



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

MAY 17, 2026
ASCENSION SUNDAY
10 AM Sanctuary Worship

WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE

Let Justice Roll like a River

Marty Haugen

**Let justice roll like a river, and wash all oppression away;
Come, O God, and take us, move and shake us,
Come now, and make us anew,
That we might live justly like you.**

WELCOME

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

INTROIT

God Is Our Hope and Strength

Eric Thiman

God is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Our human scene has been caressed
by a visit from the Eternal.

**God's realm has broken into our history
and revised all our possibilities.**

Clap, shout, and sing praises.

God reigns over all the earth.

**The Risen One has become head of all things
and we are moved, as disciples, to worship.**

This is a time to bless God and rejoice
in the fulfillment of law, prophets, and psalms.

**We join the innumerable company of the saints
in praise, thanksgiving, and witness.**

* INVOCATION PRAYER

Almighty God,

**we are seldom moved by the sound of great words
or visions of fire and clouds.**

Our doubts are often more compelling than our faith.

**Yet you break through our reservations
and protective devices to baptize us with the Holy Spirit,
and we cannot miss the joy.**

**In this hour we would look up to know you
and then go out to serve all whom you love.**

In Jesus' name. Amen.

* HYMN #55

Come like Driving Wind, O God

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Verses 1,2 and 5

1 Come like driv - ing wind, O God, let your
2 Let your peo - ple shout for joy; let them
3 Or - phan's fa - ther, wid - ow's hope, grace from
4 When you led your peo - ple out, march - ing
5 Sing to God, all round the earth, God whose

en - e - mies be smoke. Come like sear - ing
 cheer and chant your name, sing - ing of the
 heav - en for the earth, you bring home the
 through the wil - der - ness, earth was shak - ing
 free - dom has no bound, God who speaks for

fire, O God, let your en - e - mies be wax.
 path you take, rid - ing on the glo - ry clouds.
 dis - pos - sessed; you set slaves and pris - oners free.
 as you went, rain was pour - ing from the sky.
 all to hear, God whose bless - ing is our life.

This unrhymed 21st-century paraphrase effectively communicates the urgency of Psalm 68 and its celebration of God's power, manifest both in destroying all that hinders God's purposes and in caring for those who have no other helper. Such a God deserves our thanks and praise.

TEXT: Richard Leach, 2007

MUSIC: Erfurt *Enchiridion*, 1524; harm. Sethus Calvisius, 1594

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NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

7.7.7.7

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Harriet Niles

On this day of mystery and wonder,
 we reflect on our record as an Easter people.
 Is there evidence that Christ is alive within us and among us?
 Is the work of the Spirit obvious
 to any who observes our words and deeds?
 Let us admit how things are with us,
 as we seek God's forgiveness.
 Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,
 followed by time for silent personal confession.
 Thus, we pray:

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Hear us, God, our hope,
for we have too easily denied our heritage
amid the competing claims all around us.
We declare ownership of what is only lent to us for a time.
We strive for knowledge and control beyond our capacity,
wanting power on our own terms rather than through
the unpredictable empowerment of your spirit.
Sometimes we stand on tiptoe to view what is out of sight,
then arrogantly conclude there is nothing to see.
O God, open our eyes and our hearts
that we might be forgiven and find true life in you.**
(moment of silent confession)

* KYRIE

Choir

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us.

Congregation

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us.

* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Repentance and forgiveness of sin
are proclaimed to all people in the name of Jesus Christ.
Forgiveness is God's gift to us,
one we can never earn but are welcome to accept.
When we agree to God's freeing offer,
we are also agreeing to let God's love change us.
We are blessed by this opportunity for newness of life.

Alleluia and Amen!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer a sign of peace to one another.

* GLORIA #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.**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.

Our giving expresses our faith in Jesus Christ
and our love for all the saints.

In the church, we depend on our prayers for one another
and the generosity of support for the programs that help us all
to grow in wisdom and capacity to serve.

