

# LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

September 12, 2021     Kingdomtide 16

“At Home Worship”

## Call to Worship

*Come and praise the Lord.*

**Come to seek God’s grace.**

*Christ hears our every cry.*

**We need God’s healing touch.**

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

**Come to praise the Lord.**

**Opening Prayer**    Holy Lord, our Light and our Salvation, open our heart to hear the word you proclaim to us this day. Open our minds to embrace the life you hold before us. Show us the way of unity, that we may live generously, sharing your light and your love with one another after the example of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

**Scripture Reading**    *“I will make my words known to you....”*

Read Proverbs 1.20-33

**Prayer of Confession**    Out of our deepest need, we pray to you, O God. Forgive us when we expect the worst; forgive us when we live with anger and bitterness, rather than kindness and love. Restore us with the gift of your grace, and fill us with the power of the Holy Spirit that we may grow into a people of peace and love. In Christ’s name, we pray. 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**    Rise in joy and hope for God will lift you

up and fill you with good things. Thanks be to our God.

**Scripture Reading**    *“For all of us make many mistakes....”*

Read James 3.1-12

**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 Special Prayer in Remembrance of 9-11**    (insert)

## The Lord’s Prayer

**Scripture Reading**    *“And what about you? Who do you say*

*that I am?”*     Read Mark 8.27-38

**Meditation**    Our gospel reading for today has long been one of my favorite passages. These words which Mark shares conjure up images in our minds of Jesus walking along the dusty road with his disciples; they are likely conversing with one another, commenting on the scenery, or perhaps talking over the last encounter Jesus had with the people who were coming to know and follow him. In the midst of all this, Jesus seeks out their opinion to a very important question. “Who do people say that I am?” No doubt he was curious as to how he was being perceived. Did people think he was just another military-type ruler or do they truly understand that he was entirely different? The disciples tell him that people think of him as important to their lives and history as one of the prophets whom God sent. That was high praise.

Then, having asked that question, Jesus turns once again to the disciples but this time with a far more personal question, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?” While it was important for Jesus to know what those in the crowds who kept flocking to him were thinking, it was exceedingly important for

Jesus to understand what the disciples themselves were thinking. Did they “get it?” Was Jesus more than a friend with whom they were sharing their time? He wanted to know.

Of course, it was Simon Peter who answers for them all. “You are the Messiah,” he says boldly. Jesus must have been so proud of them. His closest friends understood all that he had been teaching them.

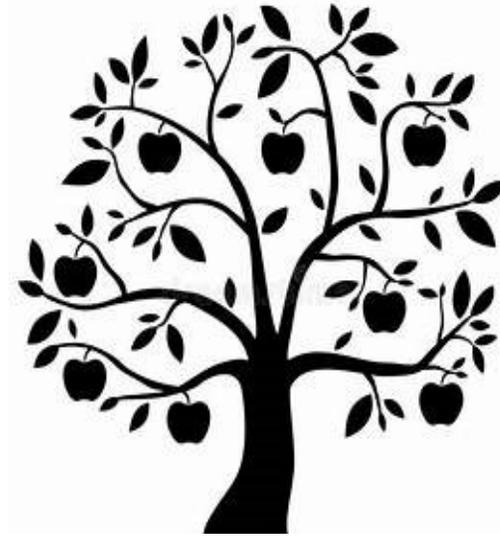
And then Jesus says something to them that must have been so very confusing. Mark’s gospel relates it in this way: “*And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.*” What was he saying, they must have thought!

But Jesus explained himself, foreshadowing his future betrayal, suffering, death, and resurrection. And in the face of what could only have been described as nonsense, Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him for predicting such things. And Jesus response to this rebuke? He referred to Peter as “Satan.” It was not a pleasant conversation, to say the least.

But it was a necessary one. Jesus needed his disciples – of his day and now ours – to know exactly what it means to call him our Messiah. This gospel, says one commentator, is “meant to rock the status quo.” And certainly it does for Jesus goes on to remind the disciples that it will be only as they lose their lives for him and for the sake of the gospel that they will truly live. Once again, what?? What would it mean to take up their crosses and follow him? The disciples would clearly find out.

So it is with each of us today – if we are very serious about truly living as Christ’s disciples. Being a Christian often means going against societal norms; it often means standing out while we stand up for all that Christ would have us do. More than anything, it means living lives that show others who we say that Jesus is every day. So, what about you? Who do you say that Jesus is? May God bless us in this endeavor.

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



*Kingdomtide*

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