. And in so doing, may others know that you are Christ's disciples.

BENEDICTION*

POSTLUDE

****Indicates please stand in body and/or in spirit.***

All songs not from Glory to God are used by permission of CCLI #1124594