The offering will now be received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Go Not Far From Me, O God

adapt. John Hullah

Go not far from me, far from me, O God;
cast me not away in the time of age;
forsake me not when my strength faileth me.
O let my mouth be filled with Thy praise: that I may sing
Thy glory and honor all day long.

* DOXOLOGY #609

Praise God, from Whom All Blessing Flow

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us join our voices in prayer:

**Clothe us with power, O God,
that our offerings and our lives
may make a compelling witness to your love for all the saints.
Enlighten our hearts that we may share with all
the hope to which we have been called.
Keep us faithful to the tasks you set before your church.
Amen.**

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Grant Us Lord

STUTTGART

Grant us, Lord, the grace of giving with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living we may offer unto thee. Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Let us pray together:

**Come Holy Spirit, open our minds
to see the power of Scripture to give life;
enlighten our hearts
that we might see Christ in all whom we meet;
in the name of the one, holy, and living God,
to whom we give all glory. Amen.**

THE READINGS

Epistle

Acts of the Apostles 1:6-14 (Inclusive Bible)

While meeting together they asked, "Has the time come, Rabbi? Are you going to restore sovereignty to Israel?" Jesus replied, "It's not for you to know times or dates that Abba God has decided. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; then you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth."

Having said this, Jesus was lifted up in a cloud before their eyes and taken from their sight.

They were still gazing up into the heavens when two messengers dressed in white stood beside them. "You Galileans—why are standing here looking up at the skies?" they asked. "Jesus, who has been taken from you—this same Jesus will return, in the same way you watched him go into heaven."

The apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a mere Sabbath's walk away.

Entering the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying—Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James ben-Alphaeus, Simon, a member of the Zealot sect, and Judah ben-Jacob. Also in their company were some of the women who followed Jesus, his mother Mary, and some of Jesus' sisters and brothers.

With one mind, they devoted themselves to constant prayer.

The Holy Spirit has a word for each of us today.

With God's help we are listening.

After Jesus said this, he looked up to heaven and said, “Abba, the hour has come! Glorify your Only Begotten that I may glorify you, through the authority you’ve given me over all humankind, by bestowing eternal life on all those you gave me.

And this is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent, Jesus, the Messiah. I have given you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

Now, Abba, glorify me with your own glory, the glory I had with you before the world began. I have manifested your Name to those you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me; and now they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you’ve entrusted to me does indeed come from you. I entrusted to them the message you entrusted to me, and they received it. They know that I really came from you; they believe it was you who sent me.

And it’s for these that I pray—not for the world, but for those you’ve given me—for they are really yours, just as all that belongs to me is yours, and all that belongs to you is mine. It is in them that I have been glorified. I am in the world no more, but while I am coming to you, they are still in the world.

Abba, holy God, protect those whom you have given me with your Name—the Name that you gave me—that they may be one, even as we are one.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

“Ascension Mending”



* NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF CANDLES, PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We ask all these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...

**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.**

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no
 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery - where their high com -
 3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what - e'er your
 4 In Christ now meet both east and west; in him meet

south or north, but one great fel - low -
 mu - nion find; his ser - vice is the
 race may be. All chil - dren of the
 south and north. All Christ - ly souls are

ship of love through - out the whole wide earth.
 gold - en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.
 liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
 one in him through - out the whole wide earth.

This setting expands and enhances the thematic inclusiveness of an early 20th-century text by adapting the melody of a traditional spiritual to carry these words. This 1940 pairing marked the first use of African American musical material in a mainline North American hymnal.

TEXT: John Oxenham, 1908, alt.

MUSIC: African American spiritual; *Jubilee Songs*, 1884; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1940

MC KEE

CM

(alternate tune: ST. PETER, 318)

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

The Human One has lived among us
and lifted our spirits to the mountaintops.

**Because we have seen the Eternal in Jesus Christ,
God has been made real to us.**

We celebrate the reign of the Human One
over all the realms of heaven and earth.

**God has raised our Savior
to dominion, glory, and sovereignty.**

Now God calls us to be the church, Christ's body,
witnessing to the ends of the earth.

