

Fifth Sunday in Easter

May 3, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?”

—*Luke 24:32*

First Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: P.O. Box 2729; San Bernardino, California 92406

909.882.3308

www.fpcsb.net

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT: REV. BRIAN S. SYMONDS

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN W. SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: CURTISS ALLEN, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC;

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST;

AMY GANO, BELLS

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

This service is being **livestreamed** and can be viewed on our YouTube channel in real time or as a recording. **Large-print copies of this order of service**, as well as **audio enhancement devices** are available **from the ushers**.

We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community** – rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

Information on our common life can be found on our website www.fpcsb.net, along with sermons and newsletters. You can participate in our work by supporting us financially with a one-time or sustaining donation.

Children are **welcome** in worship.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, June 7th.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Jeanne Clark

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

Readers should remember, here, that Luke is not recording a verbatim conversation in real time. Luke is constructing a story to respond to the hopes that the coming of the Messiah would lead to the reestablishment of the Davidic kingdom. Nevertheless, the conversation Luke provides would have been risky, even foolhardy, for those fleeing town after the execution of their leader. Yet Jesus engages with this risky conversation, walking with those who dare to speak openly of their political and religious concerns. Might the riskiness of the conversation on the road to Emmaus encourage contemporary readers toward their own risky conversations?

-- Rev. Dr. Margaret Aymer, *The Working Preacher*

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

This Too Shall Pass

W. Zeitler

Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

WELCOME

INTROIT

Take, O Take me as I Am¹

Bell

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (based on Psalm 31:1–5, 14–15)

Our God refuses to shame us. God's justice delivers us.

✠ **Praise God, in whom we seek shelter and guidance!**

Our God listens to us. God rescues us from danger.

✠ **Praise God, in whom we seek shelter and guidance!**

Our God renews our spirits. God is always faithful.

✠ **Praise God, in whom we seek shelter and guidance!**

We trust our God. Let us worship God, whom we call ours.

✠ **Praise God, in whom we seek shelter and guidance!**

*HYMN 15

All Creatures of Our God and King

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

† The symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

*** Stand if you are able** **✠ The congregation will read.**

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PRAYER of CONFESSION

We all err from doing God's justice. When we confess our sins, we tell the truth and admit our own power to enact injustice that harms others. Let us pray:

✠ God of compassionate mercy, your grace and love extend to all people. We are called to forgive others, as you forgive us. Far too often, however, we wield forgiveness like a weapon. We see others doing wrong and feel haughty when we grant them grace. We call out the sins of the powerful but fail to notice our own power. We become narrow in our quest for truth, and ignore other people, in other rooms, crying out for your justice. Help us search ourselves and seek forgiveness from those we have made beg us for mercy. Connect us to others and guide us to share power and grace as we follow you.

Jesus promised his followers there are many rooms in a world filled with God's justice. When we speak truth to our own power, we make room for God's just world. This is the good news: God raised Jesus and made room for us, calling us to live out of God's forgiveness by making sure there is room for all.

✠ Alleluia, Amen!

(We stand and sing the Response)

*SUNG RESPONSE 587

Alleluia

CELTIC ALLELUIA

TIME with the YOUNG DISCIPLES

[After Time with the Young Disciples, children are encouraged to worship with us. There are activity bags and books in the Narthex.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM

*In Remembrance*² RaganCourtney/Buryl Red

In remembrance of me, eat this bread. In remembrance of me, drink this wine. In remembrance of me, pray for the time when God's whole will is done. In remembrance of me, heal the sick. In remembrance of me, feed the poor. In remembrance of me, open the door and let your neighbors in, let them in. Take, eat, and be comforted; drink and remember too, that this is my body and precious blood shed for you, shed for you. In

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remembrance of me, search for truth. In remembrance of me, always love. In remembrance of me, don't look above, but in your heart, look for God. Do this in remembrance of me.

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Your Word, O God, is a source of refuge and guidance. Lead us, and inspire our hearts and souls as we engage holy Scripture with our minds and spirits. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 24:13-35 (CEB)

On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey. They were prevented from recognizing him.

He said to them, "What are you talking about as you walk along?" They stopped, their faces downcast.

The one named Cleopas replied, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?"

He said to them, "What things?"

They said to him, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth. Because of his powerful deeds and words, he was recognized by God and all the people as a prophet. But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel. All these things happened three days ago. But there's more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning and didn't find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. They didn't see him."

Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! Your dull minds keep you from believing all that the prophets talked about. Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then he interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.

When they came to Emmaus, he acted as if he was going on ahead. But they urged him, saying, "Stay with us. It's nearly evening, and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?” They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying to each other, “The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!” Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim.

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *Close Encounters of the Divine Kind:* Rev. Brian S. Symonds
Walk to Emmaus (Listening)

DEACONS’ MINUTE for MISSION

Kyle Smith

THE OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We offer our tithes and gifts to be part of God’s purposes in the world, and we invite you to take part. You may place your offering in the basket in front or give it to the usher. You may always send gifts by mail or online.)

