

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

November 1, 2020 All Saints' Day

"At Home Worship"

Call to Worship

We will bless the Lord at all times.

God's praise will continually be in our mouths!

O magnify the Lord with me,

And let us exalt God's name together!

Blessing and glory, wisdom and honor, power and might,

Be to our God forever and ever.

Opening Prayer God of new beginnings, you are the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. Gather us in, we pray, that we may remember the ties that bind us together in your love. Write your law upon our hearts, that others may find us to be kind and generous, like those saints gone before us. We pray that you will strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may live in love – a love that transforms our lives even as we transform the lives of others. Amen.

Scripture Reading *"Draw near and hear the words of the LORD your God."* Read Joshua 3:3-17

Prayer of Confession Helper God, be the hope that overcomes our despair; be the love that overcomes our hatred; be the mercy that overcomes our sin. Set us free from the prisons of our own making, and release us from the bonds that bind us. Welcome us home into the loving arms of your mercy. 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 We are not far from the Kingdom of God, for in Christ we are given grace and forgiveness. Praise God for this marvelous gift given to the saints gone before us and to each one of us. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading *"lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory."* Read I Thessalonians 2:9-13

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.*

A Time of Silent Prayer and Remembrance of our Saints

The Lord's Prayer

Scripture Reading *"All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted."*
Read Matthew 23:1-12

Meditation The verse above is translated in Eugene Peterson's *The Message* in this way: *"Be a servant. If you puff yourself up, you'll get the wind knocked out of you. But if you're content to simply be yourself, your life will count for plenty."* "Content to simply be yourself!" What great advice! Being our own unique self means realizing that God has blessed each of us with our very own gifts and talents. For instance, I know – without any doubt – that understanding mathematics is NOT one of my gifts. Never was and, I'm pretty certain, never will be! But I am grateful for the gifts that God has given me which allow me to serve Him every day.

What gifts has God given to you? And, once you recognize them, how do you use them to God's glory? Taking stock of one's gifts and using them is not exalting oneself - if one recognizes that God is the giver and we are using them not for our own

advancement but to make a difference for the Kingdom of God - as this quote reminds us: “Not everyone has the same gifts or fulfills the same role in the community, but all are children of the same God and students of the same teacher, Jesus. Everyone has a role to play and gifts to contribute in God’s Kingdom.”

The Lord’s instructions to Joshua were to select twelve men, one from each of the tribes of Israel. It’s highly likely that Joshua chose men with the gifts to lead their people. Theirs was an important task so those who could organize others, share a vision, encourage others to follow – those were the individuals that Joshua would have chosen.

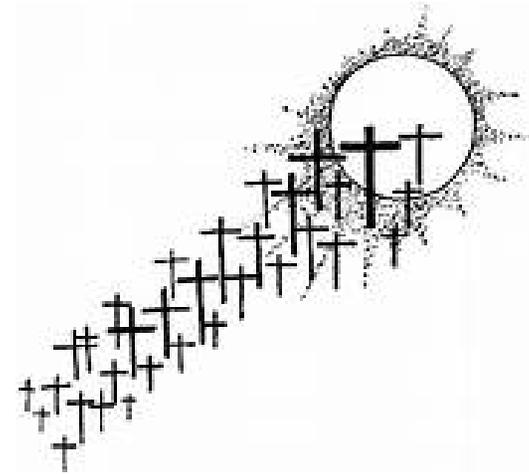
Writing to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul speaks of “urging and encouraging” his readers on their journeys of faith. Paul wants these new Christians to be the best they can be and to use the gifts that God has bestowed upon them – once again – for the good of God’s Kingdom.

The majority of today’s gospel reading focuses on the kind of role models that Jesus does NOT want us to be; he cites many of the behaviors of those scribes and Pharisees who have been giving him a hard time in so many of our recent readings. If we stop and think about those persons who have been our role models, chances are that they do not resemble those whose way of living Jesus criticizes. Thanks be to God for that gift! May we live our lives after their example and, ultimately, after the example of Jesus.

So, in the coming days, I encourage each of us to consider the good gifts that God has bestowed upon each one of us for we are all blessed - blessed to be a blessing for others. How do you use your unique self to make a difference in the lives of others and for the Kingdom of God?

Love Feast *Please use the liturgy on the insert to celebrate this feast*

Words of Benediction Glory be to our God who has blessed us with the saints of our lives and who leads us forth as disciples who work to transform the world for Jesus.



All Saints’ Day

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