



by Rebecca Allen

**Sixth Sunday
in Easter
Youth Sunday
May 10, 2026
10:30 a.m.
Worship**

I assure you that when you were younger you tied your own belt and walked around wherever you wanted. When you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and another will tie your belt and lead you where you don't want to go.”

—John 21:18

First Presbyterian Church

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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†

Worship Leaders:

Joshua Fletcher, Rowan Fletcher, Sarah Fletcher,
Kiera French, Axel Gaeta-Symonds, Oliver Lamb,
Owen Morris, Adam Nord, Brandon Turner
With Teofila Fletcher and Rhyland French

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

Jesus calls Peter not just to love but to love others and love them to the end. Fisherman no longer, he is called to feed Christ's sheep (verses 15-17): "Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old...someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go" (21:18). This kind of love, whether it is called *philos* or *agapē*, involves an inherent expectation of "doing." Love is as love does. This is love as courage, love as risk, love as not wavering, regardless of what we are called to do. Christ calls Peter and us, as individuals and as communities of faith, to follow him even where we would not otherwise go, even where we might not want to go. These times, more than ever, are times that call for the best love of God, friends, neighbors, and enemies that we can muster. Or, better yet, these times cry out for the love to which God calls us and that God will bring to life within us for the sake of others.

--Frank L. Crouch

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE *Piano Sonata WoO 51* L. Beethoven (1770-1827)
Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Joshua, Oliver

All who worship God, come here and listen

✘ **We listen to the word of our God**

We will bring sacrifices into Your house

✘ **We will do what we promised when we were in trouble**

All of you people, come praise our God

✘ **Let our praises be heard**

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

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

PRAYER of CONFESSION *(based on Romans 5:8, Hebrews 4:16)* Sarah

The proof of God’s amazing love is this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us. Because we have faith in him, we dare to approach God with confidence. In faith and humility, let us confess our sins before God and one another.

Lord, we admit that we sometimes fail in following you.

✘ We lose our patience, we get upset, we hurt others with our words. We fail in you, your direction, your will.

We pray that you, Lord

✘ We pray that you forgive us and help us to follow you in your ways.

Help us to control ourselves, to stay calm, to be thoughtful with our words.

Thank you for guiding us through our life, even though we know we have failed you many times.

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel

✘ In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and are being made whole.

Alleluia! Amen!

(We stand and sing the Response)

***SUNG RESPONSE 587**

Alleluia

CELTIC ALLELUIA

TIME with the YOUNG @ HEART

Adam, Axel, Teo, Rhyland

ANTHEM

Reckless Love

Cory Asbury

Kiera French, Flute

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Oliver

✘ Lord, as we experience Your word, Shepherd us so that we may understand. Let us be open to Your guidance and help us experience Your grace. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 21:15-19 (CEB)

Rowan

When they finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

Simon replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Simon replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.”

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep." He asked a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was sad that Jesus asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" He replied, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. I assure you that when you were younger you tied your own belt and walked around wherever you wanted. When you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and another will tie your belt and lead you where you don't want to go." He said this to show the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. After saying this, Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me."

SERMON *Close Encounters of the Divine Kind:* Rev. Brian S. Symonds
Three Times and Sealed (Failing)

An Interview with Brandon Turner and Owen Morris

WE RECOGNIZE OUR GRADUATES

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.)

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDRETH

✠ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.

***PRAYER OF THANKS**

O Lord our maker, defender, redeemer and friend, accept and multiply the gifts we give today to be for your glory and for the good of your people

✠ Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE and 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.

***HYMN 749**

Come! Live in the Light

Haas

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

Rowan

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Jeanne Clark

USHERS: John-Paul Fletcher, *Lead Usher*

Marilyn Kraft, Rick Rodriguez, *Hospitality Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord, Brandon Turner

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

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Bob Saenz, Judy Steppins, Lorraine Bishop

Elders: **Pat Morris, Susan Skoglund, Katie Smith**

Deacons: **Rebecca Allen, Brent Nord, Chris Thomas**

This Weeks' Celebrations

May 10 Marissa Congdon
Susan Skoglund

May 11 Tinka Ponder

May 12 Wendy Lamb

May 14 Carol Coyne

May 15 Lynn Usher

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Symphonie Jeunesse Mother's Day Concert is today at 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us.

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.**

Music Box

Ludwig van Beethoven's father Johann recognized his son's genius as a golden opportunity to exploit. He dragged the boy out of bed at night to perform for tavern guests. He shaved a year off his age on concert posters to make him seem more the prodigy. He taught him with brutality, neighbors reporting the small child weeping at the keyboard while Johann loomed over him.

But the talent was real. At eleven Ludwig was filling in as organist at the Bonn court – unpaid. At thirteen, he was a paid deputy court organist – a professional, while his father still occupied a tenor's chair down the hall, increasingly unreliable, increasingly invisible. Father and son on the same payroll, in the same building, and everyone could see which direction the weight was shifting.

At sixteen he traveled to Vienna, where Mozart heard him play and agreed to take him on as a pupil. Then a letter arrived from home – his mother was dying. He returned home immediately.

He arrived home barely in time. He was sixteen. In a letter he wrote shortly after her death, he said: "She was my best friend."

His father collapsed further into drink. Young Ludwig was now, in every practical sense, the adult in the family, the breadwinner, the one protecting his two younger brothers as best he could in a disintegrating household. Sometimes Ludwig had to intervene with the police about his father's drunkenness.

Two years later the court made it official: Johann was dismissed for irredeemable drunkenness, his salary redirected by the Elector's order to his nineteen-year-old son.

Into all of this came the von Breuning family.

A mutual friend introduced Ludwig. Helene von Breuning, a widow raising four children alone, looked at this intense, awkward fourteen-year-old and saw not an asset, or a servant, but **SOMEONE**. She told her servants to let him in whenever he came. He ate there, he slept there, he was adopted into their family life. She corrected his manners – not to diminish him, but to equip him.

She introduced him to literature and poetry that would feed his imagination for the rest of his life.

And there was Eleonore — one year younger than Ludwig, his piano student, his first love. He wrote little pieces for her, calibrated to what she could play. He composed — not for a patron, or an Elector, or for survival — but for someone he loved. The little pieces he wrote for her in those years are the emotional ancestors of every intimate dedication that follows: the Moonlight Sonata to Giulietta. The Archduke Trio to Rudolf. It all starts in that drawing room on Münsterplatz.

In December of 1792, Ludwig left for Vienna — his younger brothers now old enough to fend for themselves. He never came back.

A month later, his father was dead. The Elector of Bonn wrote: "The revenues from the liquor excise tax have suffered a loss in the death of [Johann] Beethoven."

Ludwig never saw Eleonore again. She eventually married the mutual friend who had introduced them. Ludwig wrote to them both until the end of his life — two people who had known him before the world did.

The court made him a professional musician. The Breunings made him a human being. And out of both — his hell and his heaven — came everything else.

This morning's prelude is a piece Ludwig wrote for Eleonore.

— 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.