



*The mission of GPPC is to embody God's love
by cultivating community, practicing hope, repairing harm, and doing justice as Jesus did.*

September 7, 2025

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

11:00am

+ indicates you are invited to stand

Bold print indicates congregation in unison

We are grateful to be gathered here in the Almond Creek-James River watershed, which we share with a diversity of plants and creatures, including the flowering dogwood, butterfly milkweed, striped bass, northern cardinal, and red fox.

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Powhatan Confederacy. May we nurture our relationship with all our neighbors, and our shared responsibilities to this watershed where we gather today.

GATHERING

The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world. Gather your thoughts and feelings. Entrust yourself to God's saving grace.

Prelude Prelude in G Major J.S. Bach

Greeting and Announcements

Introit Doug Brown

No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe. Deuteronomy 30:14

+ Call to Worship [Wild Goose Resource Group]

One: In the beginning, before time, before people, before the world began,

All: God was.

One: Here and now, among us, beside us, clearer than air, closer than breathing,

All: God is.

One: In all that is to come, when we have turned to dust and human knowledge has been completed,

All: God will be.

One: Not despairing of earth, but delighting in it, not condemning the world,
but redeeming it through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit,

All: God was, God is, God will be.

+ Hymn 63 *The Lord Is God*

Prayer of Confession **Of The Empire** Mary Oliver, from Red Bird (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008)

Kenyan traditional

Leader: All:

Lis - ten, lis - ten, God is call - ing, through the Word in - vit - ing,
of - fer - ing for - give - ness, com - fort and joy. — joy.

1. (lis - ten) 2.

We will be known as a culture that feared death and adored power, that tried to vanquish insecurity for the few and cared little for the penury of the many. We will be known as a culture that taught and rewarded the amassing of things, that spoke little if at all about the quality of life for people (other people), for dogs, for rivers. All the world, in our eyes, they will say, was a commodity. And they will say that this structure was held together politically, which it was, and they will say also that our politics was no more than an apparatus to accommodate the feelings of the heart, and that the heart, in those days, was small, and hard, and full of meanness.

Silence

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

+ Gloria (Hymn 582) *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

WORD

Where the scriptures are read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ, the living Word, is present by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's Spirit also evokes our response. Through singing, affirmation, and prayer, with the help of God's Spirit, we discern Jesus Christ, receive Christ's grace, and resolve to follow Christ's way.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Deuteronomy 30:9-20 (NRVSUE)

The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, just as God delighted in prospering your ancestors, when you obey the LORD your God by observing God's commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

"Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in God's ways, and observing God's commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying God, and holding fast to God, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Song

We Shall Be Known

Karisha Longaker

We shall be known by the com - pa-ny we keep, by the ones who cir-cle round to tend these
fires. We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap the seeds of change
a-live from deep with-in the earth. It is time now. It is time
now that we thrive. It is time we lead our selves in - to the well. It is
time now, and what a time to be a-live. In this great turn-ing we shall learn to lead in
love. In this great turn-ing we shall learn to lead in love.

Sermon

Carla Pratt Keyes

Invitation to Choose What We Believe Today – our Faith Montage

- Cards and pens are in the pews
- Write your answer on the card
- Sign your name, if you'd like to
- After the service, consider finding someone – maybe someone from a different generation than yours – with whom to talk about what you've written
- Leave your card at the end of a pew – near the center aisle – so it can be included in GPPC's "faith montage"

This week's question: **How does what I choose to believe about God change the way I live?**

Song (seated) *We Shall Be Known*

Ordination and Installation of New Officers: Amy Dail Harris, Mary Frances Hobbs, Nancy Negus, Rosalind Banbury

Statement on Ordination and Installation

+ Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant

One: Trusting in the gracious mercy of God,
do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?

All: I do.

One: Who is your Lord and Savior?

All: Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

One: Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?

All: I will, with God's help.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

+ Prayer of Thanksgiving for Baptism

Constitutional Questions

Questions for the Congregation

One: Do we, the members of the church, accept these friends as ruling elders,
chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

All: We do.

One: Do we agree to pray for them, to encourage them, to respect their decisions,
and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ who alone is Head of the Church?

All: We do.

