

# LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

October 3, 2021 Kingdomtide 19

“At Home Worship”

## Call to Worship

*Through the abundance of your steadfast love, O God,  
we will enter your house.*

*We will bow down in awe in your holy temple.*

**We will listen to your holy Word.**

*We will follow the path you lay before us.*

**We will worship you in love and gratitude.**

**Opening Prayer** God, as we gather in this sacred community of faith, we remember that our congregation is but one of the many parts of your eternal and universal church. Though we come from different backgrounds, we are all part of the body of Christ. Make us ever mindful and understanding of the suffering of our members, jubilant in their joys and present in their struggles. We pray for our continued ministry with our brothers and sisters around the world. May we see ourselves one day as you see us. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

**Scripture Reading** “*There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.*” Read Job 1.1; 2.1-10

**Prayer of Confession** Gracious God, you are the author of life, the power of our salvation. When our strength fails, carry us to the path of faithful living. When, with our sinful ways and closed hearts, we reject your salvation, set our minds on you, that we may return to your loving presence and guiding light. Raise us up to new life, we pray, that we may be children of the resurrection each and every day. 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** Hear the good news: everyone who believes in Christ receives forgiveness of sins through his name. In the name of the One in whom Christians around the world believe, we are forgiven and loved by the God of steadfast love. Amen

**Scripture Reading** “*... in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.*” Read Hebrews 1.1-4; 2.5-12

**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 Litany for World Communion Sunday (insert) and The Lord’s Prayer**

**Scripture Reading** “*Let the children come to me...*”  
Read Mark 10.13-16

**Meditation** *(Today’s meditation has been adapted from an online resource)* Ruth Graham, the spouse of Billy Graham, wrote in *Christianity Today* of how Malcolm Muggeridge, at one time England’s chief skeptic and agnostic of the airwaves, in his later years became a committed follower of Christ. Subsequently he was invited to speak at a prominent church. Many local atheists arrived to heckle Muggeridge as a traitor to their cause. Most of the questions revolved around the issue of ‘Why have you let us down?’ Muggeridge noticed a boy in a wheelchair who was having difficulty speaking. When the boy continued to struggle, still unable to say what he wanted, Muggeridge said, “There is someone who wants to ask me a question. I will wait and answer it.”

When the boy managed only to make more agonized motions, Muggeridge stepped forward, put his arm on the boy’s shoulder and said, “Just take it easy, Son. It’s all right. What is it you want

to ask me? I want to hear, and I will just wait.” The boy blurted, “You say there is a God who loves us.” “Yes,” the world renowned scholar spoke compassionately.

“Then” asked the boy, “why me?” What a hard question! I’m sure, the author continues, Job asked it many times. The room in which Muggeridge was speaking became as silent as . Even Mr. Muggeridge didn’t speak at first. But after thinking through his answer, he said, “If you were fit, would you have come to hear me tonight?” The boy shook his head. After another silence, Muggeridge answered, “God has asked a hard thing of you. But remember, he asked something even harder of Jesus Christ. He died for you. Maybe this was his way of making sure you’d hear of his love and come to put your faith in him.” “Could be,” the boy replied.

I’m not sure, the author comments, that Sir Malcolm’s answer to the boy’s question was very satisfying. But notice: Job didn’t really find an answer to that question either except to keep holding on to his faith in God and in the end he would see that, indeed, his Redeemer lives.

If you read through the Bible, or through the pages of human history, you discover that God works through strengths and weaknesses, through wins and losses, through victories and heartbreaks. If we could control the future, we would eliminate all frustrations and heartbreaks. But then we’d also miss out on opportunities for growth, for faith, for compassion, for overcoming. We would miss out on the grace of God. It is in holding on, enduring, not giving up on God, that we see God’s power and God’s love most clearly. And we learn that we can trust God through every circumstance, even when we cannot see God.

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion** (insert)

**Words of Benediction** As we gather with Christians around the world, we acknowledge that, with Christ as our center, we are renewed in hope. With Christ as our center, we are called to serve. With Christ as our center, we are sent forth in love.



## *Kingdomtide*

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