

Sunday Worship Service – May 10, 2026

Worship words from *Sundays and Seasons* marked with *

Other material from various sources as indicated in the footnotes.

Welcome and Announcements

A Moment of Reflection

Call to Worship¹ (adapted from Psalm 90)

God of our Beginning,

From generation to generation, you have been our dwelling place-

Our home where grace abounds.

Before the mountains were born, before the earth was formed-

You are. Timeless and Eternal.

We first dwelled with you as divine thought, then as children,

born of love and breathed into fertile earth.

We, your children, bear your image.

Now, here, we gather in praise and remembrance of the First Love.

Humbled in the expanse of your sovereignty, we seek to begin anew.

What first you dream, O God, help us to awaken...

Pause for Reflection

In the silence of our understanding,

when words fail and hearts yearn to be made new,

We hear you calling from the kingdom of heaven within,

“My children. Return.”

Return & Renewal (Confession & Forgiveness)

Return to the Lord your God who is gracious,

and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

God of all mercy and consolation,

your love is steadfast. Your love is patient.

God of our near and far, you meet us where we are –

each peak and valley of our lives.

Restore us by your Spirit’s power.

Open our eyes to you, our source of life.

Come sanctify our hearts and minds.

May we walk your pathways to the glory of your name!

¹ *Call to Worship; Return & Renewal, and Words of Assurance* from “Liturgy of the Beloved” © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

As in the Garden of our Unknowing,
 We found division in worldly wisdom.
 Long have we wandered from the wisdom of your love-
 Help us to find our way back home.

Forgive us, Lord, as we forgive,
 heeding the call to love as you have loved.
 Let Mercy reign in ev'ry heart.
 May the Way of Christ be the pattern of our lives.

Down through the ages, your love is changeless-
 across the nations, each generation.
 You are the cleansing rain. You wash away our pain,
 and by your grace we have been saved.

Words of Assurance

God of our Unending, your love is as boundless as the heavens.
 Your grace is a river that flows without ceasing.
 In Jesus, you weave yourself into the fabric of our humanity-
Divine Mercy made manifest in our own time.

Therefore, Beloved, hear the good news:
 In love you were made, and to love you shall return.
 In the name of †Jesus Christ every distance is bridged,
 Every division is healed, and every heart is made whole.
 May Christ be your heart's everlasting desire.
 May the Words of Life be ever upon your lips!
Amen.

Hymn of Praise *"My God, How Wonderful Thou Art"* #863

1. **My God, how wonderful thou art, thy majesty how bright!
 How beautiful thy mercy seat in depths of burning light!**
2. **How wonderful, how beautiful the sight of thee must be –
 thine endless wisdom, boundless pow'r, and awesome purity!**
3. **No earthly father loves like thee; no mother, e'er so mild,
 bears and forbears as thou hast done with me, thy sinful child.**
4. **Yet I may love thee too, O Lord, almighty as thou art,
 for thou hast stooped to ask of me the love of my poor heart.**
5. **My God, how wonderful thou art, thou art everlasting friend!
 On thee I stay my trusting heart till faith in vision end.**

Prayer of the Day *

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Acts 17:22-31

On his second missionary journey, Paul crossed Asia Minor (modern Turkey) and arrived in Athens, where he faced the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who knew nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaimed that the “unknown god” whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead. A reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the 17th chapter:

Paul stood up in the middle of the council on Mars Hill and said, “People of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. As I was walking through town and carefully observing your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To an unknown God.’ What you worship as unknown, I now proclaim to you. God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn’t live in temples made with human hands. Nor is God served by human hands, as though he needed something, since he is the one who gives life, breath, and everything else. From one person God created every human nation to live on the whole earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands. God made the nations so they would seek him, perhaps even reach out to him and find him. In fact, God isn’t far away from any of us. In God we live, move, and exist. As some of your own poets said, ‘We are his offspring.’

