

# Ascension Sunday

May 17, 2026

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## Gathering

PRELUDE (10:00 a.m.) “Fantasy on “Fillmore” (“And Can It Be”)  
by Jeremiah Ingalls, arr. Susan T. Nelson      Handbell Choir; Kim Lampe, Director

*During the prelude, please take a quiet moment to prepare your hearts and minds for worship*

WELCOME & LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION  
Rev. Stacey Duensing Pearce, Pastor of Worship, Care and Strategic Leadership

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## Expansion of Our Hearts

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

Let God rise up! Sing to God; lift up a song to the One who rides upon the clouds—the Holy One— be exultant before God.

**Let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy!**

Let God rise up! Ascribe power to God, full of majesty and power.

**Let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy!**

Let God rise up! Awesome is God in the sanctuary, who gives power and strength to the people.

**Let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy! Blessed be God!**

\*GATHERING SONG “**Blessed Be Your Name**” (*insert*)  
Brooke Burgin, Song Leader; Traci Bopp, Keyboard

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF GRACE

### Prayer of Confession

Christ our Savior, as you ascended, you left the work to us. You called us to keep the movement going, to witness to the ends of the earth, to pray, to heal, to glorify you through our thoughts, words, and deeds, to show the world a glimpse of the goodness you have given us.

**We have fallen short of this call. We have hidden ourselves in fear, sought our own comfort, and resigned ourselves to the status quo. Forgive us, and strengthen us to do your will, that we may be signs of your coming reign.**

### Assurance of Pardon

“Protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.” This is the prayer that Christ prayed on our behalf. This tenderness and care for us shows us who Jesus is— the one who hears our prayers, responding to our longing for forgiveness with mercy.

**Thanks be to God,  
praise be to Christ,  
glory be to the Holy Spirit.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE May the peace of Christ be with you all! **And also with you!**

*(10:00 a.m. only) Children and youth are invited to leave for their classes*

SPECIAL MUSIC “Trust and Obey” (10:00 a.m.) by Daniel Towner, arr. Michael J. Glasgow  
Handbell Choir

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## Reception of God’s Word

PREPARATION FOR READING

Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy Scriptures. **Our hearts and minds are open.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Acts 1:1-11 (NRSV-UE)

*Eileen Bundz, 8:30 Reader & Reagan Karcher, 10:00 Reader*

*1 In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach 2 until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3 After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4 While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*

*6 So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9 When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”*

This is the Word of the Lord **Thanks Be to God**

MESSAGE “A Powerful Promise”

*Rev. Dave Sippel, Pastor of Discipleship, Mission, and Outreach Leadership*

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## Transformation of Our Lives

SONG OF REFLECTION & RESPONSE #114 (*green book*)

**“Jesus, Name Above All Names”** v. 1,2

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING & OFFERTORY (10:00 a.m.)

DOXOLOGY #815 (blue hymnal)

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## Compassion For the World

\*SENDING SONG #45 (Blue hymnal) “**Crown Him with Many Crowns**” v. 1,3,4

\*BENEDICTION This time of worship has ended. **Let the service begin.**

\*POSTLUDE

*\* Indicates to please stand, if able.*



*Hearing assist technology is available during worship services. To find out how to connect your hearing aids or to borrow a hearing assist device, please see a greeter.*

## **“Blessed Be Your Name”**

*by Matt & Beth Redman*

### **Verse 1**

Blessed be Your name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name

### **Verse 2**

Blessed be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name

### **Pre-Chorus**

Ev'ry blessing You pour out I'll  
Turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in Lord  
Still I will say

### **Chorus**

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name

### **Verse 3**

Blessed be Your name  
When the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's all as it should be  
Blessed be Your name

### **Verse 4**

Blessed be Your name  
On the road marked with suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering  
Blessed be Your name

*[PRE-CHORUS]*

*[CHORUS]*

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*[PRE-CHORUS]*

*[CHORUS]*



## TODAY & THIS WEEK – MAY 17, 2026

**WELCOME TO FRC:** He is risen! This Sunday, we will see him rise yet again. It is Ascension Sunday! We will dive into an awe-inspiring reading from the book of Acts. Our risen Savior will be taken up into the clouds to sit on the throne of heaven. We have spoken of his great power over the last few weeks. This power is on full display, and we are told that we will receive power, too. The message is entitled "A Powerful Promise."

**INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP? - JOIN US TODAY:** Those interested in learning more about the church should plan to attend the membership gathering today. We will meet downstairs in the Ministry Center at 11:15 a.m. We will welcome new members during the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, May 24. Please contact Pastor Dave if you are interested in joining the church [dave@frc-pp.org](mailto:dave@frc-pp.org)

**LAST DAY TO NOMINATE FOR CONSISTORY:** This year, nominations are sought for one Deacon and two Elders, each for a three-year term. Terms ending includes Elders Mark Halliday and Kim Lampe, and Deacon Christina DiBiasi. Nominations close Sunday, May 17. Nomination forms are available at the back of each worship space and may be placed in the black collection box or dropped at the office.

