

A Service of Justice, Hope, and Faithfulness
of the Presbytery of Santa Fe
at First Presbyterian Church
Santa Fe, New Mexico
October 14, 2026
6:00 p.m.



WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Andrew Black

PRELUDE

Hózhó (balance in Navajo)
Linda Raney, organist

– Conner Chee

CALL TO WORSHIP

Ashley Birk

Leader: Sisters, brothers, siblings in faith, today we gather together, but we are not enamored with who is worthy.

People: **We are concerned about who is missing.**

Leader: Friends, colleagues, disciples, today we gather, but we do not echo the orders of the empire or conform to the way of the world.

People: **We proclaim God’s message that is more powerful than the directives they draft.**

Leader: As we assemble with one another, our shared humanity creates a miracle of undoing the darkness with kindness and care.

People: **We worship together to build the framework of the new world that God designs.**

Leader: So we gather here as a community of faith, made of breath and hope and the belief that love can still reshape the world.

People: **Through our worship, we embody the truth that faith is not fragile, the future is not lost, and the nation is not beyond the reach of grace.**

Leader: Let us join in the hymns and harmonies that call for justice to roll down like the waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream..

People: **United with believers of all traditions, we demonstrate that our devotion can defeat despair, our faith can triumph over fear, and our light can overpower the darkness.**

Leader: Together our footsteps comprise the choreography that forge a new way in the world.

People: **As we worship, may our faith inspire us to articulate the truth when silence would be safer, and to embrace one another in a circle of solidarity.**

*HYMN

O for a World

Glory to God, #372

PALINDROME PRAYER (AND SUNG RESPONSE)

Ashley Birk

our country and our democracy are in the process of disintegrating
and we cannot believe, O Lord, that
we still have the ability to change our direction
for we live in a world of our own making where
money and power
are more valued than
faith, hope, and love
now, for us, it is undeniable that
war, corruption, and authoritarianism are the norm, and
no longer will we say that
we are a government of the people, since
it is evident that
all the faithful are apathetic and indifferent.
and it is a laughable lie to presume that
there is hope
But as we march together in the light of God . . .

We are marching in the light of God, We are marching in the light of God.
We are marching in the light of God, We are marching in the light of God.
We are marching, (marching), We are marching, (marching)
We are marching in the light of God.
We are marching, (marching), We are marching, (marching)
We are marching in the light of God.

our faithful efforts are worthless.
we just cannot believe that
the light of truth and justice still shines among us . . . for
it is so clearly apparent that
Your vision of equality, O Lord, will never be attained, since
it is absolutely nonsensical to think that
we people of faith can actually make a difference.
our country and our world are too broken to be redeemed.
and never, not even for a single moment, never imagine that
we can shape a new future,
for we completely acknowledge, O Lord, that
the church has failed to be Your witness,
and so we will no longer listen to the lies that say
truth and love can conquer the empire.

But when we sing in the light of God . . .

We are singing in the light of God, We are singing in the light of God.
We are singing in the light of God, We are singing in the light of God.
We are singing, (singing), We are singing, (singing)
We are singing in the light of God.
We are singing, (singing), We are singing, (singing)
We are singing in the light of God.

the church has betrayed its calling.
and so we will never say that
our witness is strong enough,
that our light is bright enough, and that
Your teachings, O Lord, are true enough,
for we know in the depths of our hearts that
acquiescing to the administration's authoritarian desires will keep the peace;
we will never be convinced that
there is hope, and so
we in the church should just remain silent.
and, as a result, no longer will we say that
we are boldly and faithfully fulfilling our mission

But when we live in the light of God . . .

We are living in the light of God, We are living in the light of God.
We are living in the light of God, We are living in the light of God.
We are living, (living), We are living, (living)
We are living in the light of God.
We are living, (living), We are living, (living)
We are living in the light of God.

***PASSING THE PEACE**

Ashley Birk

Siblings in Christ, we are indeed living in the light of God, walking with a brightness that unsettles darkness, carrying light into places where hope has been missing, and revealing the path of peace that initiates newness. Therefore, as God's people united in solidarity and illumined with God's light, let us now greet one another with the peace of Christ.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Andrew Black

Almighty God, through the power of Your Holy Spirit,
surge into our hearts and minds,
and open us to the wonder of faithful choices and meaningful discipleship.
Inspire us through Your holy word,
so that Your message for us would leap from the page
and equip us for service in Your kingdom,
for we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

READING FROM THE WORD

Matthew 7:13-14

Andrew Black

¹³ (Jesus said), "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

READING FROM THE WORD

Joshua 24:14-25

Tom Ulrich

¹⁴ "Now, therefore, revere the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

¹⁶ Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, ¹⁷ for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight.

He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, ¹⁸ and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.” ²¹ And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!” ²² Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” ²³ He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” ²⁴ The people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” ²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD *Faithful Choices* Tom Ulrich

ANTHEM *Prayer of St. Francis* – Rene Clausen
Chancel Choir

REFLECTIONS ON THE WORD

***AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** Karmen Van Dyke

We believe

- **that God is revealed as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;**
- **that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;**
- **that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;**
- **that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;**
- **that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.**

— from *The Confession of Belhar*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Andrew Black and Melissa Mitchell

- Voice 1: Great God of power and sovereignty, Wonderful Counselor of governance and order, who forms and re-forms and creates and re-creates Your people, Your church, and Your world, we thank You that we rest more serenely and more securely in Your all-inclusive embrace, and we pray that we and our leaders may learn from Your example of servant leadership.
- Voice 2: Enable us who ponder old texts of Scripture to apply them to our present circumstance, so that we may reshape our hopes according to Your teachings, and bring peace and unity to our nation of divided political parties.
- Voice 1: Keep us from becoming seduced by power and privilege, but instead give us the compassion to value traditions other than our own; fill us with the mercy to engage with cultures with which we may be unfamiliar; and endow us with the humility to ask for forgiveness for old sins of prejudice or partisanship.
- Voice 2: In this world, O God, lead us to put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil and in the power of love to overcome hatred. Bless us with the vision to see a world emancipated from violence, and infuse us with the faith to fashion a new reality of renewal.
- Voice 1: At this time in our country’s history, send Your Spirit of grace to reside with us and to attend to us in our anxiety, forgiving us in our small-mindedness, engaging us in Your life-giving work, and equipping us to turn the weapons of our words into Your instruments of equity and inclusion.
- Voice 2: Call us beyond ourselves, O God, so that our fervor to share amber waves of grain would prevail over any fear that would ignite a rocket’s red glare.
- Voice 1: As we seek to make faithful choices, instill within us the patience to listen well, the wisdom to discern effectively, and the dignity that shields us from prejudice and partisanship.
- Voice 2: Where the fabric of our common life is torn, bind us together with the thread of Your love. Turn us away from our tendency to self-destructiveness, and infuse us with a vision for neighborliness.
- Voice 1: Amid our competing loyalties and ideologies, give us the courage to live out our baptismal callings as Your people, so that we may commit ourselves afresh to the common good, to the sharing of resources, and to the welcoming of the other, employing this place on our planet as a visible venue for Your way in the world.
- Voice 2: Fill us with the faith and fortitude to fulfill the expectations You have of us, so that we may use our gifts to serve Your large purposes for the world, for we ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ who taught His disciples

