



# FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

July 5, 2020  
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas  
Link to worship videos available at: [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

### WELCOME

We welcome you to worship today.

We remember the words from the Book of Revelation, chapter 22:  
"Through the middle of the street of the City of God flows The River of Life!"

### PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J.S. Bach

### HYMN NO. 35

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

arr. Mack Wilberg

**Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near;  
join me in glad adoration!**

**Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,  
Shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!  
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been  
granted in what he ordaineth?**

**Praise ye the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;  
Surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.  
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,  
if with his love He befriends thee.**

**Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!  
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!  
Let the amen sound from his people again;  
gladly for aye we adore him.**

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Let us pray ... From the disorder of chaos, Blessed and Eternal One, you bring measures of order related to your goodness. How we praise you, by night and by day! Hear us now, as we come before you in a time of confession through silence. *(We pray in silence.)* We endure hardship of our own making, O God, and hardship which comes to life unexpectedly, even randomly. O Giver of mercy: Burdens weigh us down, and the realization of brokenness both in human relationships and in all of your creation raises our awareness that we have failed you, failed ourselves, and failed others. Lift us again in love, so that – day by day – we faithfully serve you among all of your people in the way and spirit of Jesus Christ.

Friends, let us hear and share with gladness the blessed news of the Gospel:

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 581

Glory Be to the Father

GLORIA PATRI

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

The “Perfect” Can Be the Enemy of the Seven-times-Good

HYMN

God Bless Our Native Land

AMERICA

1. God bless our na - tive land! Firm may she ev - er stand  
 2. For her our prayer shall rise To God a - bove the skies;

Through storm and night! When the wild tem - pests rave, Rul - er of  
 With guid - ing hand: Thou who art ev - er nigh, Guard - ing with

wind and wave, Do Thou our coun - try save By Thy great might.  
 watch-ful eye, To Thee a - loud we cry, God save this land!

## PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, INTERCESSION AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Let us begin our prayers of thanksgiving and intercession this morning with each of us praying in silence for self and others . . .

Especially, O God, as we, this weekend, celebrate our nation’s birth-anniversary, we give thanks for democracy, for a form of government and tradition of law which honor both individuals and the collective public. We give thanks for the vision and faithfulness of those who have stepped forward, even in the face of strong opposition and at great cost, in order to lift up dignity and equality, justice and compassion.

Through every conflict – political, legislative, judicial, social, and military – we honor you for the light of liberty and the triumph of broad consideration and thoughtfulness, which shine through days and decades, which illumine the greater purposes of domestic tranquility, equality under the law, and sacrifice for the common good.

Bring healing to individuals and to groups. Where threats are invoked, where harm and abuse have occurred, where fear inhibits and grief stings, aid all who are struggling and anxious. Stand between them and the sources of pain and injury, so that forgiveness and recovery have an opportunity to gain the upper hand.

As we remember with profound appreciation those who have lived and died before us, we join our voices with theirs from eternity, praying as Jesus taught:

**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.**

### HYMN

#### Down by the Riverside

SPIRITUAL

1. **Gonna lay down my burden . . .**  
**“I ain’t gonna study war no more . . .”**
2. **Gonna lay down my sword ‘n’ shield . . .**
3. **Gonna walk with that Prince o’ Peace . . .**
4. **Gonna serve God with ev-‘ry-one . . .**

### DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

### POSTLUDE

#### Faith is the Victory

arr. Melody Bober

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Especially in this time, visit the church website, [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org), for the newsletter, announcements, worship services and bulletins, updates, etc.

Like us on **Facebook** at: [www.facebook.com/FPCBryan](http://www.facebook.com/FPCBryan)

**NEW!!!** on **Instagram**: [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com). Search for and follow **fpcbryantx1867** and/or **fpcbryan\_youth**

Help FPC-Bryan’s YouTube channel achieve 400 subscribers to be eligible for a custom url!

