



Leisure World Community Church

Lighting A pathway into community

Growing Disciples in God's Love

Sending the Hope and Joy of Jesus into Leisure World

Our Vision: To Be the Lantern to Leisure World

14000 Church Place

9:50 am

Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

July 16, 2023

(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.

[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 – Marylee Thomsen

Author of Life, Living Word, Holy Breath, we have stumbled through the week and groped our way back to this place. Illumine the steps before us and write your word on our hearts, for we carry the name of Jesus and would walk in the light of his love. Amen.

Hymn: “Just A Closer Walk with Thee”

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

[Silence will follow each petition.]

Holy God, In every fragile, reckless moment, we belong to you. We thank you for the desire of our parents who gave us life.

O God, you are the source of all growth; your grace abounds forever.

May the love we have received spill gratitude from our hearts. May the wounds we carry open our hearts to the needs of others. May we recognize in your mercy the faithfulness that judges and redeems every human bond.

O God, you are the source of all growth; your grace abounds forever.

We lift to you now all that seems irreconcilable in our families ... in our schools and workplaces ... in our nation ... in your church ... in your world ...

O God, you are the source of all growth; your grace abounds forever.

We pray for those we identify as leaders in every sphere of life.... We pray for our president and for all whose decisions weigh heavily on others....

O God, you are the source of all growth; your grace abounds forever.

Even so, Lord, give us the courage to name ourselves as those whose responsibility is great. Teach us to act, to tend the world you love: to sow more than we reap, to heal more than we wound, to make room for others as you made room for us.

O God, you are the source of all growth; your grace abounds forever.

Redeeming God, stake your claim upon us now, until we hear your gospel echo in each stranger's story and see your image reflected on every wounded face, for we pray in the name of Jesus, who unsettles our lives for the sake of your love.

Amen.

Anthem: “On Eagle’s Wings” Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Marylee Thomsen

God of life, by the power of your Spirit come to us now. Plow our hearts with your living Word until we who are broken become fertile with your love, for we long to bear fruit in a world that is wasting. We pray in the name of Jesus, whose charge we bear. Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Marylee Thomsen

Romans 8:1-11

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they

did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!”

¹⁸“Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Message: “The Spirit of Life” Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

How is God’s resurrecting Spirit at work in you and in our community?
Where are you experiencing new life? Where are you struggling?
How might God be bringing new life from that struggle?

Reflection: “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” John Fluker, *pianist*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Marylee Thomsen

We bring our gifts because tendrils of God’s love have worked their ways into the soil of our hearts. Siblings, let us yield our lives to God’s abundant harvest.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: “Thy Word” David Albulario, *tenor*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – Marylee Thomsen

Giver of life, we do not want the cares of the world and the lure of wealth to choke your word among us. As the sower casts seeds abundantly, hopefully, so we long to participate in your seeding of the world. Receive these gifts as tokens of our lives. Send your cultivating Spirit to work among us until we yield and grow in grace, for we pray in the name of Jesus, who came out of love for the world. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

May God, whose forgiveness is boundless, the Christ, whose charge is freedom, the Spirit, which grants us life and peace, keep us in grateful community as we seek to sow the love of God without judging the soil.

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: Altar Flowers are provided by Sandy Walker. Refreshments are provided by Phyllis Spencer.

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

Membership Meeting with Pastor Johan: July 19 at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. This meeting is open to all who are interested in exploring the vision and mission of Community Church and connecting in membership to this church family.

PRAYER REQUESTS

FOR PERSEVERANCE:

new Marv Jahn & Ella Walton – have settled into their new home in Rowntree Gardens. They are happy to welcome visitors. Rowntree Gardens, 12151 Dale, Stanton, CA phone: 714-971-6786 **UPDATE:** Bldg D, Room 306