



## **First United Methodist Church of Hanford**

“The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.”



A Reconciling Congregation

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**Pastor: Rev. Pastor Pablo R. Vargas**  
**Music Director: Cavan O'Neill**

**Sunday Worship Service – 5.10.2026**  
**Lay Worship Leader- Jim Shoemaker**

**Words of Welcome & Announcements**

**Centering Time (Preparing Our Hearts & Minds for Worship)**

**Opening Prayer**

Holy One of mystery and power, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below, keeping covenant and steadfast love with all who walk before you with pure and upright hearts. Fill our lives with your glory, as you filled the temple with cloud when Solomon first brought the ark into your holy dwelling place. Give us the strength and the power to withstand the forces of evil at work in our lives and in our world. Amen.

**Responsive Call to Worship**

Family of God, on our journey of faith, We are not alone—God is with us!

**Because God is with us, we can love boldly.**

God is with us, and God joins us with one another as the Body of Christ.

**Because God draws us together, we can serve joyfully.**

Through God, we work for the flourishing of self, neighbor, and all creation.

**Because God holds us together, we can lead courageously.**

Family of God, on this journey of faith, we are not alone—God is with us!

**We come to worship God by boldly loving, joyfully serving, and courageously leading, that we may be disciples of Jesus Christ who transform the world. Amen.**

**“God of Grace and God of Glory” (UMH 577)**

**Passing the Peace of Christ (with hugs, handshakes, and fist bumps)**

**Pastoral Welcome and Prayer**

**“Still”** -Praise Team

**Reading 1: Joshua 1:5-9**

\*\* “Children are dismissed to “Godly Play” at this time\*\*

### **Scripture Reading- Ephesians 6:10-18**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power; <sup>11</sup> put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, <sup>12</sup> for our struggle is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on the evil day and, having prevailed against everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand, therefore, and belt your waist with truth and put on the breastplate of righteousness <sup>15</sup> and lace up your sandals in preparation for the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. <sup>18</sup> Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Leader: This is the Word of our Lord. People: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Sermon: “Resisting the Powers and Principalities” -Pastor Pablo R. Vargas**

Pastor’s notes:

Written to believers in **Ephesus**, a major Roman imperial city, where daily life was shaped and influenced by

- Roman military presence (visible armor = symbol of power)
- Social hierarchy (elite vs. poor, enslaved vs. free)
- Religious diversity and imperial loyalty

Paul reclaims **Roman military imagery** to describe **God’s alternative way of living**

**Truth** → integrity, honesty

**Righteousness** → justice, right relationship

**Peace** → active reconciliation

**Faith** → trust in God amid uncertainty

**Salvation** → wholeness and liberation

**Word of God** → Spirit-shaped truth (not harm)

The armor of God is not about fighting people— it is about living faithfully within systems of power, dominance, and oppression that need transformation.

Prayer of Confession:  
(Unison Prayer)

**Holy God, we come before You in humility, For we do not live as we ought. We do not love You with our whole heart and mind and strength. We do not love our neighbor as ourselves. So we pray, in all humility, That You will change our hearts and minds, That You will show us again how to love others the way You love us, That You will put power and courage in our hearts to do your will.**

(Silent prayers of confession)

Receive this goodness: Even when we wander, we are not alone. God is with us wherever we go. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

**In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Glory to God! Amen.**

### **Offertory**

#### **Offering Prayer (In Unison) and Collection**

Gracious Commander of Love, you have taught us what love looks like, and you have commanded us to live it. In a world that rewards fear and self-interest, you call us to give boldly, to serve generously, and to risk loving with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Receive these offerings as signs of our obedience and as seeds of a kingdom where welcome is wide, grace is abundant, and love never holds back. We give, not from obligation, but from the joy of being shaped by your love. In Christ's name, Amen.

#### **Closing Hymn- "Onward Christian Soldiers" UMH 575**

Benediction (Stay Afterwards for Coffee Hour)