

COMMUNITY CHURCH LEISURE WORLD

LIGHTING
A pathway into community

GROWING
Disciples in God's Love

SENDING
The Hope and Joy of Jesus

Our Vision: To Be Love to Leisure World

14000 Church Place
Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

Sunday Service: 9:50 AM
562-431-2503

December 15, 2024

6th Sunday of Extended Advent

*New is
Ours
to Do
Do It
Anyway*



**COMMUNITY
CHURCH LEISURE
WORLD**



Rev. Johan Dodge

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.

ADVENT 5 — Marylee Thomsen

As our nights grow longer and our days grow short,
we look on these earthly signs — light and green branches — and
remember God's promise to our world:

ALL: Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come.

Listen to the words of Malachi, the prophet:

“See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts.” — Malachi 4:1-3

Candle Lighters: Mary Martinez and son, Steve Martinez

[As the candles are lit, all stand as you are able and sing:]

CALL TO WORSHIP: Doxology for Advent (“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise
O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and

God, all crea - tures here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye
cheer us by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y

heav'n - ly host: Cre - a - tor, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.
clouds of night, and death's dark sha - dow put to flight.

Re - jice! Re - jice! Em - man - u - el shall

come to thee, O Is - - - ra - el.

Liturgist — Marylee Thomsen
Let us pray ...

ALL: Lord Jesus Christ, in your resurrection you appeared as the Morning Star that knows no setting: Dawn upon the darkness of the human heart so that the deathly orders of this world may be overcome and your whole creation made new; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee
For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a -
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is
O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we

lie; a - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go
bove, while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring
giv'n; so God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his
pray; cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to -

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by. Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing
 love. O morn - ing stars to - geth - er, pro - claim the ho - ly
 heav'n. No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of
 day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings

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light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to-night.
 birth, and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!
 sin, where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 tell; O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

[please be seated]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION — Rev. Johan Dodge

[A time of silence is kept after each petition.]

Lord of Life, you call us to prepare the way for your reign by bearing fruit worthy of repentance. You lift up a vision before us of a world that is shared and fair, where needs are met and no one is outcast. Baptize us fresh in your Spirit.

We pray for the nations of the world, both allies and enemies, for their leaders and their people. Make yourself known to us all, that all the peoples of the earth may live in justice and peace.

For your church here and abroad, that we hear your call for justice as good news for all people.

We pray for peace in our world, especially for those caught in war, and for all who live in fear of violence, extortion, threats, and false accusations.

For those who suffer from natural disasters, from hunger and cold. Lead us to share our food and our coats with them.

For the frail, the sick, and all those whose hands grow weak, lead us to help them with gentleness.

For those who are disabled, oppressed, or outcast among us, change their pain into praise, and let their courage be renowned in the world.

For the earth from which we draw our health, our strength, our inspiration, and for all the living creatures in whose community we live—

Surely, God, we can trust in you and not be afraid. Lead us in songs of praise and shouts of joy, for you are in our midst. We pray through the one who baptizes us not only with water but with the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major, 6/8 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed below the vocal lines. The first system covers measures 1-5, the second system covers measures 6-10, and the third system covers measures 11-15. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. The lyrics are as follows:

It came up - on — a mid - night clear, that glo - rious sing of old, from
Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace - ful wings un - furled, and
And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load whose forms are bend - ing low, who
For lo, the days are hast - 'ning on, by pro - phet bards fore - told, when

an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold. "Peace
still their heav - en - ly mus - ic floats o'er all the wea - ry world. A -
toil a - long — the climb - ing way, with pain - ful steps and slow, look
with the ev - er cir - cling years comes round the age — of gold when

on the earth, good will to all, from heav - en's all gra - cious
bove its sad — and low - ly plains they bend — on hov - 'ring
now, for glad — and gol - den hours come swift - ly on — the
peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors

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king." The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 wing, and ev - er o'er_ its Ba - bel sounds the bles - sed an - gels sing.
 wing. O rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing!
 fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

[please be seated]

