

Our Vision:
To Be the Lantern to Leisure World

Our Mission:
Lighting a pathway into Community.
Growing disciples in God's Love.
Sending the Hope and Joy of Jesus into the World.

Leisure World Community Church
in Worship *March 19, 2023*

14000 Church Place
Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

9:50 am
(562) 431-2503

Opening Announcements — Rev. Johan Dodge

Good Morning and Welcome to Worship!

Worship is often the first place that new people come into contact with this growing community of faith. And so if you are joining us for the first time, I say to you what I say every Sunday. You are welcome here. Here is a place where all are welcome. For such is the love of God for God's Very Good Creation. And if you are enjoying this worship experience, I invite you to give to God in support of this growing faith community.

[please stand as you are able]

CALL TO WORSHIP – “Doxology”

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY – Taylor White

**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. And lead us not**

into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn: "Be Thou My Vision"

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

God our faithful Shepherd, we depend on you for everything we need: for daily food, for guidance and protection, for healing in injury and comfort in sorrow. You respond in abundant provision.

Thank you for your tender care of us.

Thank you for soothing the wounds of this life.

Thank you that in the presence of enemies, especially the last enemy of death, you are with us, as Shepherd, Host, Home.

Knowing your faithfulness in our lives O God, we bring before you the lives of others, the cares of this world, entrusting all things to your goodness and mercy.

Bring healing to those who are ill in mind, body, or spirit.

Bring release to those who are held captive by old hurts or new bonds that oppress and entangle.

Bring freedom to those unjustly accused, relief to those burdened with debt, comfort to all who suffer from abuse of any kind.

We pray for people living precariously in the midst of war.

Protect, we pray, citizens and soldiers alike, and teach us to put away our weapons, taking up instead words of peace and reconciliation.

By the power at work in Christ, break down the walls of hostility we build so that we may learn to live together graciously.

We remember those living in the midst of drought and famine.

We pray for rain to fall and crops to grow, and for generosity to overflow from our own hands and resources, until all your children receive their daily bread; until all your children have clean water to drink; until all your children have adequate shelter and medical care.

Compel us to be better stewards of creation so that our habitation is sustainable and responsible.

Loving God, help us to see the world as you see it; to see others as you see them; and to see ourselves rightly, too. Pursue us all with your goodness and faithful love until goodness and faithful love fills every heart and informs every action. We pray these things in the name of the one who came that we might see, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Anthem: “We Are Marching in the Light of God (SIYAHAMBA)” Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Taylor White

Gracious God, illumine our hearts and minds as the Scriptures are read and proclaimed, so that by the power of your Holy Spirit we may see what is good and right and true. And seeing, help us to do what is pleasing to you, so that your glory becomes visible in our words and deeds. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Taylor White

Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— ⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

John 9:1-41

¹ As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing!

You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

³⁹Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Message: "Work the Works" Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

In typical Johannine style, the writer writes with palpable paradox and dramatic irony. Ultimately, it is only the man blind since birth who can truly see. The physically sighted people throughout the text—disciples, the blind man's parents, the Pharisees, and nameless others—are the sightless ones. Where have you had your opinion shifted as the Spirit has worked in your life? Where have you realized that what you think you are seeing, isn't the way to see the world around us?

Reflection: "Sweet, Sweet Spirit" John Fluker, *pianist*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Taylor White

Our lives overflow with the goodness of God. Sharing what we have so abundantly received, we bring now our tithes and offerings to God, with gladness and gratitude

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: “Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service”

David Albulario, *tenor*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – Taylor White

In gratitude, O God, we come to your table, into your presence, into your house. For all that you have done for us, most especially, for bringing us into the light of Jesus Christ, we offer our thanks and praise. We long to live as children of light, doing what is pleasing to you and bearing the fruit of the light through Jesus Christ, who awakens those who sleep, and raises those who are dead to new life. In his name we pray. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

Arise! Shine! for the light of Christ is upon you. May the love of God pursue you, the light of Christ enfold you, and the Holy Spirit keep you; as you Go into the world bearing the fruit of Christ’s light so that all might see what is good and right and true; and live as children of the light to the glory of God.
Amen.

Blessed Be the Tie that Binds

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. Amen.

*Music Team: Jennifer Scoullar, *soprano*; Lisa Margaroli, *alto*;
Dave Albulario, *tenor*; Chris Wade, *bass*; John Fluker/Hannah Yi, *pianist*

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Flowers and refreshments are provided by Mo Ashley and Taylor White.

See the sign-up charts to provide refreshments or cover cost of altar flowers. Altar flowers are \$35. Sandy Walker coordinates arrangements.

Important Banking Notice: Our bank no longer accepts checks written to "Community Church". Checks now must be written to "Leisure World Community Church". No abbreviations.

Lenten Journey: The six-week series includes a "Bowl and a Roll" lunch. Please join us on March 22 at 11am for the fourth week of the Lenten video series, "In the Footsteps of the Savior", with pastor and author, Max Lucado. No need to have attended the first session. Join us any week you are able.

UMCOR Sunday March 19: UMCOR supports worldwide humanitarian and disaster relief. There will be a Bucket at the narthex entrance and in Fellowship for this annual offering that covers the administrative costs.

The WHOA Group! - Lay Leader, Prince Pierson and Chair SPRT, Taylor White invite all to attend the monthly WHOA Group meeting.

.... TO ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE AND FRIENDSHIP AMONG OUR CONGREGATION! ALL ARE WELCOME TO EXPRESS THEIR IDEAS AND CONCERNS

This month's breakfast tea is planned for Friday March 24, 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Easter Lilies: Easter Lilies will once again adorn the church altar over Easter. Easter Lilies are available for purchase at \$15 each and may be picked up after Easter worship. Please fill out the "Holiday Flower Order" form with the notation of the loved one you are honoring/remembering and place the \$15 in the attached envelope. See Sandy Walker if you have any questions.