On [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), search for First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas, then click **SUBSCRIBE**

Our newsletter, **The Chimes**, continues to be available online, emailed to FPC-Bryan friends, and mailed to local FPC-Bryan members with the printed bulletin and sermon to those without technology. Until further notice, it will not be mailed to its full distribution list. The deadline for the next issue of the newsletter is **NOON, TODAY**, and will be distributed on WEDNESDAY, JULY 8. This newsletter will cover news from July 16-29.

**STAY CONNECTED!** with others in this community of faith at Church Updates—FPC-Bryan’s online tool for church-related announcements, ways to serve, and current prayer needs. This online tool is **“REAL TIME,”** and users receive a weekly reminder email on Thursdays to view new posts.

Login and create your password-protected account at <https://fpcbtx.churchupdates.org/login>. For more information, contact Karen in the church office, 979.823.8073 or [office@fpcbryan.org](mailto:office@fpcbryan.org).





# A WARM WELCOME!

*We are delighted to have you worship with us today.*

## WORSHIP NOTES

### PREACHER

Rev. Ted Foote

### LITURGISTS

Rev. Emily K. Béghin

Rev. Dr. George E. Klett

### MUSICIANS

Michelle Lassiter, *Pianist*

David Kipp, *Director of Music Ministries*

#### BRASS QUINTET

Aaron Ervin, *trumpet*

Mark Holtzapple, *French horn*

John McSpadden, *trumpet*

David Wilborn, *trombone*

Braden Yosko, *trombone*

### COVER ART

"The Covenant of Creation"

*(see insert)*

One of 11 faceted windows  
in sanctuary of

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

## CHANCEL FLOWERS

In loving memory of

William Douglas Von Gonten

by

The Von Gonten Family

## AUDIO/VIDEO

Emily K. Béghin

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## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JULY 5, 2020

### ONLINE WORSHIP-

To view, visit [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

5:45pm Youth (GR 6-12) Sunday Fun Day-DIGITAL

*(Watch your inbox for details via email!)*

MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2020

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2020

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2020

FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2020

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2020

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JULY 12, 2020

### ONLINE WORSHIP-

To view, visit [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

5:45pm Youth (GR 6-12) Sunday Fun Day-DIGITAL

*(Watch your inbox for details via email!)*

For regularly scheduled meetings/gatherings,  
please be in touch with your group's  
moderator, leader, coordinator, or facilitator  
to determine alternate meeting options/platforms.

## **The Covenant Windows**

Designed from Biblical stories by the Smith Glass Co. of Ft. Worth in 1966, eleven windows gird the nave, proclaiming the theme of God's covenant with God's people. The five windows at the congregation's left, moving toward the entrance, portray the covenants of the Old Testament. In counterbalance, the five to the right of the chancel depict the covenants of the New Testament. The window above the main entrance behind the balcony is the solemn Nativity scene.

A covenant is a solemn and binding agreement made by two or more individuals or groups, or to keep from doing, a specified action with understood accountability. God's compact with human beings is a commitment, a promise—absolute and certain.

The history of the people of Israel commences with the covenant of Yahweh with Israel. Abraham, at the direction of God, left Ur of the Chaldees and journeyed to a land where God promised to make his descendants a great people. The origin of Israel's religion is the covenant given to Moses at Mount Sinai and is referred to as the "old covenant."

The "new covenant" is God's sacrifice of His Son on the cross of Calvary. So it was that, in the beginning of the Third century, Tertullian began to refer to the two collections of scripture as the Old and New Testaments—by literal definition, the old and new covenants.

## **The Covenant of Creation**

The Book of Genesis relates the creation of man by the hand of God. When creation of the finite was completed, "...the Lord God commanded the human beings, saying, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'" Thus were the blessings of God and the duties of Adam directed. The creation window portrays the scope of God's acts. At its center, imposed on Calvary's Cross, the hand of God is poised in blessing. From this focal point, the eye traverses the vertical line of the Cross to the Lamb of God resting at its base, representing that moment of creation—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Cast vividly in the oblong beauty of the window, the creative process enfolds, through the sun, the moon, the stars, the fishes of the sea, the animals, birds, foliage, trees, flowers, and the human as male and female.

