



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 8, 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: — Phyllis Spencer

Holy God, Maker of heaven and earth, out of your great love for the world you sent us your beloved Son— but we sent him to his death. Have mercy on us, O Lord; forgive us, renew us, restore us so that we may be the people of your vineyard and bear good fruit for your holy realm; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Hymn: "Canticle of the Sun"

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying,
God of hosts, hear our prayer.

Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved. For your beloved, chosen people, the vine you brought out of Egypt,

God of hosts, hear our prayer.

For the church of Jesus Christ, your beloved Son,

God of hosts, hear our prayer.

For martyrs, saints, and prophets, persecuted for doing your will,

God of hosts, hear our prayer.

For all who are suffering, through sickness or oppression,

God of hosts, hear our prayer.

For the coming of your kingdom, with justice and peace for all,

God of hosts, hear our prayer.

Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven and see; have regard for your people; through Christ, the vine, in whom we are branches.

Amen.

Anthem: “Find Us Faithful” Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Phyllis Spencer

God who speaks, your love is perfect, reviving the soul; your teaching is clear, enlightening the eyes. May your Spirit illumine our hearts that our eyes may be opened and our souls revived. In Jesus 'name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Phyllis Spencer

Philippians 3:4b-14

⁴even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more:

⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard

everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 21:33-46

³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? ⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking

about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Message: “Fruits of the Kindom” Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

Study the parable of the Landowner and the Vineyard. What are the “fruits of the kindom” to which Jesus alludes in Matthew 21:43? How does your life bear fruit for God’s realm? What do you contribute to the harvest of God that Jesus describes?

Reflection: “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” Hannah Yi, *pianist*

Discipleship Moment: Stewardship — Prince Pearson CLM

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Phyllis Spencer

Without Christ, all that we have is nothing. With Christ, all that we have is everything. Let us offer all that we have to the Lord.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: “How Beautiful” Jennifer Scoullar, *soprano*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: Phyllis Spencer

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for all your good gifts, and above all, for the gift of knowing Christ our Savior. Strengthen us as we continue to strive for the heavenly prize that you offer: eternal and abundant life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “How Great Thou Art”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

My siblings, Now may the face of God shine upon you so that you forget what lies behind; may the grace of God live within you for what lies ahead, and may the love of God empower you as we press on toward the goal!

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*

In honor of Phyllis Poper and in celebration of our 61st Anniversary, please see the poem she wrote for our 60th Anniversary Celebration last year:

A Place For All

Doors open wide,
like a comforting embrace.
Sixty years come and gone,
welcome all to Church Place.

Design by man inspired,
hearts open wide.
Soaring spirits, the Word abounds,
God's message received inside.

Shepherd calls to all,
willing hearts swell.
Message on the promise made,
congregation cup is filled.

Every faith is welcome
Love in every face
A place,
A church,
A community,
Welcomes you to Church Place

by Phyllis Poper & Jim Poper

PRAYER REQUESTS

FOR PERSEVERANCE:

New Phyllis Poper – on hospice care, for peace and comfort. Visitors are asked to set appointment with Anchie at 562-637-6628, address: 2218 Conquista, Long Beach.

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Altar Flowers and Refreshments are provided by are provided by the Fellowship Team in celebration of the Chrurch's 61st Anniversary.

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

61st Anniversary Celebration TODAY: LWCC will celebrate its 61st Anniversary today after Worship in the Fellowship Hall. A Luncheon will be served.

Christmas Bazaar Crafting Parties: everyone is invited to join in on the weekly "crafting parties" this Wednesday, October 11 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.

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.

Drive Thru Food Drive: Oct. 12 from 10-12. Bring your nonperishable food items to the church. A Missions Team member will greet you at your vehicle to offload your donation. You may also drop off your food donations at the church office during the week.

Pizza with the Pastor: October 18 at 11am in the Fellowship Hall. This is an invitation to anyone who is newer to Community Church and is interested in meeting the Pastor and others in the congregation in an informal setting and to explore the vision and ministry of Community Church.

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