

The Green Hill Presbyterian Church
10:30 AM Worship – Sunday, May 24, 2026

SILENT PREPARATION: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.
– Galatians 5:22-23

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worship Assistant

Announcements....

Segue to worship – after the announcements....

Today – on our worship calendar – is Pentecost Sunday.

Our Scripture readings focus on the fulfillment of Jesus' promise:
to endue his disciples with power from on high.

Only then, would they be able to obey his command – to be his witnesses.

Now, may the music of the Prelude – and the sounding of the chimes –
help us to open our hearts and minds
to the presence of that same Holy Spirit....

PRELUDE

CHIMES

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** (*Please join responsively*)

Worship Assistant

Our Call to Worship this morning is selected verses from Psalm 104.
We invite those who wish to stand, as we join responsively....

Leader: O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, great and wide; creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

People: **There go the ships and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.**

Leader: When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit,

they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.
People: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works....I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
All: May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD.

* HYMN 129 (Blue) "Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us"

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (*Unison*)

Pastor

O God, let the sounds of praises be heard among us today, and in all the places of your dominion. We believe you are present with us – even when we cannot feel or see or hear you as we would like. We thank you for those times when you have caught our attention, and we ask for one of those times today. Shake us out of our complacency and our cherished iniquities; hold us in your steadfast love, and call forth within us an awareness of all your blessings. Stimulate among us an eagerness to live as you intend, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Worship Assistant

It is easy for us to say the words that come with Pentecost:
Spirit... Wind... Fire...

And, we claim an interest in knowing God – the Author of all creation.

But how much time have we devoted to this quest?
How open are we to your unpredictable summons, and direction?

Let us now seek God's forgiveness –
for the ways in which we have fallen short.....

Please join me in the Unison Prayer of Confession found in your bulletin,
followed by a time of our own silent confession....

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*Unison*)

Worship Assistant

O God of life and breath, your Spirit calls to us, but often we are reluctant to act. The wind of the Spirit blows and draws us ahead, yet we want to hang on to what is familiar and safe. Give us courage to yield ourselves to your Spirit, for you alone know all things good for us. Help us to

let go of that which does not nurture us, for you alone are the source of life. Remind us that, even as we struggle in our failures and disappointments, you hold us in the palm of your hand. Be with us now, Holy Spirit, in these next few moments of silence, as we each confess our own personal sins...

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Pastor

Lord, hear each of our prayers... Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor

As the Scripture tells us,

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven – and freed.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Worship Assistant

Let us ask God’s blessing on the reading and hearing of Holy Scripture:

Abiding God, who came to us in Jesus Christ,
and will not leave us orphaned:

Reclaim us now as we experience – or re-experience the Scriptures.

Call us once again to your truth, that we might renew our commitment,
and be empowered for faithful service.

Use our hands to do the work you have called us to do.

Use our caring to build community,

and use our witness to overcome ignorance of your way.

Amen.

MUSIC?

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING John 14:15-27

Worship Assistant

Our first reading comes from the Gospel according to John.

*This passage is part of Jesus' "Farewell Discourse,"
which begins at 14:1 and continues through 17:26.*

*Jesus' discourse itself immediately follows John's account of the Last Supper,
and, Peter's brash assertion that he will lay down his life for Jesus –
no matter what the future may hold!*

*And – in it – Jesus is preparing his disciples
for their role after his death and resurrection....*

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,
to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,
because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.

In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me;
because I live, you also will live.

On that day you will know that I am in my Father,
and you in me, and I in you.

They who have my commandments – and keep them – are those who love me;
and those who love me will be loved by my Father,
and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

Judas (not Iscariot) said to him,

"Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?"

Jesus answered him,

"Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them,
and we will come to them and make our home with them.

Whoever does not love me does not keep my words;
and the word that you hear is not mine,
but is from the Father who sent me.

“I have said these things to you while I am still with you.
But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name,
will teach you everything,
and remind you of all that I have said to you.