Prayer (*ruling and teaching elders are invited forward for the laying on of hands*)

Welcome and Charge

+ Somos Uno (Hymn 322)

We are one in Christ Jesus, all one body, all one spirit, all together.

Somos uno en Cristo, somos uno, somos uno, uno solo.

We share one God, one mighty Lord, one abiding faith, one binding love,

One single baptism, one Holy Comforter, the Holy Spirit, uniting all.

EUCCHARIST

The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord.

*We celebrate with thanksgiving (eukharistia) the grace (kharis) with which Jesus welcomes us to sit at his table,
eat what will satisfy our deepest hungers, and feed others as we've been fed.*

We offer ourselves in response to Christ's wonderful offering of love.

Offering



*Everyone is invited to place tithes, offerings, visitor cards,
or any other communications to the Pastor or staff
in the designated wall boxes beside each door at the back of the Sanctuary
or signal an usher to bring you the offering plate.*

*Monetary gifts and pledges to GPPC may also be given online at
<https://www.ginterparkpc.org/giving>, or by using the QR Code to the left.*

Offertory

I Believe

Mark Miller

I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it.

*I believe in God even when God is silent. Based on words discovered on the wall of
an underground passageway in 1945 where nine Jewish people hid from the German police.*

Avery Ingram, soprano

+ Doxology (Hymn 607)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;

praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore.

Invitation to Communion

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Merciful God, as it has been with generations before and will be for generations to come, your story has been and will be revealed to your gathered people. This story will meander; your time is your time. This story will confuse, yet your Spirit will guide us, if we choose to follow. This story will be deemed weak, but you will enable us to imagine and proclaim what is powerful.

For the complete and complex humanity of Jesus, and the mysterious and boundless divinity of Christ, we are grateful. For the unpretentious life of Christ, teacher and friend, we are grateful. For the revelatory death of Christ, offender and threat, we are grateful. For the promised resurrection of Christ, seeker and solace, we are grateful.

We pray you will send your Spirit to inspire us to seek your hopes for each of us and to live your intentions for all creation. By your Spirit make us one, make us whole, and make this bread and cup your body and blood, that we may know communion with you, with the saints who've preceded us, and with each other.

All: Amen. 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.

Breaking of the Bread

(Bread is gluten-free and vegan with honey.)

Please come forward to receive communion.

Servers have used hand sanitizer. Please hold your hand flat to receive the bread and take a cup from the tray.

Please return to your seat by a side aisle.

If you cannot easily come forward, we will happily bring the elements to your pew.

After others have been served, please raise your hand to signal us.

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

Our worship and service do not end with the postlude; we go forth to love and serve God in our daily lives.

+ Hymn 684 *Faith Begins by Letting Go*

+ Charge and Blessing

+ The Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

+ Postlude

Fugue in G Major

J.S. Bach

ABOUT WORSHIP

Choosing Faith Worship Series, September 7 – November 16

Choosing faith is something we invite our young people to do at confirmation (*which is scheduled for October 5!*). But honestly: choosing faith is a life-long project, and our understanding of God and what it means to follow Christ is constantly evolving. In his book, *Everything Good about God Is True: Choosing Faith*, Bruce Reyes-Chow challenges communities like GPPC to better articulate and more courageously share the beliefs that undergird our living. “Be a theologian,” he says: “someone who explores the nature of God in the world and makes claims about what is indeed good about God.” This fall, inspired by Reyes-Chow's book, we'll do that. Each Sunday, worship will explore one aspect of the Christian faith, encourage you to reflect on what you currently believe, and invite you to contribute to a visual “montage” of GPPC beliefs. We hope to strengthen our capacity to talk about our faith in a way that feels good and true to who we are.

WORSHIP LEADERS: GPPC's pastor is Carla Pratt Keyes, and our Director of Music is Doug Brown. Our lector is Sandy DeBussey. Our livestream operator is Bob Roybark. Tom Hobbs is lead usher.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES are available in the Narthex. Please see today's greeter or an usher.

ANNOUNCEMENTS about events in the life of GPPC are available through a weekly e-newsletter. If you would like to be added to the distribution, please contact Karen Mitscherlich at ginterparkpc@gmail.com.