



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

July 19, 2020
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas
Link to worship videos available at: www.fpcbryan.org

WELCOME

We welcome you to worship today.

We remember the words from Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapter 8:

"Nothing can ever separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Amazing Grace

arr. Melody Bober

HYMN NO. 475

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

NETTLETON

**Come, thou Fount of every blessing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unchanging love!**

**Here I raise my Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.**

**O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.**

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

Let us pray . . . When you have encountered us, O God, frequently we consider the encounter as a personal blessing somehow to our credit, rather than the encounter being your undeserved claim upon us for serving you near and far. Hear us now, as we come before you in a time of confession through silence.

We are divided, O Holy One, from those who are family, those who are friends, those who are associates, those we hardly know, and those we know not at all. Forgive us the sin of alienation and of how our divisions keep us from respectful reconciliation.

O Giver of mercy: Of this, there is no doubt – we have failed you, failed ourselves, and failed others. Journey with us from your love, for the sharing of life in your 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. 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

ONE HUNDREDTH

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 28: 5-6, 10-19

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

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION Through All Conflicts and Challenges: Godspeed – God Prosper You, Being with You

HYMN NO. 469 (*sing two times*)

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

CHILDREN PRAYING

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.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

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

Now let us share in prayers first offered in the summer of 1942, by United States' President Franklin Roosevelt:

O God, this earth is but a small planet in the great universe. Yet, if we but choose, it can be a planet untroubled by war, untroubled by hunger or fear, undivided by senseless distinctions of race, color, or theory.

Grant us courage and foreseeing to begin this task today, so that our children and all who follow us may be proud of the human race in every place and future.

Your spirit in us has awakened. Your spirit in us has gone forth. There is so much for which we should be grateful; yet we also pray your continuing aid and help, for one and all – self, family, friends, colleagues, strangers – that from your care and steadfastness, wholeness and love would rise up within each one.

Grant us the wisdom and the vision to comprehend the greatness of the human spirit that often suffers immensely and endures courageously for a sacred goal beyond each person's own brief span.

We are – all of us – children of Earth. Grant us the simple knowledge that: if our brothers and sisters are oppressed, then we are oppressed; if they hunger, we hunger; if their freedom is taken away, our freedom is not secure. Grant us a common faith, that human beings – your people – shall know sustenance and peace, justice and righteousness, freedom and security, plus both an equal opportunity and an equal chance to do one's best, not only in our own lands, but throughout the world.

In this faith, let us march, march toward the world, which you bless and call us to share in building.

Hear us also, 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.

**In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?**

REFRAIN **God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar, we your people,
ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.**

**As we stand, a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams.** REFRAIN

**Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
may your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again.** REFRAIN

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Rescue the Perishing

arr. Cindy Berry

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Especially in this time, visit the church website, www.fpcbryan.org, for the newsletter, announcements, worship bulletins, devotionals for children and adults, updates, etc.

Like us on **Facebook** at: www.facebook.com/FPCBryan

NEW!!! on **Instagram**: 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, 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 22. This newsletter will cover news from July 30 thru August 12.

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.



A WARM WELCOME!

We are delighted to have you worship with us today.

WORSHIP NOTES

PREACHER

Rev. Emily K. Béghin

LITURGISTS

Rev. Ted Foote

Rev. Dr. George E. Klett

MUSICIANS

Michelle Lassiter, *Pianist*

David Kipp,

Director of Music Ministries

COVER ART

“The Covenant with Jacob”

One of 11 faceted windows

in sanctuary of

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

CHANCEL FLOWERS

In celebration of

Imogene & Tom Vettors

on their 59th wedding anniversary

by their children

AUDIO/VIDEO

Emily K. Béghin

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Glory to God:

The Presbyterian Hymnal

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THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JULY 19, 2020

ONLINE WORSHIP-

To view, visit www.fpcbryan.org

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

(Watch your inbox for details via email!)

MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020

TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2020

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2020

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2020

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2020

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JULY 26, 2020

ONLINE WORSHIP-

To view, visit 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 an expansive Nativity scene.

A covenant is a solemn and binding agreement made by two or more individuals or groups, to do 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 God 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 gift of His Son in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. 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 with Jacob

In the book of Genesis, Jacob, in a dream, had a vision of the heavens unfolding and the angels of God descending and ascending a ladder. God, standing above the ladder, spoke to Jacob saying, "...and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that which I have spoken to you." The window portrays Jacob awakening from his dream. At his head is the flask of oil with which he anointed the rock used as his pillow and which he declared to be an altar unto the Lord.

Through All Conflicts and Challenges: Godspeed – God Prosper You, Being with You

July 19, 2020

Ted V. Foote, Jr.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

The First Presbyterian Church sanctuary displays eleven 18-foot-tall windows, 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 are exploring their Biblical themes one at a time. Today, we are considering the third window, that of Jacob's dream at Beth-el.

Thirteen centuries before Jesus, Jacob's family included his father, his mother, his twin brother Esau, and himself. Simply described, Jacob (the younger of the two twins) and mother Rebekah were competing against father Isaac and first born twin Esau so that Jacob could equal or surpass his brother in his inheritance: One brother and one parent competing to gain the upper hand against the other brother and other parent. It is an old story – conflict in families. And the conflict is often about money, land, possessions, favor, beliefs, etc. Once Jacob's mother tricks his father – who is mostly blind – into blessing Jacob as a primary heir – Jacob's mother thinks it best for Jacob to leave and live for a few years on her brother's ranch many miles away. So Jacob leaves home in a hurry before slightly older brother Esau can locate him around the house.

