



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

October 1, 2023

9:50 am

Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

(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: – Marylee Thomsen

Holy God, all lives are yours, and you do not seek the death of any sinner. Renew our hearts, refresh our spirits, and help us walk in your holy way, that we may welcome the impartiality of your judgment and accept your all-embracing goodness; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn: “Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup”

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

Through God's steadfast compassion for us, God has filled us with concern for our world. Therefore, we pray for what we need, saying,
God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you have placed a desire for truth and righteousness in the hearts of all people. Uplift those who seek to live faithfully and lovingly by the promptings of your Spirit, even those who do not know your name; save them from despair, and lead them to the fullness of salvation. For seekers of truth,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you call the children of Israel to make known your righteousness, and you call disciples of Jesus to take the good news of your salvation to all the nations. Help those who know your name to be faithful to their calling, to live according to your commandments, and to testify to your abounding love. For all who believe in you,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you have formed your people into communities of prayer and service. Strengthen us and give us humble and obedient hearts after the example of Christ, who humbled himself in obedience to you. For ministers of the gospel,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you have placed in human hearts a hunger to understand the structures and rhythms of creation. Grant wisdom to those who seek to comprehend the inner workings of the world, save them from arrogance, and enable them to work for the flourishing of humankind. For scientists,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you fill the world with forms that delight the ear and eye. Give artists and musicians a vision of your transcendent beauty, and grant them skill to render their vision in tangible works that manifest the sublime glory of your creation. For artists,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you established the nations of the world to order human community. Kindle love for peace among the nations and their leaders, save them from pride of wealth or power, and enable them to serve the common good. For those who govern,

God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you provided the earth as a garden, and you commanded the human community to till the land that it may be fruitful. Bless those called to the work of agriculture. Give those who benefit from farming thankful hearts for this good work. Help farmers to respect our common resources and to resist careless exploitation of nature for temporary gain. For those who farm the land,
God of compassion, hear our prayer.

God, you hear the cry of all who are in distress. Heal those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit. Comfort them in their need and help those who care for them. Teach us to bear the burdens of our siblings with humility. For the sick and those in distress,
God of compassion, hear our prayer.

These prayers we offer through Christ by the power of your Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Anthem: “Go Share the Lord” Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Marylee Thomsen

Lord, by the power of your Holy Spirit give us the words of life, that we may understand your way and follow your truth, in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Marylee Thomsen

Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name

of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, 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; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

²³When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Message: "Fellowship of the Spirit" Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

Paul, in his letter to the Christians in Philippi writes to them encouraging them to regard others as better than themselves. Such a world is the opposite of our own where we are encouraged to place ourselves first, to consider ourselves always right and to always find

fault with what others are doing. To place others before you is the way of Jesus and it can change the world around us moment by moment into the kingdom that is to come. Where do you find it most challenging to place others before yourself? Where do you draw the strength to place others before yourself in a world that is upside-down and focused on individuality? Where might you find additional strength?

Reflection: “Holy, Holy, Holy” Hannah Yi, *pianist*

DISCIPLESHIP MOMENT:

Presentation of New Member:

Pastor: Siblings in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into Christ's holy Church. We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price. Through the reaffirmation of our faith, we renew the covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for us, and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy Church.

Liturgist: Marylee Thomsen

I present Cindy Pierskalla who comes seeking professing membership in Leisure World Community Church and the United Methodist Church.

Pastor: On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

New Member: I do.

Pastor: Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

New Member: I do.

Pastor: Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?

New Member: I do.

Pastor: According to the grace given to you, will you remain a faithful member of Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representative in the world?

New Member: I will.

Pastor— to the congregation: Do you, as Christ's body, the Church, reaffirm both your rejection of sin and your commitment to Christ?

Congregation: We do.

Pastor: Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life and include this person now before you in your care?

Congregation: With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround this new sibling with a community of love and forgiveness, that she may grow in her trust of God, and be found faithful in her service to others. We will pray for her, that she may be a true disciple who walks in the way that leads to life.

