

# NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

August 2, 2020  
10:45 a.m.

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

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE

WELCOME

We welcome you to worship today.

We remember the words from the New Testament letter named Second Corinthians, in chapter 4: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that we may remember how the extraordinary power in God's vulnerable love comes from God, and does not come from us."

HYMN NO. 41

O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!

LYONS

**O worship the King, all glorious above!**

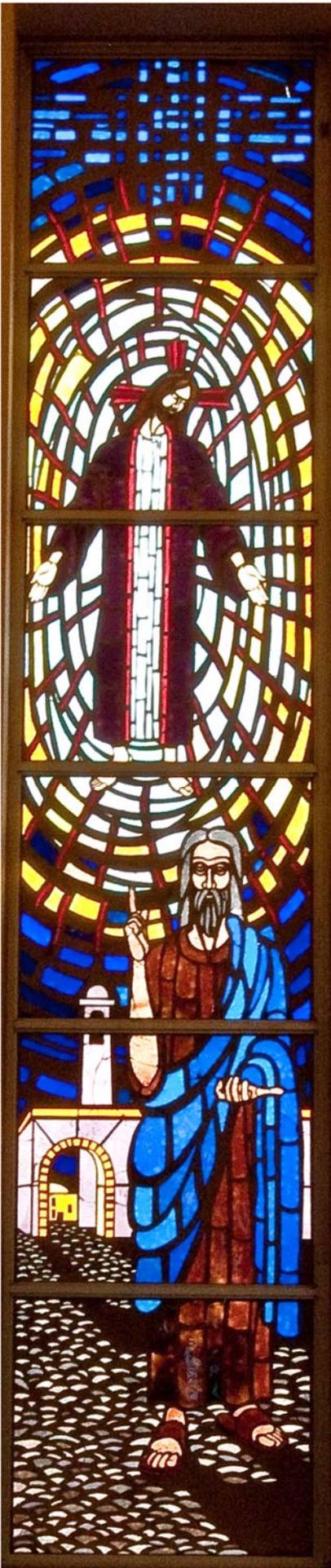
**O gratefully sing God's power and God's love:  
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,  
pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.**

**O tell of God's might; O sing of God's grace,  
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space,  
whose chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form;  
and bright is God's path on the wings of the storm.**

**The earth with its store of wonders untold,  
Almighty, your power has founded of old;  
established it fast by a changeless decree,  
and round it has cast, like a mantle, the sea.**

**Your bountiful care what tongue can recite?  
it breathes in the air; it shines in the light;  
it streams from the hills; it descends to the plain,  
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.**

**Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,  
in you do we trust, nor find you to fail;  
your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,  
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.**



## PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

Let us pray ... Blessed One, you understand Spanish and Mandarin, French and Arabic, Slavic and English. You have been present in faith communities, business consortiums, governmental deliberations, and tribal councils. Look with wisdom and understanding related to our many needs. As we approach you confessing our wanderings and sin, hear our prayers in these moments of silence.

O most loving, passionate, and compassionate One, you invite us to confess how we live beyond the light and scope of your desires for us. We neglect to recognize and take responsibility for ignoring your call to honor and respect all others. Forgive us every misuse of the treasures you bestow, plant, and grow among us. By your grace, help us, heal us, and make our lives new with all others, so that – day by day – we faithfully serve you 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

Jeremiah 31:27-82,31-34,38,40

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

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

God Writing a Covenant of Love for Transformed Life among God's People

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

Almighty, inspiring, and awesome God, we come to you with hearts open and eager to receive your love and direction for our lives. Your living Word and everlasting presence move and shape us continually to serve in ways reflective of your will and grow into our best selves. We pray that in this chaotic and overwhelming society, when stress builds upon stress and the end of these times seems distant, we can remember to focus our attentions to the callings you extend to each of us that we may love all people, seek Christ in all people and creatures, care for your creation and for one another, and serve you with the hearts of servant people. In darkness, O God, may we be children of light.

May we seek to understand yet live as well into your great mystery. May we look so that we may witness, speak so we may engage with meaning, listen so we may hear you, and discern with wisdom the ways which we must go. Lord, often we may be tempted to fall back on what is easy and what seems familiar or sturdy to us when there may be a better way, though that way may be on a winding path. Wherever Jesus may trod, Lord, help us that our feet will not tire of following His way.

May we place aside our own desires that yours may be a priority to us. All biases, habits, practices, and selfish concerns that would blur our senses to you, may we cast them away and be transformed into something new. May we, as your people, know what it is to set our sights on Christ, the true redeemer, sustainer, peace maker, society shaker, and messiah that we may walk as living examples of radical love, kindness, truth, and compassion—with each person receiving measures of your healing as each has need.

