

2. There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
3. In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (responsively)

For all the blessings of this life, we give thanks to You, Creator God. For families, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and strangers, who nurture us, that the love of God may grow within. That Your love, your Word, like a seed, may grow to produce in us good fruit.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For the leaders of various nations and cities, that they may lead with strong hearts and gentle hands and generous spirits, with compassion and mercy, with wisdom and grace. May they reflect your will guiding all their actions and decisions.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who serve in harm's way, those who live in dangerous places, those who live in areas of war and strife, those who live in fear, those who worry about employment, bills, food, and struggle just to find dignity in life. May your grace bring peace and safety to all people, one to another.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who suffer from any illness or disease – of mind, body, or spirit, Restore these, and all those we carry in our hearts, to fullness of health – health as only you, O God, can bring. May your mercy shower each of us with healing mercy and love.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who are dying, and for those who have died. Send forth your comforting love. Give solace to those who mourn. Console those who grieve. May your grace surround us like a mantle upon our heads, a shawl upon our shoulders, a hand to hold our hand.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

All: Amen

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We have received the greatest gift of all – God's transforming love. And we are called to extend that gift to all the world. We do this through our words and actions. Our offering is a visible sign of our gratitude for what we have received; it is a way of bearing fruit, of showing our love. Let us respond to God's bountiful love with generous gifts of love.

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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."

November 17, 2024

Twenty-sixth Sunday After Pentecost



Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A Cry Room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and directions to these rooms. [†] = Invites persons to stand as they are able.

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

Hebrews 10:11-14, 19, 23-25; NRSV

And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

PRELUDE

"Minuet"

DANA MOODY

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

Lay Reader: Come to Christ, the true vine, and bear much fruit.

People: **We have come to abide in the vine, and to bear the fruit of salvation.**

Lay Reader: Come to love one another, for love is of God.

People: **We have come to the household of love, for God is love.**

Lay Reader: Come to set aside your fears, for perfect love drives out fear.

People: **We have come to love one another, as God has loved us.**

Lay Reader: Come! All are welcome here.

*Scifres, Mary; Beu, B.J., The Abingdon Worship Annual 2021: Worship Planning Resources for Every Sunday of the Year (p. 112).
Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.*

OPENING PRAYER (ALL)

God, we worship you as the source of life. Grant that we may allow our will to align with yours, O God. Remove the anxiety of fast-paced living and show us how to receive your grace in the beauty of your creation. Hear our gifts of praise and confession and let this house resound with joy as we celebrate you. Let our hearts be open to your gifts of forgiveness and grace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

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HYMN

“How Can We Name a Love”

#111

1. How can we name a Love that wakens heart and mind,
indwelling all we know or think or do or seek or find?
Within our daily world, in every human face, Love’s echoes sound,
and God is found, hid in the commonplace.
2. If we awoke to life built on a rock of care
that asked no great reward but firm, assured, was simply there,
we can, with parents’ names, describe, and thus adore,
Love unconfined, a father kind, a mother strong and sure.
3. When people share a task, and strength and skills unite
in projects old or new, to make or do with shared delight,
our Friend and Partner’s will is better understood,
that all should share, create, and care, and know that life is good.
4. So in a hundred names, each day we all can meet
a presence, sensed and shown at work, at home, or in the street.
Yet every name we see, shines in a brighter sun;
in Christ alone is Love full grown and life and hope begun.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (responsively)

Lay Reader: Let us open our hearts and minds to the truth of our lives, and let us offer that truth to God.

People: **O God who loves us, hear our prayer. So often we come to you at a loss – at a loss for the right words, the right deeds, the right feelings. We know all is not right, but we cannot say with certainty what is wrong. There are deep divisions between us and others. There are too many who live in poverty and fear. There are too many horrific stories, and not enough hopeful ones. So we pray to you, our Creator and Redeemer, to make things right, and to make us right with you and each other. Turn us around from that which destroys toward that which heals and brings joy. And hear us again, as we offer you our confession in silence.**

[Silent confession]

Lay Reader: Friends, let us proclaim the Good News:

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

Lay Reader: Let us go into the world as people made new by God.

People: **Amen.**

Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, “Hold Fast to What is Good.” Used with permission.

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.

ANTHEM

“The Wonder of God’s Love”

CHANCEL CHOIR

SCRIPTURE

John 15:1-8, 16 [NRSV]

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.

SERMON

“To Know God is to Grow in God”

Rev. Anne Kesner West

HYMN

“Hymn of Promise”

#707

1. In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, whose wisdom surpasses all understanding, we offer these gifts as a token of our faith and devotion. In a world full of uncertainties, may these offerings be used to spread your hope and love. Teach us to listen to your voice amid the noise and to trust in your steadfast presence. Bless our giving, that it may build your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' 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.

HYMN

“O Blessed Spring”

TFWS #2076

1. O blessed spring, where Word and sign embrace us into Christ the Vine.
Here Christ enjoins each one to be a branch of this life-giving Tree.
2. Through summer heat and youthful years, uncertain faith, rebellious tears,
sustained by Christ's infusing rain, the boughs will shout for joy again.
3. When autumn cools and youth is cold, when limbs their heavy harvest hold,
then through us warm, the Christ will move with gifts of beauty, wisdom, love.
4. As winter comes, as winters must, we breathe our last, return to dust;
still held in Christ, our souls take wing, and trust the promise of the spring.
5. Christ, holy Vine, Christ, living Tree, be praised for this blest mystery,
that Word and water thus revive and join us to your Tree of Life.

SENDING FORTH

Let us go into the world glorifying our Creator in all we say and do. May the love of Christ nudge us to go to places we do not want to go, may the Spirit help us to welcome people we are reluctant to meet, and may the power of the Holy Spirit move us and shake us so others may recognize us as people of the living God.

All: Amen.

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

GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

POSTLUDE

“Benediction”

DANA MOODY

Rev. Anne West Kesner is an ordained Deacon in the United Methodist Church who currently serves in extension ministry at The Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters Hospital in Norfolk, VA as a chaplain and family/staff support coordinator. She has been there for over 12 years and her charge conference is through Great Bridge UMC. She is currently working on her doctoral program in ministry through Vanderbilt in ministry and mental health studies. She resides in Chesapeake with her husband, 8 year old son and their dog, Lena- plus 8 chickens but they cannot tell them apart for names.

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.

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



PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Nursery Care Providers: Lisa & Brooks Ryno

Prayer Partner: Barbara Bennett

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