

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

August 22, 2021 Kingdomtide 13

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

As we worship, rest assured that God is present here.

Open your hearts and find the God that dwells within.

Hope in God and trust this truth: God’s love and grace are yours.

God calls us to share that love and grace in all the world as we celebrate the abundance of our blessings.

Opening Prayer God of love and grace, as you welcome us here this day, we also welcome you to be within and among us. Breathe your love and grace into our very being. Open our hearts that we may know the truth of your presence and the glory of your love as we worship and give thanks for all that we are and all that we have. Amen.

Scripture Reading *“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end”*
Read Lamentations 3.22-26

Prayer of Confession Caring God, when you ask what you can do for us, we ask for creature comforts and an easy life; when you offer us wisdom, we chase after our own desires. We misuse your precious gift of time, pursuing foolish things. We forget that you are the true bread that nourishes our souls. Give us wise hearts, we pray, that we may turn to you and find our way. Feed us with the bread of life, that we may walk in faithfulness before you. 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 God’s love is steadfast and faithful; God is

gracious and merciful. In God, we are a forgiven people. In the love of God, we are made whole. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading *“...you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”* Read Ephesians 3.14-21

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.*

A Time of Prayer

We have drawn near to God in a spirit of prayer.

We give thanks and praise, for God is good. God’s love endures forever! (R)

God hears our prayers, celebrating with us our joys and holding us close in our struggles. (R)

We rest in God’s unfailing love as we pray for one another and those we love. (R)

We offer these prayers in the holy name of Jesus, who taught us to pray together, saying..... **The Lord’s Prayer**

Scripture Reading *“This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”* Read John 6.1-14

Meditation From the moment we are born until that time when we take our last earthly breath, we all share at least one thing in common: no matter where we live, how old we are, the color of our eyes or the color of our hair, we all need nourishment in order to live. For that reason, food plays an enormous part in our lives.

While Jesus often talked about being spiritually fed, he also knew how vital to our well being food actually is. Therefore, after he and his disciples reached the other side of the lake and went up on the mountain to sit down, they saw the large crowd that had been following them. Jesus wanted to take care of the people and so he asked Philip where they might buy some food. And

when Philip wasn't too much help, it was Simon Peter who spoke up to offer a solution: "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish." However, Peter had a very practical question: "But what are they among so many people?" Jesus was not deterred; instead, he asked for the people to sit down and then he took the loaves and, after giving God thanks, he broke the bread and had it distributed among the people. Likewise, Jesus did the same with the fish. After the disciples had shared this food with the crowd, an amazing twelve baskets full of food left over! A miracle? You bet!

This is a story about a miracle but also it's a story about generosity. There was a need, namely for people to be fed, and it was met which, in turn, allowed the people gathered there to stay and hear Jesus preach. Their physical needs were met and, quite likely, something that Jesus shared in his preaching fulfilled their spiritual hunger as well.

Win, win! All because Jesus modeled generosity. All because, in his radical hospitality for those in the crowd, there was room for everyone – and then some! No one went without.

This is a story of God's generosity, of God's hospitality but it is also a story that, like the parables of Jesus which we've been hearing, invites us to find ourselves in its verses. Do you live with an attitude of abundance or an attitude of scarcity? Do you truly stop to consider how richly blessed your life is or are you constantly wishing you had more? Those are important questions for us to ask ourselves – especially as we live with so many needs and concerns in our communities and in the world around us which need our attention and our generosity.

Just as Jesus was bold to believe that 5,000 plus could be fed with five loaves and two fish, so, too, do we need to be bold to believe that, as Psalm 17 reminds us, we are the apple of God's eye. God is blessing us so that, in turn, we may be a blessing to others. That miracle happens only by the power of God!

Words of Benediction In the name of God, our Creator, who gives us everything we need....In the name of Christ Jesus, our Master, whose love sustains us....In the name of the Holy Spirit, whose power strengthens our faith and increases our love.... We enter this new week with grateful hearts.



Kingdomtide

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