“Therefore, as God’s offspring, we have no need to imagine that the divine being is like a gold, silver, or stone image made by human skill and thought. God overlooks ignorance of these things in times past, but now directs everyone everywhere to change their hearts and lives. This is because God has set a day when he intends to judge the world justly by a man he has appointed. God has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 3:13-22

The author of First Peter encourages Christians to remain faithful even in the face of defamation and persecution. In baptism, we are made clean to act in accordance with what is right. The author exhorts his readers to live ethical lives and not to repay evil for evil. A reading from the First Letter of Peter, the third chapter:

Who will harm you if you are zealous for good? But happy are you, even if you suffer because of righteousness! Don't be terrified or upset by them. Instead, regard Christ the Lord as holy in your hearts. Whenever anyone asks you to speak of your hope, be ready to defend it. Yet do this with respectful humility, maintaining a good conscience. Act in this way so that those who malign your good lifestyle in Christ may be ashamed when they slander you. It is better to suffer for doing good (if this could possibly be God's will) than for doing evil.

Christ himself suffered on account of sins, once for all, the righteous one on behalf of the unrighteous. He did this in order to bring you into the presence of God. Christ was put to death as a human, but made alive by the Spirit. And it was by the Spirit that he went to preach to the spirits in prison. In the past, these spirits were disobedient—when God patiently waited during the time of Noah. Noah built an ark in which a few (that is, eight) lives were rescued through water. Baptism is like that. It saves you now—not because it removes dirt from your body but because it is the mark of a good conscience toward God. Your salvation comes through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at God's right side. Now that he has gone into heaven, he rules over all angels, authorities, and powers.

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

The Living Word (Gospel Acclamation)²

**In the beginning was the Word,
the Living Word of God, the Light of Life Unending.**

**You shine in us on ancient starlight,
in our Book of Memories and Future Dreams.**

² *Gospel Acclamation "The Living Word"* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

**Sing we halle, hallelu!
 You are the Word of Life Eternal.
 Holy Wisdom, found within!
 You speak to us and we remember:**

**“I am the Book no one can close,
 The Story of our time, before all time, together.
 I am the Voice that never falters, I, the Echo of Beyond.
 I am the Way, the Truth, the Life.” The Living Word.**

Gospel Reading: John 14:15-21

The holy gospel according to John, the 14th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I will ask the Father, and he will send another Companion, who will be with you forever. This Companion is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world can’t receive because it neither sees him nor recognizes him. You know him, because he lives with you and will be with you.

“I won’t leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live too. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them loves me. Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

The gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: Never an Orphan

Hymn of the Day “I Will Never Leave You Orphaned”³ (tune #696)

1. **“I will never leave you orphaned,”
 Jesus, you once told your own.
 When we're overwhelmed and frightened,
 show us that we're not alone.**
2. **Thank you for the Holy Spirit
 who is present every day,
 giving love that we might share it,
 giving us the words to say.**

³ Text © 2020 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. (www.carolynshymns.com)

3. **In affliction, we find comfort
through our Friend and Help and Guide.
When we're sad and cannot bear it,
you are with us — by our side.**
4. **Then, in comfort, we find challenge
as you call your church to be
mercy-bearers, justice-seekers
in your new community.**
5. **Christ, in comfort and in challenge,
May the church hear what you say:
"I will never leave you orphaned."
May we trust your word today.**

Ionian Creed ⁴

Let us confess our faith together using a paraphrase of the Nicene Creed from the Iona Community, an ecumenical movement based in Scotland:

**We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon, of water and earth,
of male and female.**

**We believe in God beside us,
Jesus Christ, the word made flesh,
born of a woman, servant of the poor,
tortured and nailed to a tree.
A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,
he died alone and forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven,
to be everywhere present throughout all ages,
and His kingdom will come on earth.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit burning with Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church,
Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of all resurrection and of eternal life. Amen.**

⁴ *Ionian Creed* from *Iona Abbey Worship Book* © 2001 The Iona Community, Glasgow, UK

Prayers of Intercession *

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation. Each petition will end with the phrase "Merciful God" and the congregational response "receive our prayer."

A brief silence.

