

**Downtown Presbyterian Church**  
**Order of Worship for May 17, 2020**  
**Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Opening Voluntary**

Prelude on *Rhosymedre*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

**Welcome**

**Call to Worship**

*Come to worship, people of God, with praises on your lips.  
Even when we are feeling isolated and fearful,  
we can glorify the One who holds our hands in our loneliness.  
Come into the presence of the One who makes holy and sacred  
every place, every space.  
Even where we continue to stay safe in our homes,  
the doors of grace are flung wide open for us.  
Come and hear the stories of the One who loves you.  
In living rooms, on laptops, tablets and phones –  
We will sing our songs and tell those tales  
of the peace and of the hope which is ours.*

**Hymn**

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"  
Ryan Norris, cantor

**Gathering Prayer**

*When it does not seem to matter to many, Creator God,  
we will dare to be your people,  
to love those the world would have us reject;  
to be just in the face of every reason to be cruel;  
to be unafraid of whatever awaits us.*

*When all the odds seem stacked against us, Jesus our Savior,  
we still dare to live as your sisters and brothers,  
serving others even from the safety of our homes;  
sharing in the burdens of our neighbors;  
refusing to leave the lonely orphaned with no hope.*

*When the props are knocked out from under us by fears and worries, Faithful Spirit,  
we dare to breathe  
joy upon those caught in the net of hopeless,  
peace into all the quavering hearts around us,  
wonder for all those who look for you but do not see.*

*When we have failed to dare,  
forgive us;  
renew our faith;  
grant us courage.*

*And in our silence, hear us as we surrender to you our personal confessions,  
trading them for grace, your breath, your love.*

### **Assurance of God's Grace**

*May the peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.***

### **Announcements**

### **Prayer for Illumination**

### **Scripture**

Acts 17:22-31

*Paul stood up in the middle of the council on Mars Hill and said, "People of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. As I was walking through town and carefully observing your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: 'To an unknown God.' What you worship as unknown, I now proclaim to you. God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn't live in temples made with human hands. Nor is God served by human hands, as though he needed something, since he is the one who gives life, breath, and everything else. From one person God created every human nation to live on the whole earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands. God made the nations so they would seek him, perhaps even reach out to him and find him. In fact, God isn't far away from any of us. In God we live, move, and exist. As some of your own poets said, 'We are his offspring.'*

*"Therefore, as God's offspring, we have no need to imagine that the divine being is like a gold, silver, or stone image made by human skill and thought. God overlooks ignorance of these things in times past, but now directs everyone everywhere to change their hearts and lives. This is because God has set a day when he intends to judge the world justly by a man he has appointed. God has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."*

### **Sermon**

Rev. Mike Wilson

**Special Music**

“God of Our Life”  
 Ryan Norris, tenor

Charles Henry Purday, 1860  
 harmony, John Weaver, 1986

*God of our life, through all the circling years, we trust in thee;  
 In all the past, through all our hopes and fears, thy hand we see.  
 With each new day, when morning lifts the veil,  
 we own thy mercies, Lord, which never fail.*

*God of the past, our times are in thy hand. With us abide.  
 Lead us by faith to hope’s true promised land. Be thou our guide.  
 With thee to bless, the darkness shines as light,  
 and faith’s fair vision changes into sight.*

*God of the coming years, through paths unknown we follow thee;  
 When we are strong, Lord, leave us not alone. Our refuge be.  
 Be thou for us in life our daily bread,  
 our heart’s true home when all our years have sped.*

— Hugh Thompson Kerr, 1916, alt.

**Pastoral Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer****Hymn**

“In Christ There Is No East or West”  
 Ryan Norris, cantor

**Benediction****Closing Voluntary**

Postlude Pomposo

George Blake

Today’s Opening Voluntary is based on a 19th-Century Welch hymn tune, Rhosymedre. In 1920, Ralph Vaughn Williams (RVW) composed a chorale prelude based on the tune as the second movement of his collection, Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes. RVW also titled this piece as ‘Lovely.’ The piece is also considered a favorite among church organists. Of note, RVW’s Rhosymedre was played at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales (1997), the Royal Wedding of Prince William (2011), and the Royal Wedding of Prince Harry (2018).

Included in The Presbyterian Hymnal, 1990, Rhosymedre is set to a text written by Fred Pratt Green titled ‘The Grace of Life Is Theirs.’ Given the theme of love in our lectionary readings today, this tune and text serves as an appropriate choice for the Opening Voluntary. The second verse of Green’s text reads:

Where love is, God abides, and God shall surely bless a home where trust and care give birth to happiness. May they, O Lord, together prove the lasting joy of such a love.