BELL OFFERTORY

Praise for the Morning

Akers

***PRAYER OF THANKS**

God, who faithfully fortifies the world you created, bless our gifts and use them to protect all creation and allow us all to flourish in Your justice and love.

✠ **Amen.**

CELEBRATION of HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION to the LORD’S TABLE

Friends, it would have been easy on that Easter morning for Jesus to roll away the stone, walk to the city center, and declare that death had not won. Instead, Jesus waited in the garden. He waited for the people who needed him most. He waited for Mary. He called her by name. He stopped her crying. He gave her a reason to hope. So, if you have ever doubted that God’s love for you is personal and specific, may the truth of this day remind you otherwise. The God you seek will meet you in the garden on your hardest days. And that same God has a seat saved at this Table, specifically for you. So,

come. Come, whether you are dancing for joy, or like Mary, still feeling a little lost. Come with your questions. Come with your hunger. Come, whether this is your first time or your hundredth. Come, because this feast is a reminder that God's Table is big enough for all of us. Jesus Christ is risen and he rose for you. So, come. All are welcome.

SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

✘ **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

✘ **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

✘ **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

GREAT PRAYER of THANKSGIVING

Resurrecting God, Mary went to the garden looking for you. Two thousand years later, we follow in her footsteps. We seek after you, hungry for a garden moment where we might hear you say our name or feel you in our midst. So, before the hallelujahs begin, we empty our pockets of our prayers and remember where we've been.

With gratitude, we recall Maundy Thursday. We are grateful for the tables we gather around, for the friends that feel like family, and for this church—which acts as our band of disciples. We hold onto the reminder of you washing the disciples' feet that night, and trust that that same love extends to us.

With sorrow, we recall Good Friday. We grieve the depths of cruelty woven into that day— a cruelty so many in this hurting world know. So, for those who are still caught in grief and loss, for those whose days have turned to night, relieve them of their suffering. Find them in the crowd. Wipe their tears. Hold their grief for them and point them toward peace.

Now, with hope this Easter season, to find ourselves face-to-face with your good news. Thank you for giving us reason to hope. Thank you for the sunrise after a long night, for the healing of bones and hearts, for laughter that is contagious, and for the joy felt in community. Tether every gratitude and joy in our life back to you.

SANCTUS

James C. Huffstutler

- ✘ Holy, holy, Lord Almighty, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Glory in the highest.
Blessed, blessed,
blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

OUR 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.

PRAYER of CONSECRATION

Spirit of the living God, present with us now,
breathe in us and on these your gifts of bread and wine,
that sharing your blessing and your broken life,
we may share in your presence and reality,
and together, as your body, remain in your love.

THE WORDS of INSTITUTION

Among friends gathered around a table,
Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying,
"This is my body which is given for you.
Do this to remember me."

Later, after they'd eaten, he took a cup
and said, "This cup is our new relationship,
made possible by my life and death.
Whenever you drink it, remember me."

Look, here is your Lord, coming to you in bread and cup.
The gifts of God for the people of God.

CELEBRATION of the MEAL

(Communion will be served by intinction at two stations. As you feel ready, please come up the center aisle to a station, receive a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, eat it, and return to your seat by the side aisle. The cup is

non-alcoholic. Gluten-free bread can be found at the station by the pulpit. There will be rovers to bring the elements to you if you do not wish to come forward. We sing as we commune.)

SUNG PRAYERS

As we go forward, as we wait and pray before & after, we sing our prayers together. The refrains are sung over & over as we make them our own.

SUNG REFRAIN 544 *Bless the Lord, My Soul*³ Jacques Berthier
Bless the Lord my soul, and bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord my soul, who leads me into life...

SUNG REFRAIN 527 *Eat This Bread*⁴ Jacques Berthier
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst

SUNG REFRAIN 466 *Come and Fill Our Hearts*⁵ Taizé
Come and fill our hearts with your peace;
You alone, O God, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace;
Alleluia.

PRAYER after COMMUNION

✘ Where don't we seek after you, God? We look for you in the mirror, in strangers, in sunrises, on mountain tops, in the laughter of children, and in meals shared together. We look for you on the city streets, in hospital rooms, in jail cells, in poetry, and hymn melodies. We look for you everywhere! Sometimes the seeking is hard, but then at other times, we come to this Table and all are fed, and all are welcomed, and there is room for everyone, and no one is turned away, or made to feel unworthy. And in those moments, we see you clearly. So, thank you for meeting us in our seeking. Please don't stop seeking us. Gratefully we pray, amen.

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***HYMN 836**

Abide with Me

EVENTIDE

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE**

Now Go Forth

Unknown

Now go forth with peace and understanding; now go forth with joy and fellowship; now go forth and show God's love; Go and serve.

