



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

November 26, 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 — "Christmas Doxology"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, in every generation.

Praise God, all creatures here below, the blessed incarnation.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host, Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Let all creation praise the Lord with love and adoration.

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT— "Kindom"

Taylor White, Alvin Knowles

Leader: Lord Jesus, open our eyes to recognize your beloved family, help us see your face among our neighbors in need. We light this candle, the candle of Kindom as a sign of the work that is ours yet to do.

Leader: We light this candle as the Candle of Kindom.

People: God of majesty, you love us with an everlasting love and show us the way to justice and peace. In Jesus Christ you have reconciled the whole world to you and claimed us as your own.

Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

Our Shepherd satisfies our needs; in faith, let us pray to the Lord.

O Lord, our God, we pray for the church.

As you have made Christ the head of all, help us to live faithfully as his body, continuing his mission in the world....

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O Lord, our God, we pray for the earth.

Let all the earth make a joyful noise to you, a song of praise to the rock of our salvation, for you are coming to reveal a new creation....

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O Lord, our God, we pray for all nations.

Drive out those wolves in sheep's clothing who abuse the weak and scatter the flock. Come and save us; bring justice and peace....

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O Lord, our God, we pray for this community.

Help us to see Christ among our neighbors, serving those who are hungry and thirsty, naked and lonely, sick or in prison....

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O Lord, our God, we pray for loved ones.

Remember the people of your pasture: rescue the lost, bind up the broken, heal the sick, and feed those who hunger....

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Loving Shepherd, lead and guide us— in green pastures and by still waters, in right paths and through dark valleys, until we feast with you in glory and dwell in your house forever; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Anthem: "Would I Miss the Miracle?" Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Taylor White

Holy God, open your Word. Give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, that our eyes may be enlightened and we may know the hope to which we have been called; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE : Taylor White

Ephesians 1:15-23

¹⁵ I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸ so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and

gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Message: "Weaving Stories" Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

The story of the end times in Matthew's Gospel had a strong moral for life here and now. In the Gospel, the threat of punishment is used as a motivator. What are the ways you are motivated to do something? Because of joy or because of consequences? How might you shift from consequences to a life of joy? Who might you reach out to to help you?

Reflection: "The First Noel" Hannah Yi, *pianist*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Taylor White

God holds the depths of the earth and the heights of the mountains, the sea and the dry land. In gratitude for the immeasurable gift of Jesus Christ, let us bring our tithes and offerings to God.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: "I Wonder As I Wander" Lisa Margaroli, *alto*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: Taylor White

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for your love in Jesus Christ our Lord; may we honor your presence in all

people and may our lives and our gifts serve to bring your kindom into being.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

May God who seeks the lost keep you; may God who brings back the wandering heart uphold you; may God who binds up the injured heal you; may God who strengthens the weak empower you; and may the grace of Christ surround you, the love of God astound you, and the Holy Spirit keep you, this day and forevermore. 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, *baritone*; John Flucker/Hannah Yi, *pianist*

PRAYER REQUESTS

FOR PERSEVERANCE:

Amelia – lovely woman attendant at the St. Andrews gate – recovery after discharge from the hospital.

Sandy Walker – Son in law, Jeff, has surgery on 11/21.

Alvin Knowles – the second of 5 radiation treatments is on Nov. 20. He is feeling good and appreciates our prayers.

Mo Ashley –heart surgery/Aneurism surgery last week. It went well. Her sister, an RN, is caring for her. Please not phone calls, but prayers and cards are appreciated.

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Altar Flowers and Refreshments are provided by Steve Martinez.

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

Advent Study: The weekly study "Advent is for Action", led by Pastor Johan, meets on Thursday mornings at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome

Thankful Tree: Spend some time in prayer reflecting on the ways that God has blessed you this past year. Jot that note of gratitude on a leaf and stick it to the tree in the Narthex. Leaves will also be available to fill out in the office to be mounted on the tree.

Hanging the Greens: We would love to have everyone join us as we decorate the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for Christmas on Tuesday, November 28 at 11:00.

Charge Conference booklet: Copies of the annual Charge Conference meeting booklets are available for pick up in the Narthex for those who were unable to attend the meeting on November 17.

Your help is requested: In preparation for the Christmas Bazaar, please see below opportunities to serve. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or Fellowship Hall or you may contact Sandy Walker or Virginia Olejnik.

- Bake cookies or treats to be sold at bake sale
- Bring in donations for "Grandma's Attic" before 11/30
- Help at the event: set up - work a station - clean up
- Loan a Nativity set for display (not sell) at the event. Bring in by 11/28 for Patty Jo to set up the Nativity display in the Narthex.



Nov 26, 2023

GROW.PRAY.STUDY

Notes from the Service

My Prayers this week

Prayer Journal

Use these prayers in your time with God each day.

Household Prayer: Morning

God of all creation, I greet your new day with thanksgiving and praise. Do not let me neglect the needs of those I meet today, and keep me faithful to your ways, for I want to live for you. Amen.

Household Prayer: Midday

God of majesty, I am not ready for your holy realm. I hear your Spirit guiding me toward your paths, but am comfortable and struggle to follow where your Spirit leads. Forgive me merciful God, so that I might rejoice in your presence as I look upon neighbors, family and friends. Help me to claim your story for me and the world of my making. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Thank you, Lord, for the gifts and challenges of this day. Where I failed to do your will, forgive me. Grant me peace throughout this night, and open my eyes; melt my heart; enlighten my understanding in the day to come. Amen.

Did you know?

This is the Third Sunday of the new Christian Year. This Sunday has also been known as Christ the King Sunday. Christ the King Sunday is a relatively new idea and given that we live in a democracy without a king, it may be helpful to think of this Sunday simply as part of the Advent story instead of as Christ the King. In this season of Advent, we are preparing again for the birth of Jesus from which comes our theme for the year: "God's Judgment is Love". God has already judged you and God's judgement is love.