

Congregational Church of Westminster West

(United Church of Christ)

Ascension Sunday, May 17, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude: Fugue in G (J.S. Bach, BWV 557)

Call to Worship (Psalm 25, a Psalm of David):

One: To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

All: O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

One: Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.

All: Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

One: Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

All: Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

One: Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

All: He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way. All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

One: For your name's sake, O LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great.

All: Who are they who fear the LORD? He will teach them the way that they should choose. They will abide in prosperity, and their children shall possess the land. The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes his covenant known to them.

One: My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

All: Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me out of my distress. Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.

One: Consider how many are my foes and with what violent hatred they hate me.

All: O guard my life and deliver me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.

Hymn: "I Sing the Mighty Power of God" (PH #68)

I sing the mighty power of God, that made the mountains rise, that spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies. I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day; the moon shines full at his command, and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food; he formed the creatures with his Word and then pronounced them good. Lord, how thy wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye: if I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant or flower below, but makes thy glories known; and clouds arise, and tempests blow, by order from thy throne; while all that borrows life from thee is ever in thy care, and everywhere that I could be, thou, God, art present there.

Call to Confession

. . . All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. For the sake of our brother, Jesus the Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

. . . Hear the good news: we are forgiven!

All: Thanks to be to God.

Gloria (NCH#756, once in unison, then twice as a round)

Prayers of the People:

One: May the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

. . . This we pray in the name of your son Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Let us not fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Luke 24:44-53

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 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. 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; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 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.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 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.”

Philippians 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death--even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Hymn: “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” (PH# 195)

All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall!
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all (repeat).

Crown Him, ye martyrs of our God, who from His altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod and crown Him Lord of all (repeat).

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race, ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace and crown Him Lord of all (repeat).

Let every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball
To Him all majesty ascribe and crown Him Lord of all (repeat).

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song and crown Him Lord of all (repeat).

Sermon: “Naming Names”

Offertory: “Blessed Jesus, at Your Word”

(Zahn No. 3498b, Johann Rudolph Ahle)

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that Love has done:
Creator, Christ, and Spirit one.

Dedicatory Prayer

Hymn: “At the Name of Jesus” (PH# 197)

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, every tongue confess him King of glory now; 'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord, who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

At his voice creation sprang at once to sight, all the angel faces, all the hosts of light, thrones and dominations, stars upon their way, all the heavenly orders, in their great array.

Humbled for a season to receive a name from the lips of sinners, amongst whom he came. Faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last, brought it back victorious when from death he passed.

Bore it up triumphant with its human light, through all ranks of creatures, to the central height, to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast; filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.

In your hearts enthrone him, there let him subdue all that is not holy, all that is not true. Crown him as your captain in temptation's hour, let his will enfold you in its light and pow'r.

Benediction

Postlude: "Red-Winged Blackbird" (David Francey)

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Please join us downstairs in the community hall
for refreshments after the service.

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Musician today: Fred Gray; preacher today: Ray Huessy
Deacon: Karen; deacon tech: Lee Crocker; trustees: Guy Payne, chair

Ministers to the World: the Congregation



Sunday, May 24: Lee Crocker, preaching; music by Eric Robinson

Sunday, May 31: Adrienne Major; music by Eric Robinson