**TOMORROW EVENING "CHURCHES OF WELCOME":** The "Churches of Welcome" program is an opportunity to learn more about refugees and displacement around the world. Join us on May 18<sup>th</sup> in the Jr. High Room at 6:30 p.m. It is a discipleship opportunity that may result in action steps and service opportunities. Contact Pastor Dave for more information (office phone 973-835-1144 x28 or email [dave@frc-pp.org](mailto:dave@frc-pp.org))

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE CHANGES

**NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 24 & MEMORIAL DAY SCHEDULE:** *On Sunday, May 24, we will worship together at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary (no early service).* The township parade will take place Monday, May 25, beginning at 10:00 a.m. from Maresca Lumber and ending at the grandstand in front of the church, where a special prayer will be offered.

**SUNDAY, MAY 31 - FIFTH SUNDAY SCHEDULE:** On fifth Sundays, we have one, kid-friendly worship service at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. No Sunday school will be offered, but there will be packets for kids to use in worship. A continental breakfast will be offered prior to worship beginning at 9:00 a.m. in Friendship Hall.

## THINGS TO KNOW

**"EXPANDING OUR WELCOME" - A CHURCH LISTENING PROCESS:** The FRC Consistory is inviting our whole faith family into a listening process about expanding our welcome....especially to members of the LGBTQ community. Please read more about the whole process in the most recent cover article in the Go Forth. Copies

of the Go Forth are in the back of the worship space. There are ongoing sessions you can join in. Group Listening Session on Monday, June 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Blue Room. The Bible Study dates are Tuesdays May 26 & June 9 from 7-8:30 p.m. and/or Sundays May 17, May 31 & June 14 from 12:30-2 p.m. There is also an opportunity to sign up for a personal session with consistory. To sign up for any of these options, go to the Welcome Center in Friendship Hall. You can also use this QR code to sign up online specifically for the group listening sessions.



**VBS REGISTRATION OPEN NOW - RAINFOREST FALLS AUGUST 3- 7 FROM 9 AM-NOON:** Registration for our 2026 Rainforest Falls Vacation Bible School is open for kids age 5 through 6th grade. The \$35 per child registration fee includes all our program supplies, a daily snack, a t-shirt, and music download card. Space is limited for participants and volunteers are needed. Register on the church website under Grow/Children & Youth/Spark Kidz

**FRC SUMMER SEMINARY INTERN:** Beginning May 24 and continuing this Summer, FRC will have the joy of hosting a seminary intern: Chloe Roberts from Western Theological Seminary. Her internship is completely funded by a grant from the Classis of Passaic Valley. The goal of Chloe's internship is to provide her with space to grow as an emerging ministry leader. Chloe will also be spending time at Pequannock Reformed Church (with Rev. Debbie Pierce). You will see her preaching a couple Sundays, providing pastoral care, and maybe doing some discipleship activities.

## MISSION/OUTREACH/SUPPORT

**FRC NEEDS TO REPLACE OUR CHURCH VAN:** Our vibrant FRC youth ministry relies on the FRC van for transportation to their yearly retreats, mission trips, and even local outings. Pastor Dave and a fundraising team are aiming to raise \$40,000 for a used Ford Transit 15-passenger van. You can give online on our website to the "Van Fund".

**YOUTH MINISTRY BEEFSTEAK FUNDRAISER FRIDAY, JUNE 12 TO SUPPORT OUR "VAN FUND":** Please consider coming to a wonderful night of beefsteak dinner and fellowship with your church friends. The dinner will be held at the Bloomingdale Firehouse on Hamburg Turnpike. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., Bloomingdale Fireman's Hall, 97 Hamburg Turnpike, Bloomingdale, NJ 07403. Tickets are \$65 per person. Please go online to purchase your tickets now. You can also bring a check to the office to register. See the May/June Go Forth for more details. [https://givebutter.com/2026\\_frc-van\\_beefsteak](https://givebutter.com/2026_frc-van_beefsteak)

**MAY COMMUNION OFFERING - EAGLECREST ALASKA MISSIONS:** Through community projects, day camps, cookouts, and special events, Eaglecrest brings the presence of Christ to the people they serve. Donations may be given by check, placed in the collection during

worship, or made securely online through our website under "Mission of the Month". Please make checks payable to FRC and note "May Communion" in the memo line.

**TRAVEL SIZE ITEMS NEEDED:** We continue to collect travel size hygiene items for Bessie Green. There is a box outside the office, or they may be left in the Food Pantry closet in the Friendship Hall lobby. Reminder - FRC is NOT accepting any clothing or household goods at this time. PLEASE do not leave bags of these items on the property.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

### WE ARE HIS HANDIWORK – AN ART ACTIVITY FOR KIDS

**AGES 5-13:** This art activity will help participants explore their own uniqueness through self-portraits. These acrylic paintings will be hung in the art gallery upon completion. Join us on May 30 from 10:30 a.m. – noon, upstairs in classroom 22. Please register on the website under "Grow"/ YOUTH & CHILDREN / SPARK KIDZ. Contact Janet Chardavoyne with questions [janet@frc-pp.org](mailto:janet@frc-pp.org).

