

(What is?) Ascension Sunday

May 29, 2022



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF FRESNO
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Raygan Baker

WELCOME

Are you a guest with us, or interested in connecting with us?

Text "New" to 559-425-4050 and fill out the Connect Card.

Does your infant or toddler need a minute, a change, or a good cry?

Don't worry, we've (literally) all been there.

The service is livestreaming in our Caring Room (Room 1) nearby, where there is space and supplies to help get what your child needs.

(*Congregation may stand | Responses: Liturgist/**Congregation/all**)

Prelude "Adagio for Strings" - Samuel Barber; arr. Strickland Scott Horton, organ

Welcome Rev. Raygan Baker

***Call to Worship** Liturgist: Wayne Brown

All you who are yearning for connection,
craving rest, dreaming of communities of compassion, come.
For God's Wisdom longs to be inherited.

God's Liberation longs to be danced with.

God's Anger longs for reparations to be made.

God's Peace longs to be sunk into.

Come, let us worship the Beloved,
For we desire God's transforming love.

***Hymn** "Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!" vvs. 1 & 2 #257, pew hymnal

Opening Prayer Liturgist: Wayne Brown

Holy God, hear our prayers!

For peace. For justice. For joy. For healing. Wherever and however evil seeks to turn us against each other, make us resolute in our pursuit of another way. Bind us together through Christ who came to set the captives free and liberate the oppressed. May your spirit of abundance be our guide. Amen.

Scripture Reading Luke 24:44-53

Time for Discovery

**Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still;
let this be our song — no one stands alone,
standing side by side. Draw the circle wide.**

Gordon Light, ©1994 Common Cup Company

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The 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,
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.***

Scripture Reading:

Acts 1:1-11

Liturgist: Wayne Brown

Sermon

***Hymn**

"This is My Song"

#591, pew hymnal

Invitation to Prayer

Sung Call to Prayer

**Lord, listen to your children praying:
Lord send your Spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying:
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

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Prayers of Intercession

God we are weary! It seems a week cannot pass without more violence. Safety is nowhere to be found. Hope seems distant. And so we turn to you, trusting in your promises that like a mother hen, you gather us under your wings. And so, in our all our mourning and our anger, hear our prayers!

For the families and loved ones of those whose lives were taken in Buffalo (10), Laguna Woods (1), and Uvalde (21) and for those who were shot and remain in recovery.

Let your justice prevail.

In our temptation to get used to gun violence, to become numb towards loss of life, and to allow for the normalization of violence.

Let your justice prevail.

Wherever there is a refusal to acknowledge the patterns and powers of toxic masculinity, white supremacy, and Christian supremacy at play in shooting after shooting,

Let your justice prevail.

In response to the idols we have constructed - the gold we have shaped like guns - seeking security in violence, aggression, and retribution.

Let your justice prevail.

Fill our hearts with an insatiable hunger to hold our policy makers, corporations, and all who benefit from gun culture accountable.

Let your justice prevail.

You, O God, remember the names of everyone of your beloveds whose lives have been taken. We trust that all of our holy rage flows from you, and our sacred resistance will be sustained by your Spirit.

Even when we struggle to see it;

Let your justice prevail. Amen.

Responsive Prayer; Eco-Beatitudes

Blessed are we when we treasure the wisdom of the earth,
receiving survival strategies whispered underground by bristlecone pine and sequoia, returning the praise songs of nuthatch and titmouse, flocking together with the murmuration maps of bees and bats and butterflies, and pollinating possibilities for living in these beautiful ruins.

Woe to us when losses of profit are considered more costly than losses of habitat, health, or home.

Holy confrontation with corporations that harm is the faithful labor of Love.

Blessed are we when our daily actions and interactions align with dreams for collective flourishing,
and pattern our days with the small, the slow, and the simple, moving through the world gently, with gratitude, attentive to beauty, savoring the lifeforce that flows freely through it all.

Woe to us when we privatize natural resources,
when we hoard and steal the gifts of the land, or conceal patterns of colonization. The only way to planetary healing is through return, reparations, and repair.

Blessed are we when our grief propels us toward protection,
our wild love for the world motivating our every dream. No escape, no denial, but holding what is in our cupped hands and broken open hearts, our prayers poured forth like libations of lament, remembrance, and promise.

