

Seventh Sunday in Easter

May 17, 2026

10:30 a.m. Worship



by Rebecca Allen

Jesus called to them, “Children, have you caught anything to eat?”

—*John 21:5*

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†

Lector: Laurie Stafford

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

“The parallel to the call of the disciples only deepens in this frame because this miraculous catch of fish echoes the catch in Luke 5, when Jesus steps into Simon’s boat and tells him to put out into deep waters. John’s story is too similar to ignore the connections, but it is the differences that we should pay attention to. Here, Jesus is not in the boat with the disciples, and it takes place not in the opening of his ministry but at the close. John might use the parallels to Luke’s story to introduce the theme of discipleship to the narrative, but then he points to the new kind of discipleship that must occur, now that Jesus’ earthly ministry is over. Jesus will not be in the boat with them, but if they continue to listen to his voice, they will succeed in their future ministry and follow in Jesus’ footsteps.”
--*The Working Preacher*, Jennifer Garcia-Bashaw

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

Chaconne

D. Buxtehude

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

WELCOME

INTROIT

Take, O Take Me As I Am¹

Iona

Take, O take me as I am. Summon out what I shall be. Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 68:7-10, 32*)

O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, the earth quaked,

✠ **the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.**

Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad; you restored your heritage when it languished; your flock found a dwelling in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

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

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

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✠ Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord.

*HYMN 645 *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* MIT FREUDEN ZART

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Too often in the season of Eastertide, we are quick to roll the stone back over the entrance to the tomb. Our hallelujahs are robust and loud on Easter Sunday, but a few weeks in, we begin to mistrust the promises of the resurrection. Nonetheless, God stands always ready to restore us to wholeness. With the confidence of God's beloved, let us confess our sins, knowing that the God who hears us, loves us, and will forgive and renew us. Let us confess together — first in unison and then in silence.

✠ **Eternal God, you have loved us from generation to generation. You have shown your faithfulness more often than we can recall. The Bible tells us of your steadfast mercy. You even pray for us. Yet we live holding on to past hurts; we are not open to your new creation. We prefer the safety of what we know to the excitement of discipleship. Forgive us, we pray, and make us again as you would have us be. We make all of our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.**

We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence.

✠ **Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.**

Believe the promise of the gospel:

✠ **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

(We stand and sing the Response)

*SUNG RESPONSE 587

Alleluia

CELTIC ALLELUIA

MOMENT for MISSION

Jeanne Clark

TIME with the YOUNG DISCIPLES

*[After Time with the Young Disciples,
There is KidSpace today in Room 10.]*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANTHEM

This Is My Word²

Pepper Choplin

As the snow falls from heaven as it comes in swirling showers from the sky, so is my Word. As the rains bring the water to the earth that is thirsty and dry, so is my Word. And the Word of my mouth, it shall not return empty; it will bless the earth wherever it is heard. This is my Word. As the rains bring renewal and the tender buds begin to come alive, so is my Word. Giving seed to the sower, and the bread to the hungry 'til they thrive, so is my Word, so is my Word. And Word of my mouth, it shall not return empty, it will bless the earth wherever it is heard, this is my Word., This is my Word.. O Lord, when I am weary, when I feel the days I'm living are in vain, my God help me be faithful to the Word You have given to proclaim. Proclaim the Word, and you will go out in joy and be led forth in peace, and the hills will break before you into song. So be faithful, brave, and true, for I will go before you. And when your earthly journey here is done, I'll say well done, I'll say well done, I'll say well done, well done!

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION (*Psalm 19:14*)

May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of all of our hearts, be acceptable, even pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our strength and redeemer. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 21:1-14 (CEB)

Later, Jesus himself appeared again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. This is how it happened: Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter told them, "I'm going fishing."

They said, "We'll go with you." They set out in a boat, but throughout the night they caught nothing. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples didn't realize it was Jesus.

Jesus called to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?"

They answered him, "No."

He said, "Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some."

So they did, and there were so many fish that they couldn't haul in the net. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard it was the Lord, he wrapped his coat around himself (for he was naked) and jumped into the water. The

² Words & Music: Pepper Choplin. ©1999 by Harold Flammer, a division of Shawnee Press, Inc. Reprinted with permission under ONELICENSE #A706254. All rights reserved.

other disciples followed in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they weren't far from shore, only about one hundred yards. When they landed, they saw a fire there, with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you've just caught." Simon Peter got up and pulled the net to shore. It was full of large fish, one hundred fifty-three of them. Yet the net hadn't torn, even with so many fish. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples could bring themselves to ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

This is the word of faith that we proclaim,

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *Close Encounters of the Divine Kind:* Rev. Brian S. Symonds
A Fish Fry of Unbelievable Measure (Advocating)

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 HUNDREDTH

✠ **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**

With abundance upon abundance, Almighty God, you have seen to our needs. We return this portion of our wealth, we offer these prayers, and we remember the gift of time you have given us as tokens of our commitment to know you, to love you, and to serve you. Bless these gifts, multiply and use them, and may we be blessed ourselves as we see your work in our midst,

✠ **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 463 *How Firm a Foundation* FOUNDATION

*MOMENT for REFLECTION

*CHARGE and BENEDICTION

RESPONSE *Now Go Forth* *Unknown*

POSTLUDE

GREETER: Doris Nord

USHERS: Margaret Doane, *Lead Usher*

Mark Adelson, John-Paul Fletcher, *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

Noé Falconi, Marianna Fowles, Debora Holk

Elders: Neal Williams, Robin Edwards, John-Paul Fletcher

Deacons: Dave Thomas, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

This Weeks' Celebrations

May 17 Sharon Louise Landeros

Wanda Skipper

Tim & Lynn Usher

May 22 Brian Symonds

May 23 Jim Morris

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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.**

Reminder: Our next Blood Drive will be held on June 7th.