Mr. Smith's third faceted glass window from 1966 illustrates the night on the trail headed toward his uncle's ranch many miles away when a somewhat worried Jacob lay his head upon a rock-pillow and slept and dreamed. The dream included a ladder, or staircase, or escalator between God's heaven and earth. Angels/ messengers convey wisdom and will from God as needed and as commissioned. The word from God Eternal which Jacob receives during his nervous sleep – with his head on a rock or two – is a message of promise: "Yes, you've been deceptive, Jacob. Yes, you are running from your brother's clear anger at how you have set yourself up to receive such a large portion of the family inheritance. True, your life is not perfect in ethics and honesty. Yet, I bless you as a conveyor of my blessing. I'm going with you now. I'm coming back with you later. Life for the future is built upon life today. I'm part of life with you today. I'll be part of life with you and others in the future. Live into this promise."

Before we come back to Jacob's waking up the next morning, let's come forward three thousand two hundred years or so. Rather than directly diving into the conflicts which might be present in your family or my family, or in First Presbyterian Church-Bryan, or in Brazos County, or the United States, let's overhear a conversation from 83 years ago, in a backyard, about 3 hours south of here. (As you overhear this conversation, try to listen less to the particular labels and more to the personalities and the general way they describe each other and their differences.) A 1932 graduate of Wharton High School, aspiring to act and write for the theatre, over the next five years, went to Dallas, and then to Los Angeles, and then to New York, before returning for a home visit with his parents during the summer of 1937. "The first night I was home, we sunder the Chinaberry trees in the backyard. My parents questioned me about my acting classes and teachers, my friends, and the jobs at which I worked attempting to have my income match my expenses. I offered criticism of the South's large-farm agricultural endeavors with economic interdependency on poor white and black laborers, at which point my father asked, 'I hope you're still a Democrat, Son.' 'Yes, I'm still a Democrat.' He replied, 'I tell you, Son, I could forgive you almost anything except your voting Republican.' My mother added, 'You know, we're having a terrible time. Half of our family is not speaking. It's just terrible.' 'Why is that?' I asked.

My dad chimed in: ‘Because they’re ungrateful. Half of my relatives, God help me, are Roosevelt haters. I just don’t get it, after all he’s done for the South.’ ‘Who hates FDR?’ I asked. ‘Your cousin, Thomas, who lives here in Wharton is a Dixiecrat. Have you heard how they want to take over the Democratic Party in the South. Racists they are. And my sister and her husband drove all the way here from Houston about ten days ago. He did it so he could sit in my living room and tell me he voted Republican. I asked, “Sister, did you vote Republican too?” She said, “I did.” Just smug, I tell you. Can you imagine? How, in the name of God?’ ‘Now, Honey, don’t get all worked up!’ my mother advised my dad ... Yet before my visit in Wharton ended, cousin Thomas’ mother called and invited the entire family over for dinner at her house. My mother accepted, but only under the condition that she could squeeze a promise out of my dad and me not to talk politics. Apparently, Dixiecrat cousin Thomas’ mother made him promise the same, because politics never came up at our extended family’s dinner together [“Beginnings: A Memoir,” by Horton Foote (2001), pgs.191-194]. That 21-year-old from Wharton, Texas, would live 72 more years, along the way of his journey receiving two Academy Awards and a Pulitzer Prize for his writing. Such recognition was possible, we might say, given his sensitivity to the way ordinary people are and to the way ordinary people become who they become in their varied life-journeys. In Jacob’s household three thousand three hundred years ago, twin sons were in competition for an inheritance of land, livestock, money, and pride – which built walls between them. In Wharton, Texas, in 1937, an extended family was competing for the upper hand in politics and ideological influence – the differences among which created walls between them.

Whether traveling by walking or riding, whether working or sleeping, whether under a roof and ceiling or under the canopy of the wide sky above, Jacob’s dream in the night and the Ebenezer – the rock marker he builds to commemorate the location (as illustrated in this window) – remind us that we – all of us – always belong to God who journeys with us in order to accompany and to change/ to transform and make us new – however long that takes – by God’s undeserved, unearnable love and grace which bless Jacob, and his brother Esau, and you, and me, and all others! The roadmap of each one’s journey is written in our memories and on our souls. We are engaged along each one’s journeys by conflicted feelings, conflicted relationships, conflicted consciences, and conflicted orientations. In his 2019 book, “Sailing True North: Ten Admirals and the Voyage of Character,” Admiral (Retired) James Stavridis explores the life-journeys and gifts for leadership of ten different Admirals of different time-periods and nations. He concludes with these words: “This constant process of self-examination is at the heart of improving our character, which is indeed the work of a life-time for us all. None of us is perfect, but some are farther along in the voyage of knowing themselves fearlessly and honestly and working hard to improve. That is the voyage upon which I hope you are well and truly embarked, and I wish you Godspeed ... all the days of your life” [p.287].

Godspeed. It’s a word from about 750 years ago, with roots in Middle English. It means, “May God prosper you,” not meaning, “May God make you rich monetarily;” not meaning, “May God always grant you to have the upper hand,” but rather, “May God be along your journey, among all conflicts, learnings, and transformations. May God guide and shape you from love, for love, serving among God’s people day-by-day, near at hand or at a far distance.” Godspeed: May God prosper you from love, for love, in serving among God’s people.” – All honor and praise be to God.