

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

October 4, 2020 Kingdomtide

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

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

We open our 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.

Opening Prayer God, we remember that our church family 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 “...you shall have no other gods before me”

Read Exodus 20.1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Prayer of Confession Litany for World Communion Sunday
(insert)

(Though not specifically a prayer of confession, these words do remind us of our sinfulness in our unity as one people, God’s people. Please pray this litany in a spirit of confession.)

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 “I press on toward the goal...”

Read Philippians 3.4b-14

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.*

Prayer O Lord God, we seek to set our minds on you this day. We ask for your strength as we continue to navigate this uncharted territory; we hope for your light to shine upon us that we may, by your grace, make a way where sometimes the path is unclear. By the power of your Spirit, teach us how to live as your Kingdom people and be the disciples of Jesus that you would have us be. We are grateful that you hear the joys and concerns of all those who call upon your holy name; hear us now as we pray as Christ our Savior has taught us, saying.....

The Lord’s Prayer

Scripture Reading “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone” Read Matthew 21.33-46

Meditation Throughout the years I have had a rather fluid opinion of the apostle Paul and his writings. Overall, I hold him in great esteem; after all, his ministry for Jesus Christ continues to be so life-changing for countless people the world over that his letters have been preserved in the canon of Scripture. However, at times there are passages where I am perplexed by what seems like boasting and then there are passages which sum up my faith

journey to a “t.” And, as in today’s reading from the Letter to the Philippians, there are passages which include both! Paul begins today’s verses by sharing his credentials, telling his readers exactly what makes him confident, tracing his ancestry back to the days of the tribes of Israel. That’s impressive, if not a tad boastful. However, Paul redeems himself from his boastful ways when we realize that he has shared his “pedigree” in order to make a point: the point that all of it pales in comparison to what Paul receives as a follower of Jesus Christ. To gain a righteousness based on faith in Christ is the ultimate blessing for Paul and he works toward just that, as he tells the Philippians: “... but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

In telling yet another parable, Jesus tries to share a similar message with those elders and teachers of the law who keep waiting and watching for something that Jesus says or does so that they can charge him with blasphemy. Regardless of their bravado, Jesus offers them this warning: “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.” In what we might call an “aha moment,” finally they realize that Jesus is talking about them! Their lives are lived in strict adherence to the law of Moses, so strict in fact that there is little room for God’s grace. Jesus tells them more than once that he has come, not to abolish those sacred laws, but to fulfill them, to live out the love that God has for all of us. The goal which the apostle Paul writes of is the truly righteous life that Jesus comes to offer us, the life that Jesus hopes for the elders and chief priests - and you and me as well. So, let us press on toward that goal!

Words of Benediction We join with the faithful around the world knowing that we are a people loved by God. We rejoice that we are a people blessed with grace and hope. May the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the courage of the Holy Spirit strengthen our faith and set us loose to share God’s love with all.



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