God, make us a transformation peoples and help us that we may grow beyond our imagining. We pray all this in the name of your Son who taught us to pray to you saying,

**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.**

**Standing on the promises of Christ my king, through eternal ages let his praises ring;  
glory in the highest, I will shout and sing, standing on the promises of God.**

REFRAIN **Standing (standing on the promises), standing (standing on the promises),  
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
Standing (standing on the promises), standing (standing on the promises),  
I'm standing on the promises of God.**

**Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living Word of God I shall prevail, standing on the promises of God.** REFRAIN

**Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord, bound to him eternally by love's strong cord,  
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword, standing on the promises of God.** REFRAIN

**Standing on the promises I cannot fall, listening every moment to the Spirit's call,  
Resting in my Savior as my all in all, standing on the promises of God.** REFRAIN

## DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

AZMON

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Especially in this time, visit the church website, [www.fpcbryan.org](http://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](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 350 more 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, August 5. This newsletter will cover news from August 13-26.

**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.*

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## 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*

### COVER ART

“The Promise of a New Covenant  
Given to Jeremiah”

One of 11 faceted windows  
in sanctuary of

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

### CHANCEL FLOWERS

In loving memory of  
my father, Otto Krehbiel,  
by Kathrine MacNeil

### AUDIO/VIDEO

Emily K. Béghin

### COPYRIGHT LICENSES

Select hymns from

*Glory to God:*

*The Presbyterian Hymnal*

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## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, AUGUST 2, 2020

### ONLINE WORSHIP-

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2020

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2020

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2020

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2020

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2020

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, AUGUST 9, 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.



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Find “First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas” on FACEBOOK

## **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 Promise of a New Covenant Given to Jeremiah**

Outside the walls of Jerusalem after defeat and devastation from Babylon's armies, prophet Jeremiah stands and proclaims the new covenant soon to come from God. "Behold," he cries, "the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke ... I will put my law within them ... they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest ... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." He continues, "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the city shall be rebuilt for the Lord from the tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate." This illustration of Jeremiah reflects the yet-to-be-realized promise of God which, over time, will be experienced in relation to Jesus Christ—in this Smith Studios window—who is portrayed as the essence of Jeremiah's dream/vision.

## God Writing a Covenant of Love for Transformed Life among God's People

Jeremiah 31:27-28, 31-34, 38-41

August 02, 2020

Ted V. Foote, Jr.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

I've now looked at the "Jeremiah and New Covenant of God's Love" window for 13 years. I have been acquainted with Jeremiah, chapter 31, verses 31 through 34 for decades, but because Jesus is not mentioned as being part of Jeremiah's vision, I've wondered why the Smith Glass Studio artist for this window included Jesus in the vision as illustrated. Yes, I know that Jesus is understood by Christians generally to be the embodiment and fulfillment of God's "new life covenant" 470 years after Jeremiah; but Jeremiah – according to the Bible verses we have – had no image of a person in his vision, much less the future person of Jesus. For 13 years of looking at this window, I've continually thought that the artist added more to the window than chapter 31 of Jeremiah indicates. I now realize, though, that – while Jesus is not mentioned in these verses – the artist has pushed me to a broader understanding which is truly helpful. Here's what this window has led me to consider.

In 1972, Major League Baseball mainstay Yogi Berra received two high honors: (1) The New York Yankees recognized his career contributions by "retiring" his jersey number; and (2) Mr. Berra was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. At the time his number was retired, the then Mayor of New York City, the Honorable John Lindsay, was awarding Yogi the "key to the City." It was a hot, muggy day. Yogi was scheduled to offer some remarks after the presentation. Apparently he either seemed relaxed, or Mary Lindsay was hoping to reassure him. The First Lady of New York City leaned over and said to him, "You sure seem cool about this." Yogi replied, "You don't look so hot yourself." Of course, Mr. Berra meant literally that Mary Lindsay did not look hot because she in fact looked cool! It's just that usually when that phrase is spoken, the speaker intends to convey "not looking so hot" means "looking sick" or "less than vibrant and full of energy." For thirteen years, I've thought Jeremiah did not "look so hot himself" in this faceted glass window. Nor does he look "cool." For that matter, neither does Jesus "look so hot" as the fulfillment of God's "written-upon-the-heart-covenant." To me, they both look serious and possibly real tired.

Jeremiah was never known to be a comedian. He was serious; and he was tired. Jeremiah's role as God's prophet in Jerusalem of Judah included political aspects of citizenship. God had called him to speak again and again before the King and the Court-political-and-religious-officials to say that faithfulness to God is more than agreeing with a government policy – like rebelling against the Babylonians. The King in Jerusalem told Jeremiah to "shut up" and ordered him arrested. When the Babylonians indeed conquered the city and took the King into exile with other community leaders, the Babylonians placed Jeremiah under house arrest in wasted Jerusalem. Given this, we understand how, when receiving a vision of God's unwavering promise, Jeremiah still looks exhausted.