## The “Perfect” Can Be the Enemy of the Seven-times-Good

Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31

July 05, 2020

Ted V. Foote, Jr.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

The First Presbyterian Church sanctuary displays eleven windows, 18 feet tall, each of 6 stacked sections of artistically arranged faceted glass, illustrating covenant themes in the Bible. They are a 1966 creation of the Smith Glass Studio of Fort Worth. For eleven Sundays, we will explore their Biblical themes one at a time. While our mostly patriotic themed worship service thanking God for this democracy was last Sunday, since today is July 5, we'll also touch on an interpretation or two of U.S. history.

Window #1, on the sanctuary's southwest side, is the “Creation” window: stars, moon, and sun above; Adam and Eve, a snake in the shrubbery, doves, a lamb at the bottom – and not simply any lamb – the Lamb of God at the foot of a slender cross; and in the center of the window and center of the slender cross is the hand of God, fingers up, in a blessing pose.

Sometime around 1974, an African-American friend and I were in a conversation. He asked me, “Foote, do you ever think about how so many illustrations of the first chapters of Genesis portray Adam and Eve as White folks?” I said, “Now that you mention it, I guess that's so. Since many anthropologists believe the first humans likely lived in Africa, do you think Adam and Eve should be illustrated as Black.” He started laughing and said, “Not at all. If they weren't white, y'all would be blaming us for ‘original sin! I'm perfectly happy for all y'all's pictures of Adam and Eve to be white!” If my friend were here to see Window #1, though, I'm sure he would say: “Look right there! God's hand of blessing is dark in color. That's what I'm talking about. White folks can claim Adam and Eve who were persuaded by the serpent. Black folks will be happy to share color with God's hand of blessing!”

There's no reason to argue over racial/ethnic origins when reading or creating artwork from Genesis chapters one, two, and three. The most important aspects in Genesis chapter 1, according to the narrator, are what God says and what God observes. Reading the chapter 1 narrative, let us be clear: It is not intended as a scientific research, analysis, and findings report. It is a narrative describing religious-and-life-meaning-and-purpose. Here all creation exists because God exists and because God speaks, nine times in the 31 verses of chapter 1. God speaks, and something of creation develops and materializes. And here all creation has value, yes, because God spoke and created, but, additionally, because God observed and made a judgment, seven times, 6 times during the six days described as the process of creation, “good; good; good; good; good; good;” then, at the end, the overall assessment: “very good.”

In 1991, three of our family, with a fourth “on the way,” lived in East Texas. On the evening of July 3, about 8:00 p.m., a seven-months pregnant Joanie and I loaded up two adult lawn chairs and 4 year old Kendall's smaller lawn chair (we also loaded up Kendall) and drove across town to Henderson High School's parking lot on the east side of the Tyler highway in order to watch the annual municipally sponsored fireworks display in the city park, which was on the west side of the Tyler highway. When the last spectacular sky-high red, white, and blue Roman candle-shot boomed and scattered into wisps of gray smoke against the early night sky, the four-year old rose from his miniature chair, turned to us and said, “Ok. Is that all we do – just go ooooo and aaaah at the fireworks before we go home?” A four year old was correct about a Fourth of July fireworks display; and the same can be said about an 18 foot tall faceted glass window in a church building illustrating the Creation story of Genesis 1. “Ok. Is that all we do – go ooooo and aaaah at the attractive window before we go home?” When we stop and think – and it may take a child, a teen, or an adult many years younger than I am or you are to gain and re-focus our attention – how this nation and this world are more important than any holiday fireworks display; and God's world and cosmos – person-by-person, community-by-community, body-of-water-by-body-of-water, even cosmic dust particle by cosmic dust particle – need far more from us than simply “going ooooo and aaaah” at a faceted glass window, mountain range, canyon, river, or ocean, and heading home.