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

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

ANTHEM?

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Acts 2:1-21

Pastor

*Our second reading is Luke's account of the Day of Pentecost –
for which his followers have been patiently waiting....*

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind,
and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them,
and a tongue rested on each of them.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages,
as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem.
And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered,
because each one heard them speaking
in the native language of each.

Amazed and astonished, they asked,
"Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"

Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia,
Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,
Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene,
and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,
Cretans and Arabs –
in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,
"Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you,
and listen to what I say.

Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose,
for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:
'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

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

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Pastor

Buddy Bench.....

An **old man and his wife** are sitting in their car –
in the parking lot of a supermarket.

The **hood of their car** is up;
evidently, they are *having engine problems.*

A **young man** –
in his early twenties, with a grocery bag in his arm –
walks in the direction of the elderly couple.

The **old gentleman** *emerges from the car,*
and *takes a few steps* in the young man’s direction.

He *points to the open hood* – and asks the **young man** for *assistance.*

The **young man** *puts his grocery bag into* his expensive SUV,
turns back to the old man,
and yells at him:
“You shouldn’t even be allowed to drive a car at your age.”

And then – *with an unkind gesture* –
he *gets into* his car, and *speeds out* of the **parking lot.**

The **old gentleman** pulls out *his handkerchief,*
mops his brow, and *goes back* to his car.

Again, he *looks at the engine.*
He then goes to his wife,
and *appears to reassure her* that things will be okay.

A **stranger** approaches the **old man.**
“Looks like you’re having a problem,” he says.

The **old man** *smiles – sheepishly,* and *quietly nods* his head.

The **stranger** looks *under the hood* of the car –
but he *has no more expertise* with **automobile engines** than the **old man**.

He assures the **elderly gentleman** that he *will return*,
and – then – heads to a nearby **service station**.

He *explains the situation* to a **mechanic**,
and says *he will pay him.....*
if he would help the **elderly couple** with their car.

Then – returning with the **mechanic** –
the **stranger** *gets into a conversation* with the **old gentleman**.

The **stranger** is *wearing a ring* – signifying that *he had been* a **Marine**.

And – *coincidentally* – so had the **old man**.

He confides that he had been involved
in some of the *harshest battles* in **our nation's history** –
including Guadalcanal, and **Okinawa**.

And, *he had retired* from the **Marine Corps** *after the war*.

After the car was repaired – *and running*,
the **old gentleman** *handed a card* to the **stranger**.

Then, they *shook hands* – and *parted*.

A little while later, the **stranger** happened to *look at the card*.

The **name of the old gentleman** was on the card – *in gold leaf*.

And – *under his name* – was an inscription:
Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

It was *only then* that the former **Marine** realized
that he had *just befriended* one of **America's true heroes**.

And so – particularly on this **Memorial Day weekend** –
we give thanks for those who were *special friends to our nation* –
through their **sacrifices**, and their **self-less service**.

This morning's reading from **John's Gospel**
was also the Gospel Reading for the **6th Sunday of Easter** –
two weeks ago.

But we will include a few additional verses, and its topic –
Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit –
makes it *especially germane* for this **Pentecost Sunday!**

And, a bit of **pedagogical repetition** is often beneficial!

In it, **John continues his account of Jesus' Farewell Discourse**,
as **Jesus is preparing his disciples for his impending absence**.

And – in it – **Jesus says**,
“And I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another advocate,
to be with you forever.”

This – the **New Revised Standard Version's** translation –
is *“another advocate”* –
picture someone who *stands beside you* in a **court of law**.

The original **Greek** is *allon parakleton*.

The **King James Version** translates this phrase as *“another comforter.”*

The old **Revised Standard Version** translates it as *“another counselor.”*

The new **Common English Bible** translates the phrase as *“another companion.”*

And, the **Message** reads the **Father** will send *“another friend.”*

I like *that – friend alliterates* – and *that helps* with a **sermon title!**

But you and I – *not* being **Greek scholars** – can *take our pick*.