The closing phrase of Green’s first and last verse states, “May we, O Lord, together prove the lasting joy of Christian love.

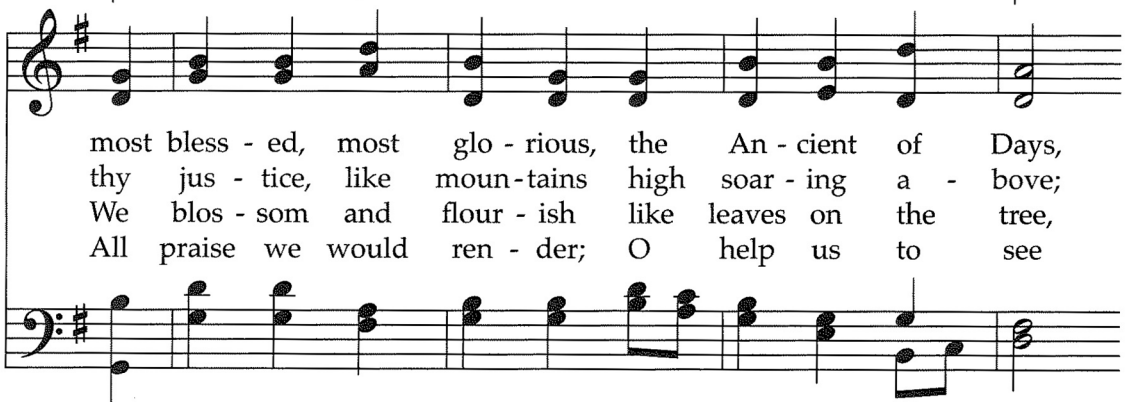
# Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise



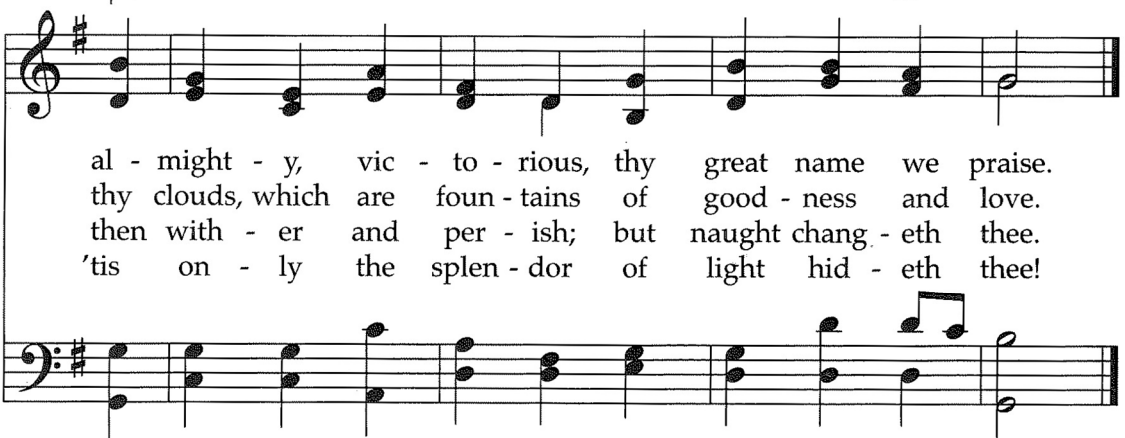
1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,  
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,  
3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small.  
4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light.



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,  
nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might:  
In all life thou liv - est, the true life of all.  
Thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight.



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,  
thy jus - tice, like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove;  
We blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,  
All praise we would ren - der; O help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.  
thy clouds, which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.  
then with - er and per - ish; but naught chang - eth thee.  
'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

The opening line of this hymn was inspired by the three divine attributes listed in 1 Timothy 1:17 (King James Version), and it continues by considering how God's life exceeds our own finite existence. The text is well set to a Welsh melody shaped by many three-note units.

# In Christ There Is No East or West

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in  
 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery - where their  
 3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what -  
 4 In Christ now meet both east and west; in

him no south or north, but one great fel - low -  
 high com - mu - nion find; his ser - vice is the  
 e'er your race may be. All chil - dren of the  
 him meet south and north. All Christ - ly souls are

ship of love through - out the whole wide earth.  
 gold - en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.  
 liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.  
 one in him through - out the whole wide earth.

This text formed a very small part of an elaborate Christian missionary pageant in the early 20th century, yet it has endured while the grander aspects of that production have faded away. It is set to a simple 19th-century tune that does not get in the way of its message.

TEXT: John Oxenham, 1908, alt.  
 MUSIC: Alexander Robert Reinagle, 1836

ST. PETER  
 CM  
 (alternate tune: MC KEE, 317)