

Living Out God's Call to Joy and to Justice

First Presbyterian Church, McAllen
September 27, 2026 -- A Season for Peace



Edvard Munch
The Sun

Opening Sentences

- Let us hear what the LORD will speak. God will speak peace to the faithful.
- Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Prelude

Call to Worship

from Psalm 25

Please rise in body or in spirit for the Call to Worship.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;

My God, I put my trust in you.

Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation;

in you have I trusted all the day long.

You are gracious and upright, O LORD.

All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness.

Hymn

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

GG #65

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but thou art mighty. Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more;
feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow.
Let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer, be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside.
Death of death, and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.

Prayer of the Day

Good and gracious God,
we come to be instructed in your way,
to be encouraged in Christ,
to be consoled by love,
and to share in the joy of the Spirit.
Do your work within us, God,
as we gather to worship you.
Guide us in your will
and lead us in your way.
Open our hearts and minds
that we may recognize your call.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Call to Confession

Confession for Christians is about confessing our human sin and our need for divine mercy, but it is not only that. It is also a chance for us to stand humbly before God, sharing our yearnings and our hopes; offering our commitment and recommitment to God's ways. It is a chance for us to seek God's help in bringing to flower the seeds of hope and love within us. In this season of peace, let us confess our desire to be peacemakers, using a prayer from the Corrymeela Community in Ireland.

Prayer of Confession

**God, we believe that you have called us together
to broaden our experience of you and of each other.
We believe that we have been called
to help in healing the many wounds of society
and in reconciling human to human and human to God.
Help us, as individuals or together,
to work, in love, for peace, and never to lose heart.
We commit ourselves to each other –
in joy and sorrow.
We commit ourselves to all who share our belief in reconciliation –
to support and stand by them.
We commit ourselves to the way of peace –
in thought and deed.
We commit ourselves to you –
as our guide and friend.**

A moment of silent confession

Assurance of Grace

People of God,
the Lord is loving and we are reconciled to God.
**Therefore, let us surrender ourselves
to the will of God for the glory of God.**

Act of Praise

O for a World, v. 1

GG #372

O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,
where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

Passing the Peace of Christ

The peace of our Lord be with you all. / **And also with you.**

Time with the Younger Church

Life of the Church

Prayer for Illumination

Lord, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
give us the words of life,
that we may understand your way
and follow your truth,
in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Anthem

Gospel Reading

Matthew 21:23-32



When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what

authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’” ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸ What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, do and work in the vineyard today.’” ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Word of the Lord / **Thanks be to God**

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith

from The Confession of Belhar

We believe that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ;

We believe that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells.

What is the world like when God's will is done?
Mustard seeds grow more than we can conceive;
roots thread the soil; branches reach for the sun.
This is how God moves us each to believe.

What is the world like when God's will is done?
Witness the wandering child coming home;
watch as the parent breaks into a run.
This is how God longs for us when we roam.

What is the world like when God's will is done?
No more is neighbor just ally or friend;
peace thrives in places where once there was none.
This is how God works when rivalries end.

What is the world like when God's will is done?
Ready for feasting we watch through the night,
tending our lamps till the new day's begun.
This is how God readies us for the light.

These are the stories that Jesus imparts;
filled with the Spirit who joins us as one.
Born through our voices, our hands, and our hearts,
this is a new world where God's will is done.

Prayers of the People

With one mind in Christ, and one heart in the Spirit,
let us pray to the Lord of heaven and earth.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for the church . . .
Make us faithful laborers in your vineyard,
doing your will, seeking your way,
and fulfilling the promises of our baptism.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for the earth . . .
Break open the hardness of our hearts
to feel the suffering of your creation;
make fresh water flow in desert lands.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for all nations . . .
Give our leaders the wisdom to seek you;
give our people the patience to trust you.
Keep us from quarreling, and grant us peace.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for this community . . .
Be mindful of your mercy and steadfast love:
teach your wisdom; help the humble;
redeem those who have been subjected to shame.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the name of Jesus, we pray for loved ones . . .
Encourage those who are suffering;
give consolation to those who mourn;
satisfy the desires of all who thirst for you.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Enable us, O God, by the power of your Spirit,
to live our lives in a way that is worthy of the gospel,
to the glory of the name that is above all names,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who has taught us to pray together, saying:
Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Invitation to the Offering

The works of the Lord are wondrous indeed.
Let us offer back to God
a portion of what has been given to us,
for the glory of God's name.

Offertory

Act of Dedication

O for a World, v. 2

GG #372

O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

Offertory Prayer

Merciful and gracious God,
you abound in steadfast love and faithfulness.
With gratitude, we bring our gifts to you.
Bless these gifts and bless our lives
that together we may share your mercy and grace
for the world you dearly love. Amen.

Hymn

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing, v. 1-2

GG #546

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us,
traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give and adoration for your gospel's joyful sound;
may the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, ever faithful
to your truth may we be found.

Charge and Benediction

Congregational Response

O for a World, v. 5

GG #372

O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

Postlude

Today's Worship Leaders:

Rev. Kathryn J. Escandell

Miranda Prater

John Adam Tabali

Beverly Avila

Robert Garza

Ale Pacheco-Garza

FPC Chancel Choir

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