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION — Marylee Thomsen

Holy Word, you are our guide and ultimate assurance. By your Holy Spirit, open us to your promises and commands and shower us again with the fire of your love. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE — Marylee Thomsen

Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Luke 3:7-18

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be

baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

MESSAGE: “New Is Ours to Do – Do It Anyway” — Rev. Johan Dodge

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION — Rev. Johan Dodge

In the beginning of John’s Gospel this week, John says to the people who have come out to him — You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? And in the passage from the Prophet Zephaniah God is described as a warrior who will deal with oppressors, gather the outcast, and bring the people home. How has this language of opposition framed your worldview? How might a change of perspective serve to see the world around us not as opposition but as opportunity?

REFLECTION: “Joy to the World” — John Fluker, *arranger and pianist*

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT III — Rev. Johan Dodge

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 MAUREEN “MO” ASHLEY, ALVIN KNOWLES, LOIS DIMOS, and JIM DIMOS, who come seeking professing membership in Leisure World Community Church and the United Methodist Church.

PASTOR — Rev. Johan Dodge

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?

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim — “I do.”

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

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim — “I do.”

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?

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim — “I do.”

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?

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim — “I will.”

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES – Rev. Johan Dodge

PASTOR (to Congregation): — Rev. Johan Dodge

Do you, as Christ’s body, the Church, reaffirm both your rejection of sin and your commitment to Christ?

Congregation — “We do.”

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life and include Maureen, Alvin, Lois, and Jim 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 these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.

PASTOR — Rev. Johan Dodge

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

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

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.]

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

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 Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim):

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?

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim: "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?

Mo, Alvin, Lois, and Jim: "I will."

PASTOR (to Congregation):

Members of the household of God, I commend Maureen, Alvin, Lois, and Jim to your love and care. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them 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 — Rev. Johan Dodge

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING — Marylee Thomsen

Let us bring to God our offerings, with thanksgiving that God provides more than enough for all. Let us give, as each is able, for the benefit of Christ's church and God's world. **Amen.**

[Ushers, please come forward]

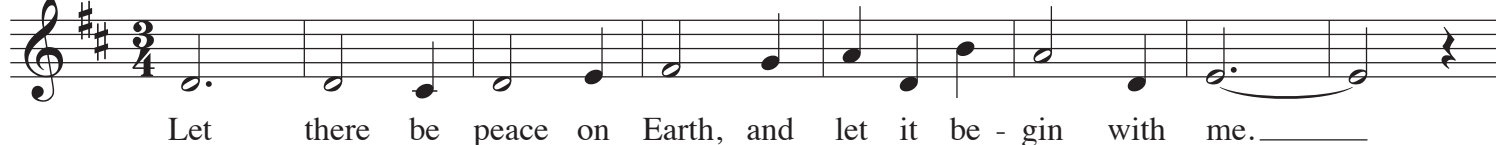
OFFERTORY: "Do You Hear What I Hear? — Dave Albulario, *tenor*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING — Marylee Thomsen

Gracious God, in gratitude for all that you have given us, we bring our tithes, offerings, and labor to help feed a world hungry for healing and hope; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

[please stand as you are able]

HYMN: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"



49

take each mo-ment and live each mo-ment in peace e - ter - nal - ly;_____

57

Let there be peace on Earth, and let it be - gin with me._____

BLESSING — Rev. Johan Dodge

As we go forth this day, we go forth as those with need and those with abundance. May God bless each of us with eyes to see where our abundance might serve another need and may the Holy Spirit dissipate our pride to ask for or to receive the assistance we need. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH: “Blest Be the Tie that Binds”

Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris - tian love: The
fel - low - ship of kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove. A - men.

