

# LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

August 30, 2020 Kingdomtide

“At Home Worship”

## Call to Worship

*How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts !*

**To you our hearts sing for joy.**

*Happy are those who live and pray in your house.*

**Happy are those who find their strength in you.**

*There is none like you in heaven or on earth.*

**We will dwell in your courts forever, O God.**

**Opening Prayer** Creating, loving, healing God, we gather together this day, although we are in different places and situations in life. In faith, we come before you in praise and worship, desiring to be fed with your love and healed with your grace. Fill us with wonder, O God, that we may proclaim your good news for all to hear. Open our ears, our mouths, and our hearts this day. In Christ Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

**Scripture Reading** *“Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.”* Read Psalm 84

**Prayer of Confession** Holy Source of Life, you promise to set us free from paths of fear, doubt, and denial. Yet we resist your invitation, seeing only what we must give up if we are to follow the path of Jesus. We doubt that you can bring water to the dry places of our lives or replace our suffering with joy. Forgive us when we turn away from your promise of abundant life. Heal us, Comforter God, and lead us home. Amen.

**Time of Silent Confession** *Our loving God invites us to share the confessions of our hearts that we may know the comfort and peace of forgiveness.*

**Words of Assurance** The God we serve is the God of life, the God of hope, the God of new beginnings. This we trust and, by this, we live in the new life given us in Jesus Christ by God’s mercy and grace. Thanks be to God.

**Scripture Reading** *“Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.”* Read Romans 12.9-21

**Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer** *We come to worship with many concerns upon our hearts but also joys in our lives. You are invited to share them with God in this time of silence.*

**Unison Prayer** Loving God, we worship you today, knowing that you are a God of steadfast love and grace. Carry us, we pray, out of our fears and doubts into the glorious message of your saving love and constant presence. Bless us with your truth and wisdom, that we might be a blessing to others, revealing your promises to others through our words and our actions. You shower our lives with your peace, peace which comes to us through our relationship with your own Son, Jesus Christ. Hear us now as we pray the prayer that he taught us...

## The Lord’s Prayer

**Scripture Reading** *“...those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”* Read Matthew 16.21-28

**Meditation** “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?” These are the questions we heard Jesus ask his disciples in our reading from Matthew’s gospel last week. Speaking for his friends, Peter was quick to respond, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.” Despite Peter’s confession, we wonder if he really understood the meaning of those words. What kind of a messiah did he want? Perhaps he was envisioning another King David. Maybe he wanted someone to lead a rebellion so that

Jesus could reign. Or he might have longed for a strong military ruler who would oust the Romans for good. Whatever or whoever it was that Peter and his companions were looking for, it is a good bet that the Jesus who was leading them was far from it. Consider the words we heard in today's reading: "From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." What?! No, this was not likely the messiah they were looking for. In fact, at Jesus' proclamation, Peter refutes him strongly, "God forbid it, Lord."

Despite the expectations, neither Peter or the disciples or we ourselves get the Messiah we *want*. Instead we get the Messiah we *need* – the one who asks us to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him. Likewise, Jesus, our Messiah, is the one who reminds us that those who want to save their life will lose it and those who lose their life for the sake of Jesus will find it. Is that really the messiah we need? Yes, it is for our God "wants mercy from us rather than strength. God wants forgiveness over judgment. God wants grace and vulnerability over power and glory." Or as another commentator explains, "Jesus calls us to a life of single-minded obedience.... Jesus calls us to be different, to be holy, to grow in likeness with him. But with that demanding call to obedience comes a gift – the gift of abundant life in Christ – if we lost our life in service to Christ and his kingdom, we will find a life beyond our imagining." The apostle Paul describes the life that we are called to live after the example of Jesus Christ, our Messiah, "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer." May it be so. Amen.

**Words of Benediction** Go forth in the love of God to proclaim the mercy and grace of Christ. Go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit filled with hope and peace. Go forth!



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