

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

November 8, 2020 Kingdomtide

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

Give thanks and sing of God’s mercy and grace.

We sing of God’s amazing love.

Rejoice and offer praise, for Christ is here.

We worship the One who lives.

Walk in the light; live in God’s love.

Redeemed and reclaimed, we worship the God of mercy and grace.

Opening Prayer God of abundant mercy and grace, pour your love and your Spirit upon us, that we may recognize our abundance and give our love and our lives completely and freely to you. Speak to us in this holy time of worship as we gather before you to praise your holy name. In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading *“The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.”* Read Joshua 24:1-3a; 14-25

Prayer of Confession O Lord, you created all that is, and yet we forget to whom we belong. You have ordered this world according to your purposes, and yet we neglect your ways. You have created us in your image and likeness, and yet we misuse your gifts of freedom and power. Forgive us, O God, for the ways we fail to care for your good earth; forgive us for taking for granted all your blessings of life and truth; forgive us when we fail to see the good in the world. Forgive us, gracious God, for our self-centered pride, and pardon us for our ingratitude. Restore to us the joy of serving you in Christ’s name. 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 Christ’s gift of forgiveness is true and everlasting. Receive this good news: we are forgiven and redeemed. Amen.

Scripture Reading *“Therefore, encourage one another.”*
Read I Thessalonians 4.13-18

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 For the goodness of your creation, we thank and praise you, O God. For the fellowship we enjoy in Christ, we rejoice. For the power and freedom you bestow we offer our lives in service to the Spirit’s reign. As we pray for those we love who are in need of your quieting presence, we place our trust in you and you alone. May we be blessed by the grace you offer us in Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.....

The Lord’s Prayer

Scripture Reading *“Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”* Read Matthew 25.1-13

Meditation It is Election Day 2020 as I write this meditation for us this week. After what seems like years, the day has finally arrived; now we wait for the results and rejoice that this way-too-expensive campaign is over at last. Despite all of the polling that has been reported, we can’t predict the real outcome of any of the races until the votes have all been counted. Voting is one exercise where we can’t wait to see how it may turn out and then vote at the last minute, especially if like millions of us, you voted early.

Waiting to see how things turn out is never a good strategy but it's what those foolish maids in the parable from Matthew's gospel did. As was the custom of Jesus' day, the ten maids were awaiting the coming of the bridegroom. When all the preparations had been made, he would go through the streets and call everyone to come to the wedding feast. Not knowing how long the wait would be, five of those maids brought extra oil with them; they didn't want to be found wanting. In contrast, the foolish maids didn't bother to be prepared. And, what's more, they thought they could just use some of the oil that the wiser maids had brought along. Not so fast, foolish maids!

The master of storytelling, Jesus talked about preparing for a wedding – something his listeners understood – but what he was truly referring to was our readiness to be a part of God's Kingdom when he comes again. Just like the wedding guests, we aren't sure when that time will be. Will it be today? Tomorrow? In the morning? In the evening? We don't know; that's why Jesus offers us some sage advice: *"Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."* Given that reality, it is incumbent upon each one of us to live as Jesus would have us do every day, to pay attention to our journeys of faith and grow as Christ's disciples. Even though we do so within the community of faith, we must remember that it is our very own faith journey for which we must be accountable. In other words, we can't get into heaven with someone else's oil!

Fanny Crosby was a great hymn writer, a woman who lived out her deep faith in her words. She penned lyrics based on this passage from Matthew 25. Here is the final verse: *"Blessed are those whom the Lord finds watching, In his glory they shall share; If he shall come at the dawn or midnight, Will he find us watching there?"*

Words of Benediction May the Lord of our lives – Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit - bless you and keep you in the week ahead for we go forth as the faithful people of God, as strong disciples for Christ. May God go with us!



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