



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

September 3, 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 is said 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: – Taylor White

Almighty God, in the self-giving love of Christ you have revealed the path of salvation; give us courage to deny our false self and take up the true self of community that Jesus revealed to us through his life and teachings. Yes, Lord, move in our lives, change our minds, soften our hearts, direct our feet, that we may follow you more faithfully.

We seek to follow Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: “Nearer, My God, to Thee”

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

[A time of silence follows each petition.]

Listening God, you heard the prayers of the Israelites.

Hear now these prayers, both spoken and silent:

For peace where there is conflict ...

For food where there is hunger ...

For hope where there is despair ...

For health where there is sickness ...

For faith where there is fear ...

For life where there is death ...

We pray in the name of Jesus, who conquers all that would defeat us and gives us new life. Amen.

Anthem: “The Healing Place” Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Taylor White

By the power of your Spirit, O Lord, make your Word become a joy to us and the delight of our hearts. Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Taylor White

Romans 12:9-21

⁹Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;

¹⁰love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

¹⁶Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

²⁰No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.”

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Matthew 16:21-28

²¹From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." ²³But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

²⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? ²⁷"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Message: "In Harmony with One Another" Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

How has your life reflected the charge of Jesus to take up your cross and deny yourself? What more might God be calling you to in this moment of your life?

Reflection: "Try to Remember" Chris Wade, *pianist*

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION:

We are pleased to offer both white and red grape juice. If you are afraid of spilling red grape juice, a limited number of cups with white grape juice are provided.

Invitation to Communion – Rev. Johan Dodge

Here at Community Church we celebrate "Open Communion".

Anyone who wishes to commune may come to our Lord's Table. You do not have to be sinless; God forgives you. You do not have to be perfect; but God is encouraging you to grow. You need not belong to this or any church; God Invites all people to this meal. It is enough to

love the Lord and follow Him with all your heart. This is what God asks us to do. Come to our Lord's Table in faith this day. Go from this place to live, and never be the same again. Let us commune as brothers and sisters in Christ.

[Ushers, please come forward to collect and distribute the elements]

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

People: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to this your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. At his ascension you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, In remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
We offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving As a holy and living sacrifice,
In union with Christ's offering for us, As we proclaim the mystery of faith.

People: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pastor: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty *God*, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Sharing of the Bread

Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

The Sharing of the Cup

The bread which we have eaten is a sharing in the bread of Christ.
The cup over which we give thanks is the sharing in the cup of Christ.

Unison Prayer

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Taylor White

The apostle Paul encourages us: do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. In loving service to this loving Lord, we now return to God a portion of the bounty God has provided.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: “September Song” Chris Wade, *baritone*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: Taylor White

Holy God of holy ground, like Moses, we question our fitness to serve heaven’s purposes on earth. Overcome our qualms with the assurance of your presence; bless these offerings that, through them, we may do your will; in the name of the triune One. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

My siblings, hold fast to what is good; repay no one evil for evil. Rejoice in hope; be patient in suffering; persevere in prayer.

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, *baritone*; John Fluker/Hannah Yi, *pianist*

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Altar Flowers and flowers are provided by Gerri Seaton in celebration of her 91st Birthday on September 1.

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

Upper Room: The September-October edition of the Upper Room devotional is available this morning and in the church office.

September Lantern Newsletter: The September Lantern is available for pick up before Sunday Worship on Sept. 3 if you do not receive your copy by mail or email.

Welcome New Members: Sunday, September 10 will be a special worship service as we welcome new members, Sandy Cardot, Melinda Cowan, Jo Rousey, Susie Perslow, and Jenny Chang into the Community Church family.

PRAYER REQUESTS

FOR PERSEVERANCE:

- new Ron Holbrook – health concerns
- new Fred Reker and Jeanette Williams – travel mercies and wonderful connections as they visit family and reunite with military brothers on their September 5-18 road trip.
- new Alvin Knowles – Is feeling good, “so far so good!” His appt. with his doctor was moved to 9/5 to discuss the course of treatment. He appreciates our prayers.