In **English**, the phrase literally means “*one who is called alongside to help.*”

The **elderly couple**, sitting in that *broken down car* –
who were aided by that former **Marine** –
needed someone to *come alongside them*,
and *assist them* in their **helpless situation**.

And – indeed –
any of us might find ourselves in that situation,
sooner or later.

A **man** – who *undergone open-heart surgery* –
told a friend about **his experience**.

He said,
“The day before surgery, a nurse came into my room to visit.
She took hold of my hand,
and told me to feel it, and hold it.”

“Now,” she said,
“during the surgery tomorrow you will be disconnected from your heart,
and you will be kept alive only by virtue of certain machines.

“When your heart is finally restored,
and the operation is over – and you are recovering –
you will eventually awaken in a special recovery room.

“You will be immobile for as long as six hours.
You may be unable to move, or speak,
or even to open your eyes,
but you will be perfectly conscious.

“You will hear, and you will know,
everything that is going on around you.

“During those six hours,
I will be at your side and I will hold your hand –
exactly as I am doing now.

“I will stay with you until you are fully recovered.
Although you may feel absolutely helpless,
when you feel my hand,
you will know that I will not leave you.”

“It happened exactly as the nurse told me,” the man continued.
“I awoke – and could do nothing.

“But I could *feel the nurse’s hand* in my hand – for hours.
And that made all the difference!”

It certainly does make a difference,
when *someone comes alongside us* when we are in need.

And – for **Christians** – *that* is the work of the **Holy Spirit**.

In some instances, the **Holy Spirit** comes *with power*.

At other times, the **Holy Spirit** comes *as a guide*.

But there are also times when we need a *friend*, a *counselor*, or a *comforter*.

Then, the **Holy Spirit** serves in *those capacities*, as well.

But *why* does **Jesus** say, “***I will give you another advocate . . .***”

John wants us to understand that the *same Spirit* – that was in **Christ** –
is also the **Spirit** that *will be with us* in our time of need.

And, **John** is very clear that *this* is *why Christ departed* from this world –
so that his **Spirit** could be made *available* –
available to *every person in this world*
who *opens* himself – or herself – to the **Spirit’s Pesence**.

This - then -- is also an *illustration* of our experience of the Trinity:

The same **Spirit** who *created* this world --
whose *works were declared* in our verses from **Psalm 104** --
then *became flesh* in **Jesus Christ**.

And -- *today* -- we celebrate the return of the **Holy Spirit** on the **Day of Pentecost**.

I like to think about it this way.....

Jesus' teaching about the "*Grain of Wheat....*"

His **last words** -- before *giving his life....*

His Spirit is returned at Pentecost....*much more than 30, 60, or 100-fold!*

Indeed -- after **Peter's bold sermon** -- in **Acts, Chapter 2** --
three thousand people were added to the **number of believers!**

And -- so -- the **Holy Spirit** has now become *available to every believer:*
for *guidance*, for *comfort*, for *empowerment*,
for *clarity of mission*, and for *strength*,
as we seek to be **Christ's people**.

And, *all of this* is wrapped up in that **short phrase**,
"*And I will ask the Father,*
and he will give you another advocate,
to be with you forever."

In other words, it is **God Himself**
who *desires to come alongside us*.

And -- so -- the **God of all creation** can be...
our Comforter...,
our Counselor...,
our Advocate...,
our Companion...,
our Friend....

Writer **Ian Coffey** tells of the *difficulty* **Bible translators** had
in translating the **Scriptures**
into the **Karre language** – of equatorial Africa.

One word that was *particularly difficult* was **paracletos** –
the **Greek word** which we translate as **Holy Spirit**.

How could they *adequately describe* the work of the **Holy Spirit**,
in a way that **these people** –
who had *little – or no – experience* of the **Christian faith** –
could understand?