God of new life, you call us through the waters of baptism to be in relationship with you and one another. Guide the church and its leaders to proclaim Christ's righteousness throughout the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You create the world and all that is in it. Shelter budding plants and young animals, provide unpolluted habitats and clean water, and raise up stewards for the environment. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You set civil servants in the places where we live. Instill truth and equity among judges and lawyers, gentleness and courage among first responders, and peace among leaders of towns and nations. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You provide comfort in times of trouble. Heal those who are sick, shelter any who are unhoused, feed those undernourished, and accompany and console all who are lonely, bereaved, anxious, or ill (*especially...*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You are love and you desire that we love one another. As a mother hen cares for her chicks, bless all who provide motherly care in our lives, and inspire us to care for one another. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Gracious God, we pray for mothers who face hardships and trials. Whether they deal with health issues, financial stress, or relational struggles, be their rock and fortress. Let your presence be a comforting reminder that they are not alone in their journey. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of new life, your steadfast love endures forever. Inspire us by the example of the faithful departed, who clung to your promises of life, forgiveness of sins, and salvation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

The Peace *The Assembly greets one another with a word of peace.*

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Offering / Offering Prayer *

(an Offering plate is placed on the altar)

Let us pray:

Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving ⁵

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.

O God triune, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.

Here by your wisdom are both life and death, growth and decay,
the nest and the hunt, sunshine and storm.

Sustained by these wonders, we creatures of dust join in the ancient song:

The earth is full of your glory:

The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer.

In Christ you bring life from death;

we remember his cross, we laud his resurrection.

Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.

Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness.

Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song:

The earth is full of your glory:

The earth is full of your glory.

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,

so filled with your love for this earth.

On the night before he died, he took bread, and gave thanks,
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

⁵ From **Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks: A Collection of Litanies, Laments, and Thanksgivings at Font and Table** by Gail Ramshaw, copyright © 2017 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song:
The earth is full of your glory:
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you create the worlds,
you uphold the living, you embrace the dead.
Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.
Strengthen us for our journey with this meal, the body and blood of Christ.
Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth.
Empowered by your promises, we rise from our deaths to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory:
The earth is full of your glory.

Amen, and amen.
Amen, and amen.

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Communion Invitation

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

Communion Instructions

Communion Distribution (begin with communing the online congregation)

Hymn during Communion "O Bread of Life from Heaven" #480

1. O bread of life from heaven, O food to pilgrims given,
O manna from above:
feed with the blessed sweetness of your divine completeness
the souls that want and need your love.
2. O fount of grace redeeming, O river ever streaming
from Jesus' wounded side:
come now, your love bestowing on thirsting souls, and flowing
till all are fully satisfied.
3. We love you, Jesus, tender, in all your hidden splendor
within these means of grace.
Oh, let the veil be riven, and our clear eye in heaven
behold your glory face to face.

Hymn during Communion "Children of the Heavenly Father" #781

1. Children of the heav'nly Father safely in his bosom gather;
nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.
2. God his own doth tend and nourish, in his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them, in his mighty arms he bears them.
3. Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever;
unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth.
4. Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh,
his the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.

Communion Blessing

May the precious body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,
strengthen you, and keep you in his grace now, and unto life everlasting.

Prayer after Communion *

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are
making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love
our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus,
Amen.

Sending of Communion Prayer

Eternal God, whose glory is revealed in the crucified and risen Lord, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with our brothers and sisters who are homebound. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion in the body and blood of your Son, that we all feast upon your abundant love made known in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hope Everlasting (Benediction) ⁶

Choir assembles to lead this sung Benediction

Oh, where do we go from here?

Whom do we follow, which path do we take?

We'll follow wherever You lead.

We'll follow Your heart's desire,

And seek to be Your peace for a world in need.

Now, may the God of all hope fill you with joy and peace, by faith,

And may your hope everlasting, by the power of the Spirit, abound!

Commission

Go in peace, inspired by the risen Christ to love and serve!

Thanks be to God.

Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen

⁶ *Hope Everlasting* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.