



the good news is...

rooted in justice, mercy,
& faithfulness

March 22, 2026 – 10 am

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Covenant is an accepting, welcoming community sharing the glory of God's love with all.

PRELUDE

"Great is Thy Faithfulness" arr. Forrest

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Welcome to the weary and the worn.

People: Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.

Leader: Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

People: Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.

Leader: Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

People: Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.

Leader: Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

People: This is God's house. Make yourself at home here.

Leader: Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!

*Please rise in body or spirit



As was his custom, the author wrote this hymn to accompany his sermon on 1 Chronicles 17:16–17, preached on January 1, 1773; he called it "Faith's Review and Expectation." Much of its current popularity comes from this now-familiar tune, an association that began in 1835.

1 Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me;
his word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

5 When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God,
we love to live our lives by the rules.
We love clear answers.
We love right and wrong.
We love swift justice.
We love to pick up stones,
but you show us another way.
You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation.
You prioritize mercy over legality.
You prioritize people over tradition.
You prioritize love over everything.
Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters.
Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.
Forgive us. Soften our hearts.
Root us in mercy, justice, and love.
With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.



WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

HYMN #582

“Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me”

1 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.

2 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.



PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord, be with you all. **And also with you.**

HYMN #188

"Jesus Loves Me"

TALK WITH CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE FIRST READING

Matthew 23:23 (NRSVUE)

We live not by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God.
Thanks be to God.



THE GOSPEL READING

John 8:2-11 (NRSVUE)

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

"The Good News is...Rooted in Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven... (Hymnal p. 35. We say "debts & debtors.")

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Legacy Giving

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING



OFFERTORY

"United in Purpose" by Rollo Dilworth / Lyrics by Maya Angelou

The text for this particular piece is from Dr. Angelou's book, *Rainbow in the Cloud: The Wisdom and Spirit of Maya Angelou*.

*"The onus is upon us all to work
to improve the human condition.
Perform good deeds, for that is truly
the way to battle the forces of entropy
that are at work in our world.
The composite of all our efforts can
have an effect. Good done anywhere
is good done everywhere.*

*When we unite in purpose,
we are greater than the sum of our parts."*

*DOXOLOGY #606

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**



*PRAYER OF DEDICATION



*HYMN #435

“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy”



These stanzas, excerpted from quite a few more, offer a reminder that the model for our dealings with others should be God's generosity rather than limited human tolerance. The text is effectively set to a broad and sturdy Dutch folk melody, probably from the 17th century.

1 There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea.
There's a kindness in God's justice,
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment given.

2 For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind.
And the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful,
we would gladly trust God's Word,
and our lives reflect thanksgiving
for the goodness of our Lord.

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy”

Liturgy from this service is by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Assisting in Worship Today:

Rusty Miller – Liturgist

Brian Gray – Vocalist

Vince Izzo – Cajon

Cherie Brooks – Director of Music & Technology

Katie Wynkoop – Organist/Pianist & Assistant Director of Music

Brian Biller – Media Production Specialist

Rev. Joel A. Esala – Pastor



“Epilogue”
by T. Denise Anderson
Inspired by John 8:2-11

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT



Bible Study - Wednesday at 1:00pm in the Lounge. Join Bible Study with the QR code.

Preacher from the Pew - Wednesday at 7pm. This Week: Jude McClean

Centering Prayer- Thursdays at 8:30am in the Lounge

2026 VBS

June 15-18, 9-1130am

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

 <https://bit.ly/CPCVBS2026>



3 YEARS - 5TH GRADE

Begin the conversation.

Legacy Giving Lunch

4/19 11:15-1:30pm


RSVP

<https://bit.ly/CPCLegacyLunch>
or contact Megan

PER CAPITA



\$46/ per person




ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

3.29.26

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees — serves individuals and communities in need. This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Typically received during the season of Lent, this Offering helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations.

Give blood.




Monday, March 23, 206 12 - 6pm

BLOOD DRIVE

Give in March for a \$15 Gift Card by email & successful donations get A1c testing!
rcblood.org/March

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT:
Scan the QR Code
Call 1-800-733-2767 OR
Visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: covenant



MARK YOUR CALENDARS



PALM SUNDAY | MARCH 29 10 AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY | APRIL 2 7PM

GOOD FRIDAY | APRIL 3 7PM

EASTER SUNDAY | APRIL 5 10AM

PREACHER FROM THE PEW | WEDNESDAYS 7PM
BEGINNING FEBRUARY 25

PREACHER FROM THE PEW



Jude McLean

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 25, 2026
7 PM



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