**COMMUNION PREPARATION CLASS:** Kids in grade 2 and up are invited to join us for our communion class during Spark Kidz time on May 17. This class prepares kids to participate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. A First Communion celebration will be held during the 10:00 a.m. worship service on June 7.

**FUEL YOUTH GROUP:** Middle school and high school youth are invited for snacks, activities and a lesson to get growing. FUEL meets in Friendship Hall on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Friends are always welcome!

## PRAYERS & CONCERNS

### FOR THOSE WHO GRIEVE

**Brian Kaiser**, close friend of Rich & Guion Valle, passed away. Prayers for his family and friends.

The family of **Bob**, Martin's brother, who passed on May 7. Cards to Martin & Karen Williams, 55 Ramapo Rd., Pompton Plains 07444

### UPCOMING MEMORIAL SERVICES:

**Karen Mazur**, May 31 at 2 PM in the sanctuary followed by a repast in Friendship Hall

**Bart Liberti**, June 7 at 2 PM in the sanctuary followed by repast in Grace Chapel

**Debbie Priestner**, June 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.

### CONCERNS:

**Prayers for peace** in the Middle East, especially between the United States, Iran, Israel and Lebanon. Prayers of protection for US service members who are deployed.

Prayers for **Rev. Linda** serving the hungry and homeless in Lebanon who are displaced due to war. Linda is connected in mission to us through our Classis and Ponds Reformed Church. Pray for her ministry that God will supply resources in great need, and for peace and strength for her spirit.

**Pat Horner**, recovering from a procedure this past week. Cards to 4 Pearl Avenue, Pompton Plains 07444

**Ann**, friend of Eileen Bundz, has cancer and will be starting treatments next week.

**Tom Larkin**, started radiation treatments. Prayers for successful results. Cards to 3 Fairview Ave., Pequannock 07440

**Jane Young**, transferred to rehab facility this past week.

**Gloria Krueger**, recovering at home.

**Marlene**, Jo Bradford's cousin, diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. Prayers for comfort.

**William DeBell**, Susan's husband, health concerns

**Katie Wilson**, recovering from a procedure to put stents in her liver. Prayers that the liver will heal. She is also preparing for surgery on May 21 to remove her ovaries and the cyst that is attached to them. Please continue to pray for her, the doctors and a successful outcome and recovery.

**Toni**, Pat Cunningham's sister, prayers for physical & emotional healing.

### LONG TERM CONCERNS:

**Susan Breznak, Lois Wickham, Dee Patrick, Michael Angelucci** (son of Gail Trappe's friend), **Michele Brauman** (sister-in-law of Joanna Minassian & Meg Sturm), **Jamie Spillane** (college classmate of Karen & Tom Kamp), **Jennifer Carpentieri, Cindy, Anna Miller** (future daughter-in-law of Kathy & John Shea and future niece of Judy Shivy) **Joyce Gruzdis, Michael Clark** (Sharon Hollick's son-in-law), **Peggy Biondi** (friend of Amy Muller) receiving chemo, **Beverly Adams** (Jennifer Adams' mother) blood cancer, **Carol** (friend of Leeanne Leck) pancreatic cancer, **Sue Rayner**, lung cancer, **Kristen**, vision issues, **Christopher Martin** (Pat Lento's relative) myocarditis, **Steven Janowicz** (son of former members Joyce and George), **Colleen Erickson** (niece of Rose & Frank Chara), **Lorraine Nichols, Judy Napoli, Karen Milligan, Heather** (Tony's daughter-in-law), **Nancy Crefeld** (Pete's mom), **Kathryn Dontje** (Barbara Ball's daughter), **Brenda** (Barbara Ball's daughter), **Judy Lento** (Pat Lento's sister in law), **Charles Cunningham, Jim**, (Lynn Rayner's brother), **Candace** (Jane Young's sister), **Amy Griffith, Adele Ebert** (Shell's mom), **Paul** (Susan De Bell's brother), **Johanna Clark** (sister of Michael Clark)

## FINANCIALS

<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>		
	Week Ending	
	5/10/2026	5/11/2025
Sunday Collection	\$ 4,789.00	\$ 7,414.00
Electronic Giving	\$ 8,656.40	\$ 7,758.62
Total Weekly Contributions	\$ 13,445.40	\$ 15,172.62
Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)*	\$ 717,863.84	\$ 665,510.00
Weekly Goal*	\$ 13,805.07	\$ 12,798.27
Weekly Collection Surplus/Deficit	\$ (359.67)	\$ 2,374.35
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (55,772.84)	\$ (59,119.29)

### HOW TO DONATE TO FRC:

**In Person:** Drop your check at the office or place it in kiosk or the offering plate during worship.

**Give Electronically:** You can have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account and transferred directly into the church account safely and electronically. Visit our website [www.firstreformedchurch.com](http://www.firstreformedchurch.com) and choose the blue "Donate" button. You can also scan the QR code