One day, the **translators** came across a **group of porters**,
who *were going off – into the bush –*
carrying bundles on their heads.

They noticed that – in the **line of porters** –
there was *always one* who *did not carry anything*.

And, *they assumed* that he was the **boss** –
there to make sure that *the others did their work*.

They discovered – however – that he *was not* the **boss**.

Rather, he had a **special job**:
He was there *in case anyone else collapsed* with **exhaustion**.

This man – then – would *come*, and *pick up* a **fallen man's load**,
and *carry it* for him.

And – in the **Karre language** –
this man was known as *“the one who falls down beside us.”*

The **translators** – then – had the *word they needed*
to convey how the **Holy Spirit** works in the **life of a Christian**.

The **Holy Spirit** is the *one who falls down beside us* –
the very **Spirit of God**,
the **breath of God**,
the **mind of God**,
invading the life of the believer.

The **Holy Spirit** is the one who
gives us power to *discern right from wrong*,
helps us to *resist temptation*,
assures us of forgiveness – when we fail,
and gives us the *grace that assures us*
of acceptance by our heavenly **Father**.

And this teaching – then – is *reinforced*,
as **Jesus** *continues speaking* about the **Holy Spirit**:

“This is the **Spirit of Truth**,
whom the world *cannot receive*,
because it neither sees him nor knows him.

“*But you know him,*
because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

The **Holy Spirit** – then – *comes alongside us*, in our time of need.

And we – *therefore* – are *called to come alongside others*.

Many of us know the story of Jackie Robinson –
the first **African-American** to play **major league baseball**.

Perhaps you even saw the **movie** – based on his life.

Facing **jeering crowds** – at every **stadium** –
Robinson was *held to a higher standard*
than the **white players** of his time.

Yet – nevertheless – *he maintained his poise* in a magnificent way.

One day – while *playing in his home stadium* in **Brooklyn** –
he *committed an error* at **second base**.

The **crowd** – then – *began to ridicule him*.

Robinson *stood there* – in his position – humiliated, *while the fans jeered*.

But – then – *something unexpected* happened:

Shortstop Pee Wee Reese came over,
and *stood next to Robinson*.

He *put his arm* around **Jackie**, and *stood with him* – facing the crowd.

Robinson was *no longer alone* – and the *fans grew quiet*.

Later, **Robinson** said that **Pee Wee's act of solidarity** –
the *quiet placing of his arm* around **Robinson's shoulder** –
saved his career,
and gave *him the strength to go on*.

That's what it means to be a **friend**.

And, that's *also what it means* to be a **follower of Jesus**.

As disciples, we are *called to come alongside people* –
people that we *may not even know*.

You may have heard a **phrase** that was familiar to **another generation**:
"Dr. Livingstone, I presume..."

The **phrase** comes from an **expedition**
that **H. M. Stanley** took to **Africa** – in **1871**.

Stanley went to *search for* – and *report on the work of* –
the *famous missionary*, **Dr. David Livingstone**.

(Livingstone was an *explorer* –
as well as a *medical missionary* –
with the **London Missionary Society**.

And, he was a *towering figure* in the **19th century**.)

Stanley – then – spent several months in **Livingstone's** company,
carefully observing the man – and his work.

During their acquaintance,
Livingstone *never spoke* to **Stanley** *about spiritual matters*.

But – as it turned out –
Livingstone's *loving and patient compassion* for the **African people**
was *beyond Stanley's* comprehension.

He *just could not understand* how this **missionary**
could have such *love for* – and *patience with* –
the **uneducated people** among whom he had *so long* ministered.

Livingstone *literally spent himself* – *in untiring service* –
to those *whom he had no reason to love* –
except for **Christ's sake**.

