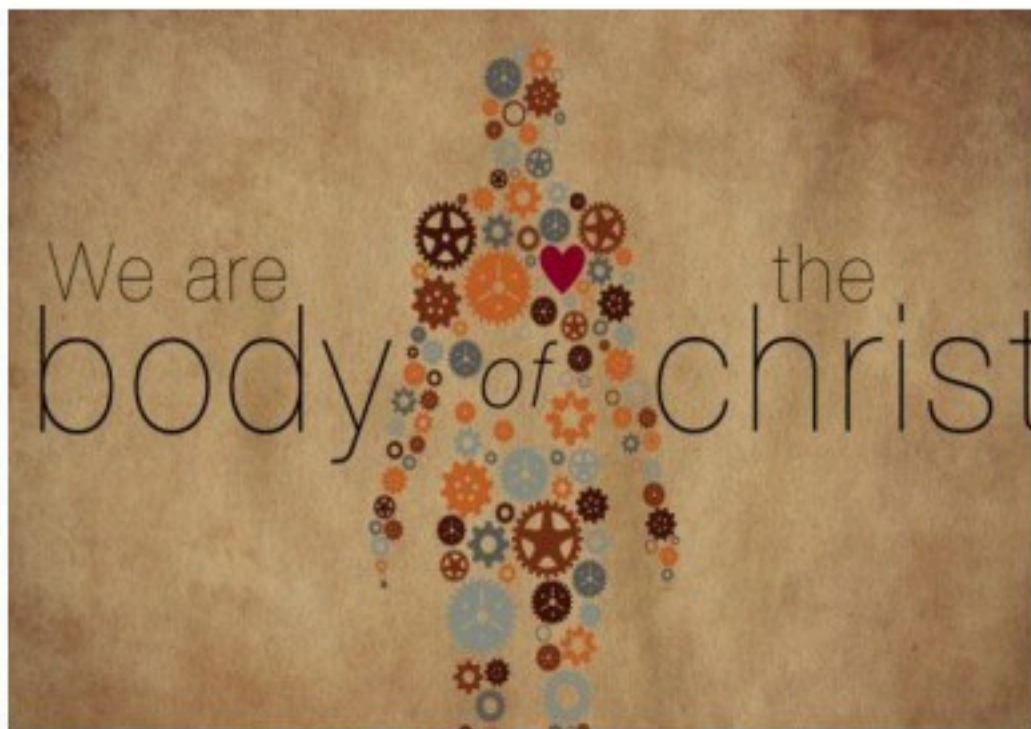


CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LACONIA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OCTOBER 6, 2024 9:30 A.M.

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING AND JUST PEACE CHURCH



Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

Lighting the Christ Candle

Call to Worship

O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

We proclaim your name to the whole human family.

We praise you in the midst of this congregation:

O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Let us continue to praise our majestic Creator.

***Hymn 333**

O Bread of Life

Prayer of Confession

Sovereign God, who are we humans, that you pay any attention to us? And yet, you have entrusted us to care for all of creation. We confess the times we have thought too highly of ourselves, and the ways we have twisted our charge to care for creation into permission to dominate and subdue it.

We confess the same human tendencies to dominate and subdue other people. It is easy for us to ignore or take for granted our own privilege, rather than seeking to dismantle unjust systems of supremacy. Your desire is for peace, but so often we choose comfort and call it peace. Remind us of who we are, and whose we are. Remind us of our interdependence with creation, and our dependence on you, our Creator. Set our hearts and minds on your will, made known to us in Jesus Christ.

Moment of Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news: we are all children of the one God, fully known and deeply loved as we are. Jesus is not ashamed to call us his beloved siblings and family. Our sin is forgiven, we are made one with Christ and with each other. Thanks be to God!

Passing of the Peace

Sung Response

Anthem

Scripture: Mark 9: 38-48

“John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name,^u and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.” “But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. “For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

“If any of you cause one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies and the fire is never quenched.

Sermon

Prayers of the People

Invitation to the Table**

On this World Communion Sunday, we celebrate that we join our Christian siblings across the globe as we gather around this table. This table extends far beyond our place of worship, and there is room for all. Can you see it?

Can we envision the great diversity of God’s children, celebrating today in a global diaspora, foreshadowing God’s beloved community? At this table, Christ is our host, and we are all guests, invited to be renewed in our discipleship as we share in a taste of what is yet to come.

Come taste and see that God is good!

Communion Prayer**

God of all, there is nothing more right than to give you thanks and praise. In a dance of creative spark and divine love, you made all that is: Dazzling galaxies and pulsing protozoa, canopies of green leaves and ocean floors of living coral. You created humanity, and called it very good. You gave us intellect and the capacity for growth, but we misused our gifts. We turned from you, but you did not turn from us. You sent Jesus to show us the depth of your love for us, to call us back to faithfulness by the example of his own life, and to welcome us as his siblings and your beloved children. He came as a teacher, a healer, and a peacemaker, but in living out your love, he encountered and confronted the death-dealing systems of this world. In sharing and showing your love, he held nothing back, until his mission was complete. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, we continue to walk in the way that Jesus opened before us; we have the courage to face down the powers of death, secure in your abiding promises of new life. And so we are bold to pray, in the presence of the Spirit and of the great cloud of witnesses:

Prayer of our Savior

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Blessing of the Elements

Sharing of the Elements

All of the elements are gluten-free and non-alcoholic. To receive, please come forward one row at a time up the center aisle. Take a piece of bread, dip it into the chalice, and partake; then return to your seats via the side aisles.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Majestic and eternal God, you have fed us with the bread of life and satisfied us with the cup of salvation. As we rise from this table, may we remember its expanse, and our connection to our siblings in Christ around the globe. Make us instruments of your peace and messengers of your love in thought, word, and deed. Make us one with you and all of creation through the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mission in Motion Moment

Offertory

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Holy God, we trust in the provision of your love and the abundance of your grace. May the gifts we offer sow seeds of peace and justice. Enable us to use them according to your will, until each child finds welcome, and all of creation is healed and reconciled to you. Amen.

***Closing Hymn 340**

We Are People on a Journey

***Benediction**

Choral Response

Postlude

** prayers adapted from a liturgy written by the Rev. Stephanie Sorge and posted in the Presbyterian Outlook.

Altar Flowers

Donated by the Diaconate Committee in honor of Pastor Tweed's Installation

Order Free COVID-19 Tests

<https://www.special.usps.com/testkits> As of September 28. Households across the country can order four additional over-the-counter COVID-19 tests for free.