Pastor: Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Pastor: Do you believe in God the Father?

Congregation: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

Congregation: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

Congregation: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Pastor to Cindy Pierskalla:

As a member of Christ's universal Church, will you be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church, and do all in your power to strengthen its ministries?

I will.

As a member of this congregation, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness?

I will.

Pastor to Congregation:

Members of the household of God, I commend Cindy Pierskalla to your love and care. Do all in your power to increase her faith, confirm her hope, and perfect her in love.

Congregation: We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the Church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Pastor: May we give God our Worship and show our pleasure.
Certificate and applause.

[New Member may be seated]

Pastor: The God of all grace, who has called us to eternal glory in Christ, establish you and strengthen you that you may live in grace and peace.

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION: World Communion Sunday

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 (Pastor 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.

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 created for yourself a world filled with diversity and blessed by your breath of life. Rainbow colors bloom in spring, summer breezes bring garden delight, and now as Autumn comes our way we see the work of your paintbrush upon every face and tree.

In mercy, while we still held to the chains of our winter, of pride, self-righteousness, and historic egos you loved us steadfastly and delivered us as babes to reflect the beauty and diversity of your grace, to bring us into a community of love, hope, and peace.

And so, with your people on earth in every place where two or more are gathered in your name and all the company of heaven who have gone before us 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 the one 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 your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

He prayed that we might be one as he is one with you, Father and he asked that we might be known by the love we have for one another.

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, together as a new creation and a new community around the globe may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit help the body of Christ be one. Help the left hand and the right hand work as one in ministry to all the world. Help the eyes and the ears sense your present and coming kingdom. Bring the

blessing of the diversity of the body to bear fruit 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 forever.

People: Amen.

[Ushers, please distribute the elements]

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 – Marylee Thomsen

With grateful hearts, let us offer our gifts, trusting in God's goodness.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: "Beautiful City" Chris Wade, *bass*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: Marylee Thomsen

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for your love shown to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Accept the offering of our lives in union with Christ's offering for us, and make us humble and obedient servants who will work for your good pleasure; through Christ, with the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

The blessing of God be with you, the love of Jesus fill you, and the power of the Holy Spirit sustain you, focusing your mind into the mind of Christ and your hands into the hands of Jesus.

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 Flucker/Hannah Yi, *pianist*

PRAYER REQUESTS
FOR PERSEVERANCE: new Pastor Lisa from LW Redeemer Lutheran Church – recovery from Covid. new Mary Granger –departed from LW on 9/25. Prayers for a safe drive and peaceful transition and adjustment to her new home in Wisconsin.

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Altar Flowers are provided by Sandy Walker. Refreshments are provided by Jenny Chang.

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

Christmas Bazaar Crafting Parties: everyone is invited to join in on the weekly “crafting parties” this Wednesday, October 4 at 11 am in the Fireside Room. You are welcome to bring your own crafting ideas, or to help cut, assemble, and work on pre-designed craft projects. All materials and instructions will be provided. Most importantly, the goal is to offer a time of fun and friendship where we gather weekly to work toward a fun event for the church we love.

Concert Today at 3:00: Come for an afternoon of lively entertainment as “#TheAccidentals” a quartet featuring our staff musicians, Dave Albulario, and Chris Wade present a free concert. Invite your friends and neighbors. A free will offering will be accepted.

October Lantern Newsletter: Copies of the October Lantern newsletter are available for pick up this morning if you did not receive yours by mail or email.

“Boost” Supplement drinks donated: If you or your friends or neighbors could benefit from the nutrition supplement drinks, please pick up the items in the Fellowship Hall after worship on Sunday.

New Vaccines available: Updated vaccines are now available. Consult your doctor or pharmacist.

61st Anniversary Celebration: LWCC will celebrate its 61st Anniversary on Sunday, October 8 after Worship in the Fellowship Hall. A Luncheon will be served.