Music Team: Dave Albulario, *Tenor / Music Dir.*
John Fluker, *Pianist*

Jennifer Scoullar, *Soprano*
Hannah Yi, *Pianist*

Doxology for Advent (*Veni, Immanuel*)
15th Century French Hymn, Words by
Thomas Ken, Text and Tune adapted by
Dean McIntyre

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”
Music by Lewis H. Redner (1868);
Words by Phillips Brooks; Public Domain;
Source: ChristmasCarolMusic.org

“It Came Upon A Midnight Clear”
Music by Richard S. Willis;
Words by Edmund H. Sears; Public Domain;
Source: ChristmasCarolMusic.org

“Joy to the World”
Tune: *ANTIOCH* by Georg Friedrich Händel;
Piano Arrangement by John Fluker

“Do You Hear What I Hear?”
Music & Words by Noel Regney & Gloria
Shayne; Arrangement by David Albulario,
inspired by the work of Brent Pierce

“Let There Be Peace on Earth”
Music & Words by Sy Miller & Jill Jackson
© 1955, 1983; Arr. Copyright © 1991 by Jan
Lee Music, Beverly Hills, California

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds” (Dennis SM)
Music by Johann G. Nägeli, 1768-1836
Words by John Fawcett, 1740-1817
Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

*All music herein transcribed & adapted by
D. Albulario for Leisure World Community
Church, Seal Beach, California.*

LEISURE WORLD COMMUNITY CHURCH
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PRAYER REQUESTS

- new Nancy Trujillo** – Prayers of healing and recovery for Nancy, as she deals with health concerns.
- new Taylor White** – After a very busy week of holiday celebrations, Taylor finds herself under the weather this weekend. She is staying with a friend to recuperate. Prayers for recovery and rejuvenation as she takes time for rest and self-care.
- new Rev. Don Roe** – Former LWCC pastor, Rev. Don Roe passed away Tuesday, December 3, 2024. He served Community Church from 2014 to 2018. Prayers of comfort for his family, and peaceful rest for Pastor Don. *His memorial will take place on Saturday, February 2, 2025 at 10:30 AM, at St. Matthew's UMC, 15653 Newton St, Hacienda Heights 91745. Attire: **Dodger Blue**.*
- new Melinda Cowan** – Melinda stopped by the LWCC office this past week and is doing much better since her recent fall. She appreciates our prayers and resolves to use her walker more frequently as a precaution.

The Care Team is concerned about the frequency of falls recently.

Please pray that God guide our steps and help us remember to use walkers and canes as a precaution.

We are praying that we might think carefully about taking on challenging tasks that might put us at risk.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

FLOWERS and FELLOWSHIP: Flowers and Fellowship refreshments are provided today by Mo Ashley. See the sign-up charts to provide refreshments or cover the cost of altar flowers for future services. Altar flowers are \$35. Sandy Walker coordinates arrangements.

POINSETTIAS: Please pick up a special *Holiday Flower Order* envelope from the check in table in the narthex if you are interested in purchasing a **poinsettia** in honor or memory of a loved one. Please fill out the form stapled to the envelope, insert a \$15 check or cash and drop it in the offering plate. Purchased poinsettias may be picked up **after Christmas Eve** worship service. The poinsettias will adorn the Sanctuary altar for December 24th service.

COFFEE WITH THE PASTOR: Every Thursday, at 10 AM, you are invited to join Pastor Johan for a weekly time of fellowship and check-in over coffee, and perhaps a little conversation around the book cultivating Christlikeness: loving as Jesus loved.

CHRISTMAS EVE: Please join us for our Christmas Eve Service: Lessons & Carols, which will take place on December 24th at 4:00 PM.

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone,
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known ...
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

"All are welcome in this place."



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, surely you are my salvation. I begin this day without fear, trusting you, for you are my strength. Help me to meditate all day on the thought that you are rejoicing in me! And keep me keenly aware, as I travel through this day, of ways that I may help others, especially those with special needs. Then bring me home to you at the close of the day. Amen.

Household Prayer: Midday

Merciful God, you come into my life longing for relationship, becoming one with me in your love. Break my resistance to life with you, show me the path toward your unimaginable peace; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Thank you, God, for the gift of today and for guarding my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. All that I did and all that I left undone, I now give over to your safekeeping, trusting in your peace that surpasses all understanding. Be my rest as I sleep tonight, and renew me in your love for another day. Amen.