And – as **Stanley** later wrote, in his journal –
*“When I saw that unwearied patience, that unflagging zeal,
and those [now] enlightened sons of Africa,
I became a Christian at his side,
though he never spoke to me one word.”*

That – friends – is true friendship:
To *live in such a way* that we come along side others,
and that *they catch faith* in **Jesus Christ** from us.

And, we may not even have to *speak a word*.

Indeed – as it has been aptly said –
“Christianity is more readily caught than taught!”

In the words which begin our Worship Bulletin,
Green Hill's final – congregational – objective
is to *share the good news of Jesus Christ.*

And – *one great way to do it – is this: Make a friend.... Be a friend....
Bring a friend to Christ....*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Amen.

* **HYMN 316 (Blue)** "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)**

Pastor

Excerpts from A Brief Statement of Faith

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and
love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of
Christ, the Church. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to
serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for
God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

**With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in
death can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

OFFERING

Worship Assistant

INVITATION

Our spiritual ancestors brought sacrifices as offerings to God.

We are invited to join them –

in bringing our best, to proclaim God's rule over all things.

God enables our labors,

and blesses them with fruitfulness.

And – in response – we gladly bring our tithes and offerings,

to invest in the kingdom of God in our own time and place.

Our morning offering will now be received....

OFFERTORY

*** DOXOLOGY**

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*Unison*)**

Great God of all people, may all that we give today be used to express your love among us and beyond us. We are thankful for your gift to us in Christ Jesus, who was so committed to sharing your love that he risked rejection and death. We are grateful that – even though his suffering resulted in death in the flesh – you made him alive in the spirit. Even so, may Christ live today in us – in our caring, in our giving, in our speaking, and in our doing. With our gifts, we rededicate ourselves to your service. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Pastor

Words of Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God.

Your Spirit hovered over the waters, and brought forth all creation.

You breathed into us the breath of life,

and set us on the earth to praise and serve you.

When we lost our way, you called us back,

then sent your own Son to save us.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels

and with all the faithful of every time and place,

who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory! Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

We thank you for Jesus, our Savior and Lord.
By your Spirit you named him beloved,
 and empowered him to serve the poor,
 proclaim freedom from sin's bondage,
 and befriend the friendless and the outcast.
When he breathed his last upon a cross, you raised him from the tomb,
 breaking the power of death and opening the way to eternal life.
Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts,
 we take this bread and this cup from the gifts you have given us,
 and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ.
Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving
 as a living and holy offering of ourselves,
 that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.
Christ is the bread of life:

**When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the saving death of
our risen Lord until he comes in glory.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us,
 and upon these your gifts of bread and the cup,
 and by the power of that same Holy Spirit,
 may they be for us a Communion in the body
 and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ.
Unite us with Christ and with all who trust in him,
 that we may be one in ministry in every place,
And, as this bread is Christ's body for us,
 send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.
Set our hearts aflame with a love for the truth,
 and the desire to do your will.
Make our witness to Christ burn brightly,
 and keep us faithful until Christ comes in final victory,
 and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm.
Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God,
 with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior has taught us, we are bold to sing....

HYMN 440 (Red)

"The Lord's Prayer"

Words of Institution

Distribution of the Elements

Prayer after Communion (*Unison*)

Living Christ, as you open the scriptures to us, you make yourself known in the breaking of the bread. Let us now go forth from this place, fed at your table and filled by the Spirit, to walk with you all the days of our lives, and proclaim the glory of your resurrection to all the world. Amen.

* **HYMN 564 (Blue)** “O Beautiful for Spacious Skies”

* **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Pastor

Remember, our Lord, Jesus Christ, said this:

“You are my *friends* – if you do what I command you.

...I have called you *friends*,
because I have made known to you everything
that I have heard from my Father.”

As we go forth this week,
may we be *faithful facets* of the **friendship of Christ** –
as “*another advocate*” – the **Holy Spirit** --
leads us – and enables us.

Let us receive the Lord’s benediction.....

* **BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

God Be with You...

POSTLUDE