

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

October 11, 2020 Kingdomtide

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

Come, and worship the Lord our God.

We come to seek God’s grace.

Christ hears our every word, our every cry.

We need God’s healing touch.

Take heart; have faith, for Christ has called us here.

Come, and worship the Lord our God.

Opening Prayer Ever-Creating God, 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 the world. Claim us as your own, we pray, that we may go forth in the wholeness of faith. Amen.

Scripture Reading “...but Moses implored the Lord his God.”

Read Exodus 32.1-14

Prayer of Confession Jesus, child of God, hear our cries and have mercy upon us, we pray. Grant us your grace for all the broken places of our lives. Jesus, child of God, hear our cries and grant us your peace, that we may know your healing touch and be restored to the fullness of life in your holy name. All this we ask as we worship and praise your name. 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 Come and see that the Lord is good for in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are forgiven; we are made whole.

In Christ Jesus, God is able to save us, to heal us, to reconcile us with one another. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading “...the God of peace will be with you.”

Read Philippians 4.4-9

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.*

Responsive Prayer (insert)

The Lord’s Prayer

Scripture Reading “give... to God the things that are God’s.”

Read Matthew 22.15-22

Meditation We almost always respect and appreciate persistence. We admire those who set goals – to attain a college degree, to receive a promotion at work, to reach a fitness target – and many more. Persistence is a good thing – well, in the right context, that is. For the last few weeks in our readings from Matthew’s gospel we have seen the characteristic of persistence used not for good but exactly the opposite. Time and time again we read of the wily ways that the chief priests and elders use in their attempt to trap Jesus. They want to expose him as disobedient to the Torah, the laws of Israel, or to the laws of Rome. And in this week’s verses, they think they have discovered the way to do just that. “Tell us, then, what you think,” they say to Jesus. “Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” They understood well the implications of Jesus’ answer. To say that taxes should not be paid would appear as if Jesus advocated violating Roman law; this would make it likely that he would be indicted. However, to say that taxes should be paid would be to recognize the emperor and thus violate the law of Israel. It was the perfect trap – or so they thought. They must have forgotten who it was they were setting up!

In response to their question, Jesus did what he had consistently done in these schemes: he refused to answer them. Instead, he takes a coin and points out a simple truth: “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” Yet again, Jesus turns the tables on those who seek to use his words against him. He doesn’t set up a dichotomy between the secular and the religious (even though the church vs. state separation has been perpetuated through the centuries). What Jesus is really reminding us is that God is our ultimate ruler, that God’s Kingdom rather than allegiance to a particular government should be first and foremost in our lives. Everything belongs to God anyway! We should give to the state what belongs to the state, i.e. taxes but remember to give God our ultimate loyalty.

The apostle Paul sums up the perfect way to live as God’s Kingdom people in his benedictory words to the faithful in the Philippian church: *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”*

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.” Amen!

Words of Benediction Go forth into the world God created in faithful covenant with the One who calls us. Go forth into God’s world to be instruments of Jesus’ love and peace. Go forth into God’s world to live out the Spirit’s gifts of wisdom and understanding. Go forth in God’s name.



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