Seven times in Genesis 1 God observes “how good Creation is.” This includes the environment, the creatures, the people. It is not enough for us ever to “go ooooo and aaaah” when admiring certain inspiring

aspects of environment, creatures, or people. But this morning, let's together focus on the people of God's world, which, in addition to environment and creatures, God has observed and declared "good," and, as a whole, with the creation and the creatures, God has declared people "very good." Moreover, related to all of this, the Biblical narrative says God is "all in," totally invested – from love. Let's also remember together, though, as we focus on God's people, the Italian or French proverb, "The perfect can be the enemy of the good." People have said, "The Garden of Eden was perfect before human sin." People can say it, but it's more than Genesis 1 claims. God's observation is that all Creation – environment, creatures, people – is "good" and, overall, is "very good." If you or I or anyone makes a claim for a standard of "perfect this" or "perfect that," we have overlooked God's "good and very good." We have set ourselves up for disappointment and even depression. We do not need "perfect" when we have God's "good and very good," which we absolutely mess up enough.

Since this is Fourth of July weekend, let's momentarily consider how it has been said that this nation's spread from the shores of the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific represents "Manifest Destiny," or God's specific plan for U.S.A. exceptionalism and superiority. Some may argue this, but there are several problems in notions and rationales of U.S. exceptionalism, superiority, and manifest destiny. God's "good and very good" is "in all," all the earth, all the universe, through various cultures and time periods. Some also point out the problem in U.S. history with race, beginning with two primary efforts: (1) the dislocation of Native Americans to make room for European settlers and (2) the relocation of African-Americans as slaves. I cannot reverse those problems. Neither can you. Yet we can always take new steps for positive relationships in the new days God gives us amid this imperfect world. Racial differences and conflicts are part of the very sad and imperfect world in which we live, yet there's hope "here and there" because we live amid what God once called "good and very good," amid that with which God is still "all in" – still totally invested from love.

How do we know? Well, we see moments. Mr. Oliver Jones was a career educator in Henderson, Texas. He introduced himself to me in 1983 when I moved there, and called or came by my office at First Presbyterian Church almost weekly. He was a veteran of the pre-1971 dual segregated school districts, and became part of the integrated system when the single district was formed. In January of 1989, Mr. Jones invited me to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day commemoration at the American Legion building. I took young 19 month old Kendall with me. We were the only two white folks in a crowd of about 150 people. We sat in the middle of the left side back pew. A young woman who was African-American sat to our right with her daughter, who was maybe two years old. When the attendees were asked to stand and sing "We Shall Overcome," and everyone in front of them reached to hold hands, the little girl – standing on the pew – looked at Kendall – standing on the pew. He looked at her, and they simultaneously moved – covering the three feet between them – to hold hands, her left in his right. He reached his left hand for my right. The daughter reached her right hand for her mother's left. Don't you see? In this imperfect world, Mr. Oliver Jones leaned on me weekly, saying our work on race-reconciliation and community-building is never done. Toddler Kendall and his neighbor in the pew that evening were showing our work on race-reconciliation and community-building is never done. And it's never too soon to start! So 2 ½ years later, when 4 year-old Kendall says, "Do we just ooooo and aaaah and then go home?" it's implied that there's far more important community-building to be done than "fireworks only." And, as First Presbyterian church, God help us to proclaim and model how much more there is always to being God's people in a good-and-very-good creation than simply oooooing and aaaahing at a beautiful window, and going home until we next return.

We don't have a perfect world. Never did. Don't see it on the horizon either. But we have a world God observes is both "good and very good." Friends, I presume God knows what God is declaring and observing, don't you? We've got to do more all the time than simply "go home" until next year or next week. We are given and called to a "good and very good" world for serving toward race-reconciling and community-building in innumerable ways. We may ooooo and aaaah at times; but we can't "just go home" without resuming such "good and very good" and difficult shared work, both tomorrow and every day after that. – All honor and praise be to God.