



Oaklette United Methodist Church

"God's Body in this Community"

"Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people."

February 2, 2025

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER

Loving, sustaining God, like the mighty oak, may our branches at Oaklette church embrace those around us in this community. Use us as an instrument to welcome and shelter your people. Deepen our roots so that our branches are strong. Let the Holy Spirit flow like a river through our church, so that we may do your will. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE: Luke 4:21-30 [NIV]

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'"

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

PRELUDE

“In Holy Communion”

DANA MOODY

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Children of God, we come to worship today with expectations: how we expect to feel, what we expect to experience, songs we expect to sing, or prayers we expect to pray. We find comfort in the familiar.

We come to worship, expecting God to meet us here.

Sometimes what feels familiar grows stale. We stop noticing the power of our prayers. We hear but don't listen to the Word. We sing without letting the music seep into our hearts. Yet, God is still here, moving and working among us.

We come to worship, expecting God to meet us here.

We may meet God in a familiar voice speaking a hard word, in a song we love that pierces our hearts, in a prayer that we receive in a new way. Because God is here, moving and working among us.

We come to worship, expecting God to meet us here.

Children of God, come! Let us worship, ready to embrace God's Word already at work among us, even when we are challenged to recognize God in the familiar and unfamiliar alike.

We come to worship, expecting God to meet us here. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, June 2024.

OPENING PRAYER

In a cynical and despairing world, O God,
give us a quietly prophetic voice to proclaim your hope.

In a violent and angry world, O God,
give us a quietly prophetic voice to proclaim your peace.

In a dismissive and disinterested world, O God,
give us a quietly prophetic voice to proclaim your compassion.

In a lonely and inhospitable world, O God,
give us a quietly prophetic voice to proclaim your love.

In a grieving and weeping world, O God,
give us a quietly prophetic voice to proclaim your joy.

May we be so captivated by your hope, O God, that we cannot help but to whisper, to sing, and to enact the message of your reign that is always coming into our world; and may our quietly prophetic lives be channels of your restoring grace wherever we may go.

Amen.

Written by John van de Laar and posted on Sacredise.com

1. I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth.
at Bethlehem I had my birth.

Refrain

Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
and I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

2. I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
but they would not dance and they would not follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
they came to me and the dance went on.

Refrain

3. I danced on the Sabbath when I cured the lame,
the holy people said it was a shame;
they whipped and they stripped and they hung me high;
and they left me there on a cross to die.

Refrain

4. I danced on a Friday and the sky turned black;
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
but I am the dance and I still go on.

Refrain

5. They cut me down and I leapt up high,
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Refrain

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

God, you share with us words of hope, words of Good News. But sometimes, we are unable to hear them because the source is too familiar. You call us to share the Good News with those around us. But sometimes we are unable to share, because the people know us too well. You encourage us to send messengers to other places where they will be heard better. But we can be jealous, wanting the Good News to be for us, not them.

In the multitude of ways we can and have subverted your message of freedom and healing, in all the ways we have kept the Jubilee year from happening, we have left the path of true wisdom and call upon your Grace to lead us back on track.

[Time of silent prayer]

This is the time of God's favor, God's grace continues to proclaim release to the captives, Good News to the poor and freedom to the oppressed. We live as loved, forgiven, and free people through the grace of God!

Hallelujah! Amen.

Adapted from Rev. Gord on his blog, Worship Offerings, [http://worshipofferings.blogspot.ca/...](http://worshipofferings.blogspot.ca/)

ANTHEM

“What Feast of Love”

CHANCEL CHOIR
Shellene Castellow, Flute

SCRIPTURE

Luke 4:21-30

He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

“Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed – only Naaman the Syrian.”

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

SERMON

“Only the Beginning”

Rev. Ned Alderman

HYMN

“Christ, We Are Blessed”

W&S 3174

1. Christ, we are blest as we gather to dine,
strengthened for love by the bread and the wine,
this is your body, now entering ours,
strong with your loving miraculous powers.
2. You laid your life down like sowing a seed;
once dead and buried, from death you are freed,
rising like wheat in the warmth of the sun!
Christ, you are risen! New life has begun!

3. Christ, you are risen, but not far above:
You live among us in each act of love,
in every deed of compassion you rise,
living in flesh we can see with our eyes.

4. Jesus, you feed us, then bid us to leave,
sharing with others the love we receive.
We are your body, sent by your command,
making love real as the bread in our hands.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to God.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Holy One.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, who used Ezra and Nehemiah to bring your holy word to the captives who returned from Babylon to Jerusalem.

You have promised that all who are captive shall be made free, that all who are broken will be made whole.

The heavens tell your glory in soundless song, sending your message of wonder and love to all people in every time and place. And so, with your creatures on earth and all the heavenly chorus, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and holy is your child, Jesus, who you sent to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of your favor.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, saying, "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of grain and grape, fruit of the earth and work of human hands. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be the body of Christ to a world that awaits release from captivity.

Center of all, light of the world, Spirit of truth, you are the one God to whom we offer our praise and thanks.

Amen.

The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022 copyright 2021 by Abingdon Press

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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Each one of us is essential to the life and well-being of the whole body of Christ. So we come now to share our gifts and resources in order to care for one another and, without dissension, for the world Christ came to save.

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1 © 2012 Westminster John Knox Press

OFFERING PRAYER

Compassionate God, who sees beyond our boundaries and loves without limit, we bring these offerings with grateful hearts. Use them to proclaim your good news, heal the broken, and extend your love to all, especially those we struggle to accept. Transform our gifts into a beacon of hope and inclusion that reflects the boundless love of Christ in every corner of our community. In his holy name, we pray. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

HYMN

“Now Praise the Hidden God of Love”

#2027

1. Now praise the hidden God of love,
in whom we all must live and move,
who shepherds us at ev'ry stage,
through youth, maturity, and age:

2. Who challenged us, when we were young,
to storm the citadels of wrong;
in care for others taught us how
God's true community must grow.
3. Who bids us never lose our zest,
though age is urging us to rest,
but proves to us that we have still
a work to do, a place to fill.

SENDING FORTH

Go forth, celebrating faith. Go forth, celebrating hope. Go forth, celebrating love.
Go forth to be the transformed people God calls us to be. Go forth to transform the world –
most especially in times of disbelief, hostility, fear, and rejection.
Go forth with the knowledge that you are always surrounded by the presence of our
steadfast, loving God. **Amen.**

The Abingdon Preaching Annual 2010 copyright 2009 by Abingdon Press

GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

POSTLUDE

“O Thou Joyful Day”

DANA MOODY

Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11:00 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be downloaded to our website on Monday morning.

The flowers on the altar today are presented to the glory of God by Ann and Jimmy Lee in honor of Ann's Birthday.

The Food Basket on the altar is presented to the glory of God.



PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Prayer Partner: Brenda Swoope

Lay Reader – Debbie Rippard

Audio–Visual Operator – Rob Castellow

Facebook Live Recorder: Bright Tsevi

Greeter: Joanne Rooks

Pastor: Rev. Ned Alderman

Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance

Financial Secretary: Edna Bess

Coastal Virginia Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Beth Givens

Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Bishop Sue Hauptert–Johnson