Woe to us when we cross the boundaries of the earth;
when we continue to push, extract, and consume in willful refusal of glaring devastation, and need for rest. Unsustainable practices diminish and destroy the rhythms of life.

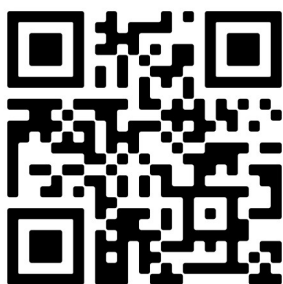
Blessed are we when we remember we're "we," not "me," or "us and them,"
bound to each other cellularly and socially, holding and being held in the web of relations, honoring each species extinction as a death of divinity, each oil spill opening our veins, each pipeline poisoning our precious lifeblood, each encounter, an opening for the medicine of care.

Woe to us when we do not choose solidarity,
when we protect ourselves at the expense of others, or silo our struggles as if they are inseparable. For climate justice must be gender justice must be racial justice must be disability justice must be a matter of leaving all domination behind.

Invitation to Generosity

Liturgist: Wayne Brown

Here at the Big Red Church, everyone counts, and every gift counts!



- ⇒ *There are two donation boxes and giving envelopes for your gifts in the Narthex (the area where an usher handed you an Order of Worship).*
- ⇒ *You can also give through the Givelify App by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera.*
- ⇒ *BigRedChurch.org/Giving/ has more instructions, links, and information about giving to the church. Thank you for supporting and joining in the ministry of this church.*

Offertory Music

"Meditation on MATERNA"

Scott Horton, organ

*Doxology

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Blessing and Sung Benediction

**Go now in peace, never be afraid;
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true;
know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world will see
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen. Amen. Amen.**

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It is our tradition to be seated for the Postlude

Postlude

"Largo", from New World Symphony - A. Dvorak

Scott Horton, organ

We Go Out to Love and Serve the World

*The responsive Eco-Beatitudes were by Rev. Anna Blaedel and
Rev. M Jade Barclay, enfleshed.com. Used with permission.*

Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!

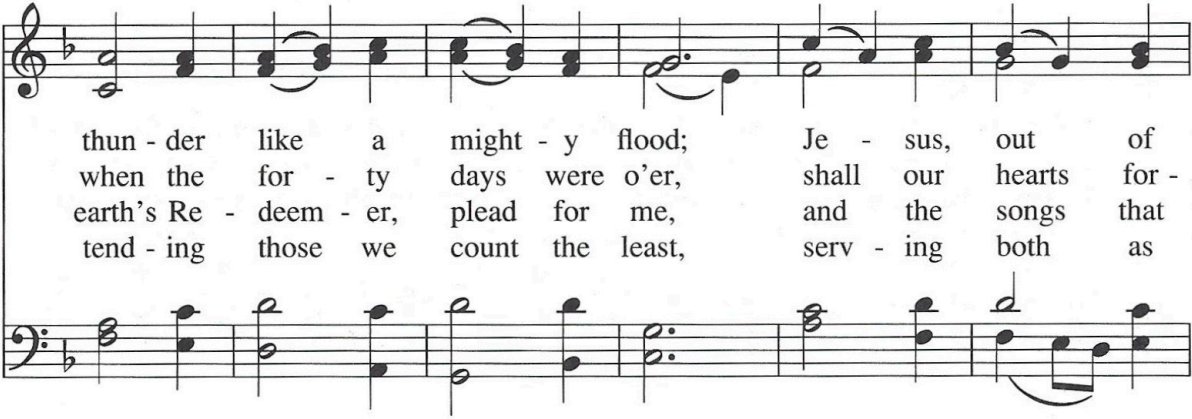
*Eph. 1:15-23; Heb. 9:11-14**William C. Dix, 1867; alt.*

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Gra - cious Je - sus! Yours the
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Not as or - phans are we
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Bread of an - gels, you on
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! Christ e - ter - nal, noth - ing

scep - ter, yours the throne! Al - le - lu - ia! Yours the
 left in sor - row now. Al - le - lu - ia! You are
 earth our food, our stay. Al - le - lu - ia! Here the
 can dis - rupt your reign; Al - le - lu - ia! Born of

tri - umph, yours the vic - to - ry a - lone!
 near us; faith be - lieves, nor ques - tions how.
 sin - ful flee to you from day to day.
 Mar - y, heaven and earth are your do - main.

