

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF FRESNO

# THE BIG RED CHURCH

April 27, 2025

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi, Pastor

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

**Prelude**      "Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn" - J.S. Bach      Scott Horton, organ  
                  "In the Cross of Christ I Glory" - arr. J. Behnke      Handbells

**Welcome**      Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

**\*Call to Worship**      Laurie Bermel, liturgists  
**[Turn Microphone on]: Good morning, Please rise in body and spirit and let us join our hearts and voices in today's Call to Worship**

One: We want this sanctuary to be a space set apart for all to seek refuge and safety.

**Many: Jesus speaks peace among us. We do not carry this all alone.**

One: We gather together to remember that fear can't keep love from showing up.

**Many: Jesus breathes the Spirit among us. We do not carry this all alone.**

One: We pray that this worship will begin to heal the wounds this world makes in us.

**Many: Jesus reaches out his hands to us. We do not carry this all alone.**

One: We journey together in search of the truth.

**Many: Jesus calls us to let go of our doubt so we might believe.**

**[Turn Microphone off]**

**\*Hymn**      "Yours Is the Glory"      #253, pew hymnal

**Prayer of Transformation**      Laurie Bermel

**[Turn Microphone on]: You may be seated... as we join our Catholic siblings in mourning the loss of Pope Francis, let us come together to pray the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi:**

One: Lord, make us an instrument of your peace:

**Many: where there is hatred, let me sow love;**

**where there is injury, pardon;**

**where there is doubt, faith;**

**where there is despair, hope;**

**where there is darkness, light;**

**where there is sadness, joy.**

One: O divine Master, grant that we may not so much seek

**Many: to be consoled as to console,**

**to be understood as to understand,**

**to be loved as to love.**

## Words of Grace

Receive the good news, For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Having received the grace of God, let us respond by standing and greeting each other by Passing of the Peace. Please return to your seats once you hear Gloria Patri played. The Peace of Christ be with you.

**[Turn Microphone off]**

## Passing of the Peace

Greeting: *The Peace of Christ be with you.*

Response: *And also with you.*

## \*Response of Praise (Sung)

Gloria Patri

*Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit Three in One;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen. Amen.*

**[Turn Microphone off]**

## Welcoming New Members

Anthem

"Steadfast Spirit" - Michael Mazzatenta

Handbells

Time for Discovery [*children are invited to the chancel steps*]

Vanessa Valdez-Johnson

**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

## The Lord's Prayer

*Our Creator, 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.*

**\*Hymn**

**"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"**

**#292, pew hymnal**

**Scripture**

John 20:19-31

Laurie Bermel

**[Turn Microphone on]: This morning's Easter reading comes from the Gospel of John, chapter 20, verses 19-31.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were [in fear], Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Liturgist: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God within us,  
and for the Word of God among us.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

**[Turn Microphone off]**

**Sermon**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

**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 the Church**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

## **Invitation to Generosity**

Laurie Bermel

**[Turn Microphone on]:**

**People of God, when the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples, they were gathered in a room locked by fear—some believing, some doubting, all in need of peace. Yet Jesus met them there, offering presence and belonging just as they were. In the same spirit, our church strives to be a safe and sacred space where faith and doubt can dwell together, and all are welcomed with grace. Let us give generously to sustain this place of peace, belonging, and hope for all who seek.**

**Our stewardship of this beautiful sanctuary—its liturgy, music, and campus—relies on our collective generosity. Our gifts also support children's Christian education programs and outreach to those in need. We are deeply grateful to those who give generously to sustain our ministry, and we invite everyone to join us in giving what they can to support the Big Red Church and its mission.**

**You can contribute by placing your offering in the plate as it passes down the aisle or by giving electronically using the QR code in your order of worship. In addition to financial offerings, you are welcome to place your prayer requests in the offering plate.**

**Let us unlock our hearts and unclench our fists, offering what we have in this moment as a symbol of our commitment to go out and be the presence of Love in our world. The sanctuary offering is now collected.**

**[Turn Microphone off]**

## **Offertory**

"Minuet" - K. Brewer

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!**

**\*Dedication**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

**\*Closing Hymn "Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day**

**#241, pew hymnal**

**\*Benediction**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

**\*Blessing Song**

**"Go Now in Peace"**

**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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**Postlude**

**"Toccata, from Organ Symphony 5" (excerpt) - C.M. Widor**

**Scott Horton,**

organ