




**LA JOLLA
UNITED METHODIST**

Living the Future Now

Sunday, February 23, 2025
Seventh Sunday After the Epiphany
www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Berceuse

Louis Vierne/Arr. Hopson
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Call to Worship

One: Jesus teaches us, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” But who are the others?

All: Our enemies and friends, family and strangers.

One: Jesus teaches us, “Be merciful as your Father is merciful.” But what is mercy?

All: To act with compassion, to help without expecting anything in return.

One: Jesus teaches us, “Forgive, and you will be forgiven.” But how do we forgive?

All: By recognizing enemies, friends, family, strangers, and ourselves as people in need of compassion.

One: Let us worship God, who loves us and empowers us to love one another with mercy and compassion.

All: Come, let us worship! Thanks be to God! Amen.

Introit

O Come, Let Us Sing Unto the Lord

Arr. Donald Moore
©1994 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.

Welcome

† Opening Hymn

God, How Can We Forgive

TFWS 2169

1. God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn?
How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?
When human loving fails and every hope is gone,
your love gives strength beyond our own to face the dawn.
2. When we have missed the mark, and tears of anguish flow,
how can you still release our guilt, the debt we owe?
The ocean depth of grace surpasses all our needs.
A priest who shares our human pain, Christ intercedes.
3. Who dares to throw the stone to damn another’s sin,
when you, while knowing all our past, forgive again?
No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.
As you, O God, forgive our sin, may we forgive.

Blessing for Young Hearts

Prayers of the People

*A Pastor will begin a time of prayer and name those for whom our congregation is praying.
Online Worshipers may type prayer requests in the Live Chat, taking care for privacy.*

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

Amen

Arr. Donald Moore
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WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Luke 6:27-38 (NRSVue)

“But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

Scriptural Response

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God! Amen**

Anthem

Lord, Listen to Your Children

Ken Medema/Arr. Schrader
©1983 Crescendo Publications, Inc.

Message

Living the Future Now

Rev. Bob Rhodes

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

How Can I Keep from Singing?
Dorian Bells

Robert Lowry/Arr. Santa Eithun
©2024 Choristers Guild

† Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Confession

All: God, we are so conditioned to respond in kind. We are so worried that when the reckoning comes, we will find ourselves left with the short end of the stick. And not without reason. The powerful take and take and lie and lie and oppress and oppress, seemingly without consequence. Teach us to love with skill. Teach us to love with precision. Teach us to love with abandon, trusting that when we step into the ocean of your abundant love, we will receive the blessings of your abundant life. Amen.

One: God's love and mercy are freely available to all. When we trust and delight in God's mercy, we are better able to show this mercy to those around us. Because God can do this, you can do it. We can do it together! In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

WE FOLLOW CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

† Closing Hymn

For the Healing of the Nations

UMH 428

1. For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
to a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word,
help us rise and pledge our word.
2. Lead us forward into freedom; from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase,
fear will die and hope increase.
3. All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned;
pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span,
may we hallow life's brief span.
4. You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind,
that by our response and service earth its destiny may find,
earth its destiny may find.

† **Benediction**

Postlude

O Worship the King

William Gardiner/Arr. Wolaver
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Liturgical elements from *Discipleship Ministries (UMC)* and *The Abingdon Worship Annual*.

Flowers: from Margie Herrick in loving memory of her husband, Bob, on his birthday
Liturgist: Kathy Dombrowski
Organist: Bob Wuertz
Pianist: Rebecca Cosford
Ushers: Cindy Rushing, Gail Chatfield, Ann Davis, Ann Gonsalves, Janet Lind,
Leigh Kramer, Jean Thomas, Betsy Witt
Tech Team: AJ Prat, Cam Rhodes

LJUMC Ministry Team

Rev. Bob Rhodes, Lead Pastor; Bob Wuertz, Music Ministries Director;
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