**We extend love and forgiveness in Christ's name
and seek to make disciples to all nations.**

* CHORAL RESPONSE

Amen

African American

POSTLUDE

How Majestic is Thy Name

arr. Mark Hayes

*“My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”*

Psalm 73:26



We continue to keep in our prayers:

Corine and Joseph McCalpine, Laurie Thomson, Tom LaRosa, Reene,
Carlos, Priscella, Anthony Buccino, Rosa Buccino, Sandy Colombo, Tralaina Davis,
Dorland, Addie Singleton, Rajvinder Kaur, Mary Orr, Sue Blazek,
Gwen and Elizabeth Baus, JoAnn Hood, the Jackson-Dix family

We pray for those struggling with illness, convalescing, homebound or in need.

Names are generally removed after four weeks unless there is a continuing need.



Please join us for Communion following the service this morning in the Chapel.



@ The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland
Sunday May 17/Ascension Sunday/Marathon Sunday

All Day Cleveland Marathon

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

1:40PM Guardians-Reds/Progressive Field

Tuesday May 19

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

7:00PM Commentary on the Gospel of John/ZOOM

Wednesday May 20

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Thursday May 21

7:00PM FPS Directors Meeting/Conference Room/ First Floor

Friday May 22

2:00PM Wedding Rehearsal/Jacob-Stupica/Sanctuary

Saturday May 23

3:00PM Wedding/Jacob-Stupica/Sanctuary

Sunday May 24/Day of Pentecost

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

Monday May 25/Memorial Day

All Day Building and Offices Closed

Tuesday May 26

12:15PM Tuesday AA Meeting/Cuyahoga Room

7:00PM Commentary on the Gospel of John/ZOOM

Wednesday May 27

11:00AM Stirring Up Hope Soup Pantry

12:15PM Mid-Week Communion/Sanctuary

Friday May 29

5:00PM Wedding Rehearsal/Abbomerato-Rummell/Sanctuary

Saturday May 30

3:00PM Wedding/Abbomerato-Rummell/Sanctuary

Sunday May 31/Trinity Sunday

10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary

11:30AM Communion/Chapel

12:00PM Stated Session Meeting/Conference Room

12:00PM Holden Arboretum Tour/Western Reserve Room

1:40PM Guardians-Red Sox/Progressive Field

Last Sunday Attendance In-Person:74 Online:172

There are many ways to support The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland

Online Giving:

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Mail to:

The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland
Attn: Financial Office
1380 Ontario Street
Cleveland, OH 44113

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Checks should be made payable to "The First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland."

All contributions are tax-deductible and will be appropriately acknowledged at year-end.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLEVELAND

LOVING CHRIST, SERVING CITY—SPIRITUALLY, SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY—SINCE 1820

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Senior Pastor: Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams

Parish Associate: Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

Minister of Music: Evan M. Collins

Choir

Leah Jennings Brown, *soprano*

Kaya Sparks, *soprano*

Val Sibila, *soprano*

Christian Bush, *tenor*

Anthony Steward, *tenor*

Noah Whitaker, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Reese Henrick, *alto*

Morgan Potts, *alto*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*

Christopher Clark, *bass*

Albert Donze, *bass*

Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

Class of 2026

Beth Buchanan

Judy Macuga

Melissa Maffia

Harriet Niles

Marty Vassel

Class of 2027

Michelle Baron

Bernard Medie

Bob Reid

Class of 2028

Dave Finley

Don Urban

Church Deacons:

Class of 2026

Mark Corey

Forrest Diehl

Pam Daly

Ruth Finley

Alyssa Niepokny

Charlene Thornton

Class of 2027

Anand Bandari

Eric Grattan

Sunny Kunche

Amy Wheeler

John Wheeler

Class of 2028

Valorie Hempstead

JoAnn Hood

Elie Medie

Brad Oglesby

Mark Pichler

Lori Montero

Church Trustees:

Class of 2027

Dave Eifert

Class of 2027

Bruce Kranicz

Class of 2027

Mike Musson

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