

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

July 26, 2020 Kingdomtide
"At Home Worship"

Call to Worship

Give thanks for God's abundant mercy and grace.

We celebrate God's amazing love.

Rejoice and offer praise, for Christ is among us.

We worship the One who lives.

Walk in the light; live in God's love.

Redeemed and reclaimed, we worship the God of abundant mercy and amazing grace.

Opening Prayer Jesus, Son of David, hear us as we worship and call to you this day. Speak to us in this holy time. Enter our lives, that we may hear your truth and trust in your grace. Transform each one of us, transform our church, and transform this hurting world. Claim us as your own, we pray, that we may live lives of wholeness of faith after the example of Jesus, our Savior and Friend. Amen.

Scripture Reading "Glory in God's holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice." Read Psalm 105:1-11

A Prayer of Confession Psalm 77 (selected verses)

I cry aloud to God, aloud that God may hear me.

In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord, in the night my hand is stretched out continually.

I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; I will remember your wonders of old.

I will meditate on all your work, and muse on your mighty deeds.

Time of Silent Confession *Offer the confessions of your*

heart to God in these quiet moments.

Words of Assurance Psalm 77 (selected verses)

Your way, O God, is holy.

You are the God who works wonders, you manifested your might among the peoples.

You redeemed with your arm your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

Scripture Reading "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God." Read Romans 8:26-39

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *Please spend a few moments remembering those who are on our prayer list and the joys and concerns you bring to God today.*

Unison Prayer Patient and loving God, we come before you in a spirit of prayer this morning. Strengthen our faith, we ask, so that, in this time of unknowing, we may live as people who wait with hope and expectation. Help us be people who trust your promise shared with us in Jesus Christ, the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Set our hearts and minds on you that we may know your constant presence and everlasting love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Scripture Reading "The Kingdom of heaven is like....." Read Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Meditation One of the things we all learned in school as we grew up were the many aspects of grammar in the English language and, even though I learned them over again in each grade, I have to admit that to this day I still get them confused. When Jesus says, "The Kingdom of God is like....." is he using a

simile? Is it a metaphor? Perhaps it's an analogy? I'm going to say it's a simile because, in the gospel lesson we share today, he is telling us that the Kingdom of God is like something else, i.e. a mustard seed, some yeast, a treasure hidden in a field, a merchant in search of fine pearls, and a net thrown into the sea. That's a lot of similes! Jesus must have REALLY wanted to get his point across!

To do so, as we know Jesus did with each of his parables, he used an object which his listeners could readily identify. Like that mustard seed, for instance. Jesus' listeners knew that from the tiniest of seeds grows the biggest of trees. When his listeners applied this to their own lives, they were comforted to know that, even if they felt their faith was small, they could still do great things for the Kingdom of God. Think about trees. They start small and, through the years, grow taller and wider until many birds (and squirrels!) find a place among its many branches. That's how our faith works in God's Kingdom. My small act of faith joins with your small act of faith along with those of others and, before we know it, we have done GREAT things for God and our community. We all have a part to play in sharing God's love and making disciples for Jesus Christ. And we all matter in those efforts. That's the message Jesus has for us in the parables he shares in today's gospel. For this reason, we can take comfort in the words of the psalmist: "Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice." And, as the apostle Paul reminds the church in Rome, nothing – not even what we might think is a little amount of faith – can separate us from our loving God. In so many ways, we are all in this together – that is, in growing the Kingdom of God as faithful disciples for Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God.

Closing Benediction

May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit abide with each of us this week.

Glory be to our God who leads us forth as disciples who work to transform the world for Christ Jesus.



Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.