The vision indicates a time will evolve when the teaching from God is written upon the heart of God's people, individually and community-wide. This does not mean that religious sentimentality and spiritualism will eclipse or over-ride other aspects of human identity. In the ancient Hebrew culture, the heart is the center of both feeling and thought, emotion and intellect. In this vision, the power of God's care for people is promised – that this will become instinctual, intuitive, natural and learned in every relationship. God pledges to be at work, purposing growth within people and communities so that we people react, behave, relate, think, and respond with care and deep respect among one another. In a world full of varied and widespread troubles, Jeremiah proclaims how God's care for people shall become normative. From God's unending efforts, people will grow into life-being-made-new. According to God's word, this life-transforming promise works through the ages.

Please know: This is not transactional. It is transformational. What's the difference? To return for a moment to Major League Baseball, the great pitcher of the early years of the twentieth century,

Christy Mathewson (1880-1925), met and courted Jane Stoughton, who consented to marry him. The transaction/ the deal they made was that Christy Matheson would change from being a Baptist to become a Presbyterian, since Jane was a Presbyterian. Jane, then, would change from being a Democrat to being a Republican, since Christy was a Republican. That's a transaction. If you will do this ... then I will do that. This covenant from God to Jeremiah to be communicated to God's people in exile is what God says that God will be working on for however long it takes God, regardless of how slow and resistant to changing and evolving God's people prove to be. God will create the change God intends. That's not transactional. It's transformational. It's not doctrinal or political. It's life-changing and relationship-altering. In fact, it may not be Christian to the exclusion of all others.

Yes, Jesus is included in this vision, as some people 475 or 500 years after Jeremiah will come to know Jesus; but until Jesus, and through the life of Jesus, and beyond Jesus, God seems to declare that what is a reflection of God's transformative power through Jeremiah's prophetic vision and through Jesus' influential life affects and transforms individuals and communities one person at a time, beyond doctrine and politics, beyond theology and ideology. Now, once your life or my life is in the process of being changed/ is in the process of being transformed, our political perspectives, our ideological perspectives, our ways of relating may well change; but the process is more complex than any single factor. Remember: for the Hebrews, the heart is the center of both emotion and intellect, of feeling and of processing thought. Here's an example beyond baseball, and beyond Christianity exclusively. "Driving Miss Daisy," written by Alfred Uhry, premiered on stage in 1986, and then on the movie screen in 1989. It's the story of a 40 year old Caucasian, Jewish adult-son in Atlanta, who, in 1948, hires a 60 year old African-American man to be employed as the chauffeur and helper for his 72 year old Jewish widowed mother. She is not pleased with this proposition, but over the ensuing 25 years, she moves beyond defensive pride, worrisome fear, and racial prejudice, because Hoke Coleburn embodies faithfulness and patience with her; yet Hoke never backs down when Miss Daisy's pride, fear, and prejudice raise up. In the final scene, when 85 year old Hoke is visiting 97 year old Miss Daisy in the assisted living center where she has come to reside, it's Thanksgiving. At her table, the two visit. She asks: "How are you?" He replies, "Doin' the bes' I can." She says, "Me too." Hoke replies, "Well, thass all there is to it, then." He notices she has not tasted her pumpkin pie. He gives her the fork. Her hand trembles. He says, "Lemme hep you wid this," gently takes the fork, cuts her a small piece of pie, places it in her mouth, then a second piece. The lights go down as music softly plays. Don't we realize that Miss Daisy's transformation has been occurring across the past 25 years? And don't we realize this is also God's intention for us? You are Miss Daisy, and I am: Being changed across the years through God's relentless transformational love.

This covenant from God, which Jeremiah's vision called a "new covenant," is not transactional, but transformational. It associates with Jesus embodying God's love, a love rejected by Empire and religious authorities. Jesus – like Jeremiah – is arrested and taken into custody: What Congressman John Lewis described as "called and getting into 'good trouble.'" So, in the window, Jesus – portrayed as the essence of Jeremiah's vision – is no more smiling than real-life exhausted Jeremiah. Yet, in the vision, Jesus' hands are extended as open and inviting, and Jeremiah's right hand points up to the Jesus of God's future. Yet notice how, with his left hand, Jeremiah motions to people then and now, encouraging a continual moving forward in the love of God coming to life from God writing upon each person's inner self and writing upon the heart of communities all around. Why? So God can turn us in the directions God desires, whatever our background or identified community. Whether we look or feel "rather cool" or "not so hot," God is growing within us courage for needed change and for transformational respect by writing a covenant of love on the inside, for living with all others on the outside – all others who are God's. – All honor and praise be to God.