

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

January 7, 2024

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 – Jeanette Williams

God of heaven and earth, we gather in the name of Jesus to hear your holy Word and to be immersed in your Spirit. Speak to us with grace and truth and pour out your love upon us so that this temple may resound with joyful shouts of glory, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: “Down to the River to Pray”

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

Let us pray to the Lord, saying,
Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

All-glorious God, maker of heaven and earth, hear us as we pray:
Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

We pray for the world you have made.... Move again over these troubled waters, steeped in chemicals and stained with blood. Where carelessness and violence bring chaos restore order, goodness, and life.

Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

We pray for the church you have redeemed.... Renew in us the gifts of your Spirit and the call to Christian discipleship. Where history and heresy have divided us, make us one in the baptism we share.

Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

We pray for the peoples you have created.... Give to the leaders of all nations the wisdom to know what is good. Where people are poor and hungry provide justice and daily bread.

Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

We pray for the loved ones you have given us.... Bless our families, friends, and neighbors; keep them safe from trouble and danger. Where there is sorrow, sickness, or suffering send your Spirit of comfort and healing.

Give strength, O Lord, and bless us with peace.

All this we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus, whose voice is our strength and salvation, whose breath is the Spirit of peace. **Amen.**

Anthem: "Homeward Bound" Music Team

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Jeanette Williams

Send down your Holy Spirit, O God — tear open the veil of heaven and speak to us as beloved children so that we may hear and believe the good news of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Jeanette Williams

Mark 1:4-11

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Message: "The Way of Water" Rev. Johan Dodge

Questions for Reflection: Rev. Johan Dodge

Water carves and smooths the rocks and landscape around us just as the Spirit carves and smooths our rough and hard hearts. Where have you experienced the Spirit carving in your life? Where do you know there are rough or hard spots the Spirit may need to work on?

Reflection: "How Great Thou Art" Hannah Yi, *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 (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.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

Hear the good news of the gospel: As a voice from heaven said to Jesus, so God says to each of us: You are my beloved child, and with you I am well pleased. In Jesus, our relationship with God is forever changed from God's people to God's children. In Jesus we become the resurrected body of Christ in the world today.

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. Before the mountains were brought forth, or you had formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the 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. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

People: (Sung Response)



Pastor: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation. In his baptism and in table fellowship he took his place with us. 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. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to this, your Church, you delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

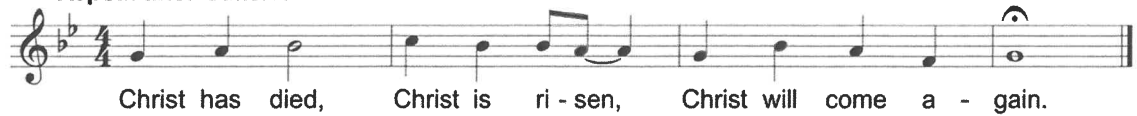
On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

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: (Sung Response)

Repeat after Cantor:



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.

[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 – Jeanette Williams

The earth belongs to God, our creator; every good thing is a gift from the Lord. Let us glorify God through the gifts of our lives.

[Ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: Dave Albulario, *tenor*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – Jeanette Williams

We give you thanks, O God, for every blessing and spiritual gift you have poured out upon us. Let the gifts of our lives be a source of blessing in your world, all to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

[please stand as you able]

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

BLESSING: Rev. Johan Dodge

Beloved children of God all the blessings of heaven are ours! Go forth in the light and love of God, giving glory to God in all that you do.

SENDING FORTH: “An Irish Blessing” Quartet

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
May the rain fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again, may God hold you in his hand.
May God hold you in the palm of her hand.
Hold you in the palm of their hand.

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 Willa Walton – doing well, living at home with the help of family. Would welcome cards or calls.

Notes and Announcements:

Coffee Fellowship: Altar Flowers are provided by Sandy Walker. Refreshments are provided by Lewis and Linda Hildreth and presented by the Fellowship Team.

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

Music Team Appreciation: Please join us after worship to celebrate and show our appreciation to our Music Team for sharing the gift of music with us each Sunday. The Sunday worship music experience will transition beginning next Sunday to one soloist and one accompanist each Sunday on rotation for this next season. Lunch will be served.

Upper Room: The January-February copies of the Upper Room devotional is available in the Narthex and the Church office.

January Lantern: Copies of the January 2024 Lantern Newsletter are available in the Narthex if you did not receive your copy by email or mail.

Church Conference on January 14: Adjourned Charge Conference will be held January 14th to approve the budget for 2024. Conference will be Officiated by Pastor Johan during fellowship following morning worship.

2024 Offering Envelopes: The monthly offering envelopes for 2024 are available for pick up in the Narthex. Please see Virginia Olejnik if you have any questions.



Notes from the Service

[illegible]

Prayer Journal

Use these prayers in your time with God each day.

Household Prayer: Morning

Living God, maker of light, thank you for the gift of this day. Let me be a light in your world so that people will look at me and see the goodness of your creation; in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Midday

God of all glory, you look from heaven and see me as I am — not worthy to kneel at your feet, not ready to welcome your way. Forgive me, gracious God. In Christ, stoop down to free me from my own entanglements; set me free to love and serve you; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Living God, maker of light, thank you for the gift of this night. Let me be at peace in your presence so that I may rest, be restored, and arise to praise your glory; in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

My Prayers this week