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Meryll Davis

USHERS: Brad Smith, *Lead Usher*

Chris Thomas, Jim Siegmund, *Hospitality Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

LIVESTREAM TEAM: James Welte, Kevin Lamb,
Oliver Lamb, Tim Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Ron & Ruby Kraft

Elders: Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis

Deacons: Rick Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith

This Weeks' Celebrations

May 4 Erika Mantei

May 6 Kaiyah DuBois
Katie Willis

May 7 Brian Gano

May 7 Maggie Willis

May 9 Chasen Bricker
Rosalind Mantei
Phil Savage

Youth and Graduation Sunday, May 10, Mother's Day. Our youth have been preparing and will lead worship on this day. We will also celebrate our high school graduates and the graduates will participate in the sermon moment. We will also have gifts for our motherly figures.

Life Skillz Recognition Sunday, May 24. Come celebrate with our Life Skillz seniors. Each week, some of us go across the street on Mondays and have breakfast and meaningful conversation with them. On this day, they will cross the street and join us in worship where we will recognize them and their many achievements.

Thank you for your generous support of our food participants. Thank you for your generous donations of shelf-stable foods. A suggestion list is available at reception, and on our website. We encourage bargain shopping since all donations can be put to good use. **Currently we would especially appreciate pouches or pop-top cans of meat, fish, or fruit.**

Per Capita Apportionment The annual Per Capita Offering for 2026 requires that we pay \$44 for each member of our congregation to our national organization. This amount is requested from you above and beyond your regular pledge offering.

Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church (please make a note on your check that the donation is for the Per Capita Offering). Thank you so much for being faithful stewards of our denomination!

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Music Box

Once upon a time there lived a woman named Silvan who had once known the color of things.

She remembered it the way you remember early childhood — almost accessible, somewhere just beyond words. The meadows had been truly green. The bread had smelled truly like grain. Her daughter's laugh had illumined the whole world.

Then came the season with no name.

It arrived quietly, as such seasons do. One morning the colors were simply less. Then less again. By midwinter she found herself moving through a world that seemed painted in ash — functional, recognizable, but drained. She went about her days. She was neither mad nor broken. She simply could not feel the warmth of anything, as though someone had drawn a thin veil between her and every good thing she had ever loved.

There was a musician, an old man named Caelan. He arrived at her door one morning with a small scroll.

"I'm not in need of charity," Silvan said.

"I know," said Caelan. "This isn't charity." He held out the scroll. "It's a piece of music. Written long ago for someone who went where you are now."

She unrolled it tentatively. Musical notes on yellowed parchment.

"What is it called?" she asked.

"This Too Shall Pass."

She looked at him sharply. "That sounds like a dismissal."

"I thought so too," he said, "But sit with it."

Silvan had no instrument, but she could read music. She sat that evening by the fire and read the notes, hearing it in her heart and mind. It was not a cheerful piece. It did not pretend the darkness was light. It started slow and heavy.

But then — not suddenly, not triumphantly — it began to move. Not upward, not yet. Sideways, almost. As though it had found, in the deepest part of its descent, a current. Not rescue. Direction.

And by the end, she noticed she was breathing differently.

She went back to Caelan the next morning.

"It doesn't fix anything," she said.

"No," he agreed.

"But it knows where I am."

"That's what music is for, sometimes. Not to carry you out. Just to sit with you in the dark and say: *I have been here too. And I am still here.*"

She looked at the parchment in her hands. "The person you wrote it for. Did they — "

"They came through," Caelan said simply. "They always say they won't. But they always do."

Silvan stood quietly for a moment. Through the window, the morning light lay across the frost. Still pale. Still veiled. But something in her had shifted, not toward lightness, but toward endurance. Toward the willingness to keep walking through the ashen season without expecting it to end before its time.

"It's a strange comfort," she said at last.

"The truest kind usually is," said Caelan. "It doesn't tell you the darkness isn't real. It tells you the darkness isn't final."

She kept the music.

The season did pass — not all at once. The colors returned the way sensation returns to a numbed hand: strangely, unevenly, more real for having been absent. Her daughter's laugh, when she heard it again with her whole self, once again broke her open with joy. She never forgot the ashen season. But she kept what she had learned there: that the descent is not the destination, that there is a current even in the deepest dark, and that the soul knows the way through.

— *William Zeidler*



The seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a symbolic statement of the church's heritage, identity, and mission in contemporary form. Its power depends on both its simplicity and complexity, as well as its traditional and enduring qualities.

The basic symbols in the seal are the cross, Scripture, the dove, and flames.

As a church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregational life is governed by the Ruling Elders of our current Session:

Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis,
Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith, Neal Williams,
Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher, Jon Horstmann, Lynda Savage,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda,
Amy Gano, Rick Rodriguez, Jim Siegmund, Kyle Smith,
Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Dave Thomas, and Chris Wright-Thomas.