Beginning this Sunday and continuing on the following Sundays, the Deacons will be taking sign-ups in the Fellowship Hall after church.

Next Sunday, May 24, is Pentecost, and we will also celebrate Life Skillz Recognition Sunday!

On Monday, May 25, the church office will be closed for Memorial Day.

Pastor Brian will be away from May 27 through June 10 as he receives his doctorate, and takes a brief vacation. The Rev. Sam Roberts will preach for us on these Sundays.

To address safety concerns, **the E street gates will be locked on Sunday** beginning on May 31st.

Music Box

Jesus was famously asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind." All of it bears unpacking, but "all your mind" jumps out at me. What does that mean?

I'm wondering if neuroscience — the study of how the mind works — has something to say here. Over the last few decades, neuroscience has made enormous headway. Now comes the task of taking all those individual 'trees' of insight and collecting them into an intelligible forest. For me, one of the more striking pioneers of this is Ian McGilchrist — formerly professor at Oxford, he now devotes himself entirely to research and writing. He argues that our brains have two hemispheres because we need to accomplish two somewhat contradictory tasks to survive — simultaneously.

On the one hand, we need to be able to focus all our attention on one thing: prey maybe, or looking for berries. This requires intense focus on a small part of our surroundings. We need to be able to focus intensely to catch or find lunch.

On the other hand, we also need to maintain a global awareness of our surroundings. If we don't stay globally aware, we'll miss the snapping twig and become lunch ourselves.

We need both. We need the ability to focus intensely, yet maintain general awareness of our surroundings.

And that's what the two hemispheres do. The left-brain is really good at focusing its attention on **ONE THING**. The right-brain is really good at big-picture contexts. (In practice, both hemispheres are involved in almost everything. It's more accurate to think in terms of which hemisphere is in the "driver's seat.")

Interestingly, we find this arrangement in the animal kingdom in general. This two-hemisphere arrangement appears across the vertebrate kingdom — in fish, birds, mammals — suggesting it's been with us for hundreds of millions of years. Because all of us need both modes of awareness to survive.

Space permits only the briefest oversimplifications. But one implication is that the left-brain is in charge of Science. And the right? — Story. Mythology — in the sense of those stories that tell us

who we are as a people, as a community, as individuals. Science and the left brain tell us how the physical world works. The right brain tells us why any of that matters. Science orients us in our physical, outer world. Stories orient us in our inner, emotional world. Science tells us **How**. Stories tell us **Why**.

Stories also have the enormous benefit that they're accessible to everyone — no background in calculus required.

Observe. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey were sacred texts to the ancient Greeks — two humongous stories. The Bible itself is mostly stories — with some poetry and essays thrown in. The Gospels tell us "Jesus spoke to them in parables." And the Bhagavad Gita is mostly — stories.

Beginning with Aristotle (4th century BCE), and especially with the Enlightenment (beginning around 1700), the West has privileged the left brain, particularly Science. Claimed by its most ardent advocates to be the **ONLY** source of Truth. But what **KIND** of Truth? Science has been enormously successful at explaining the external, physical world. Even with neuroscience, however, it still falls far short of explaining the experience of "falling in love", the moment when you hold your newborn child for the first time, what it feels like to watch a beautiful sunset. Experiences that make Life worth living.

In apposition to Science, the Church has preserved and championed the Stories we need to live. When it comes to navigating this strange voyage called Life, stories like the Prodigal Son are vastly more relevant and helpful to me than, say, Schrödinger's Equation. When facing the Dark Night of the Soul, Newton's Laws are no comfort at all.

We've been given two hemispheres — two ways of engaging with the world — because we need **BOTH** to survive. We've needed both for millions of years, and that arrangement has served us well.

So, I don't think the Church has any reason whatsoever to feel defensive about championing The Greatest Story Ever Told. Just because the West has been favoring the left-brain for centuries at least, doesn't mean that's a good idea. Indeed, I think it's been a very **BAD** idea. But that's another story.

-- William Zeidler

Pastoral Care Coverage

Pastoral care is an integral and important part of the ministry at First Presbyterian Church San Bernardino, as well as the Presbyterian Church (USA). Below is a bit about Pastoral Care from the PC(USA)'s Book of Order:

“All members are called to take part in the ministry of pastoral care, visiting the sick, supporting the weak, and comforting those who mourn. Ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament^t have particular responsibility for the exercise of pastoral care within the community of faith.” W-5.0204

And the call of the pastor even has a specific charge for pastoral care:

“...to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying;” G-2.0504

When church and community members seek pastoral care:

The church Secretary receives requests for pastoral care. Generally, the Secretary will get permission (or not) to add those names and persons to the Pastoral Care and/or Prayer Chain weekly emails. Notifications of immediate hospitalizations, transfers to hospice care, and terminal or near terminal diagnoses will be forwarded to the Pastor.

The Pastor will make arrangements to visit persons who are hospitalized, those transferred to hospice care, those with terminal or near terminal diagnoses, and those who have just passed away.

When the Pastor is away on scheduled time off:

The Pastor will be notified of deaths, and hospitalizations (visit arranged upon return).

The Minister of Pastoral Support will be notified of deaths, hospitalizations, those transferred to hospice care, those with terminal or near terminal diagnoses, and those who have just passed away (visits may be arranged).



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.