Hark! the songs of peace - ful Zi - on
 Though the cloud from sight re - ceived you
 In - ter - ces - sor, friend of sin - ners,
 Hu - man life you ful - ly en - tered,



thun - der like a might - y flood; Je - sus, out of
 when the for - ty days were o'er, shall our hearts for -
 earth's Re - deem - er, plead for me, and the songs that
 tend - ing those we count the least, serv - ing both as



ev - ery na - tion you've re - deemed us by your blood.
 get your prom - ise, "I am with you ev - er - more."
 sound in heav - en will re - peat your gra - cious plea.
 Priest and Vic - tim in the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.

William C. Dix, manager of a marine insurance company, was also a gifted writer who made a significant contribution to hymnody. This hymn was written to fill a need for communion hymns in Church of England hymnals.

Tune: HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7.D.
 Rowland H. Prichard, 1844
 Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

This Is My Song

Ps. 82:8

Lloyd Stone, 1934

1 This is my song, O God of all the na - tions, a song of
 2 My coun-try's skies are blu - er than the o - cean, and sun-light

peace for lands a - far and mine. This is my home, the
 beams on clo - ver - leaf and pine; But oth - er lands have

coun - try where my heart is; here are my hopes, my
 sun - light, too, and clo - ver, and skies are ev - ery -

dreams, my ho - ly shrine; But oth - er hearts in oth - er lands are
 where as blue as mine. O hear my song, O God of all the

beat - ing with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.
 na - tions, a song of peace for their land and for mine.

These stanzas, published during the period between the two world wars, express a hope for lasting peace among all nations, races, and cultures. Finlandia is derived from a "tone poem" of the same name by Finnish composer Jean Sibelius.

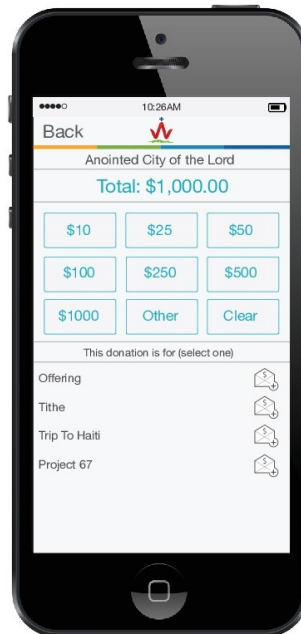
Tune: FINLANDIA 10.10.10.10.10.
 Jean Sibelius, 1899
 Arr. for The Hymnal, 1933

How To Make Your First Givelify Donation

- 1 Download the free Givelify app



- 2 Locate our church
- 3 Tap the Give button
- 4 Tap an amount
- 5 Select an envelope
- 6 Tap Give Now
- 7 Create your account



- 8 Securely enter your payment information
- 9 Complete your donation

- ➔ Next time you use Givelify, you can save time with the **1-TAP GIVE NOW** button

This Week at Big Red

Monday, May 30

- ♦ Church Office Closed
- ♦ **5:00pm:** Yoga (Nursery)

Tuesday, May 31

- ♦ No Events

Wednesday, June 1

- ♦ **8:00am:** Bible Study (Zoom)
- ♦ **5:00pm:** Yoga (Nursery)
- ♦ Grapeleaf Submissions Due

Thursday, June 2

- ♦ No Events

Friday, June 3

- ♦ **5:00pm:** Yoga (Nursery)

Saturday, June 4

- ♦ **10:00am:** Fresno Rainbow Pride Parade (Tower District)
- ♦ **11:00am:** Fresno Rainbow Pride Festival (Fresno City College)

Sunday, June 5

- ♦ **9:00am:** Exploration Hour (Various)
- ♦ **10:00am:** Worship (Sanctuary)

First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Office Hours: Monday – Friday

9:00 am – 3:30 pm

First Time Worshipping with Us? Text “New” to (559) 425-4050 and fill out the Connect Card.

Pastor

Rev. Raygan Baker
rbaker@bigredchurch.org

Office Manager

Erica Holland
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Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Custodian

Gregory Chavarria

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Technicians

Patrick Lopez
Karisa Garza
Brad Jenkins
Erica Holland

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Assisting in Today's Service

Liturgist: Wayne Brown

Music Director/ Organist: Scott Horton

Ushers: Bruce Owdom, Sue Karibian, Bob McParland

Technician: Erica Holland

FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us. We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation. We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.