

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**  
Jesus calls all people to sit at table with him: the sick and the uncertain, the weak and the poor, the Pharisees and tax collectors. From north and south and east and west he calls us to come and sit at this table, the foretaste of the kingdom of God. On a night long ago, when Jesus sat at table with his disciples, they thought they were the hosts and he the guest. But then he broke the bread, and their eyes were opened and they recognized him. The guest became the host; the foolish one was revealed as Wisdom. To this table, to this banquet of Wisdom, he calls us again.

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is right and our great delight to praise you, O God. In the beginning of time, your wisdom danced through creation, calling forth light and life. Through wisdom, you formed us in your image, calling us to love and serve you. Foolishly we turned from you and abandoned your ways of justice and mercy. Yet you did not reject us, but continued to call us and claim us as your own. We were slaves in Egypt, and you freed us. We were hungry and thirsty in the wilderness, and you nourished us with manna and water from the rock. We had no home, and you led us into the land of your promise. We worshiped idols of our own making, and you called us through the prophets to turn back to you. At last you emptied yourself of power and came to us as the child of Mary, holy God in frail and human flesh. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

You are holy, O God of power and might, and blessed is Jesus Christ, the one who comes in your name. In his life, he called unlikely people to follow him: fisherfolk, tax collectors, children, sinners, deniers, betrayers. On the cross he gave himself up to the powers of this world, showing in his body your great foolishness, O God, for loving such a wayward world. Yet by this very cross, O Wisdom from on high, you have undone and remade the wisdom of this world, drawing light from darkness, power from humiliation, life from death itself. Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ, we proclaim together the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Come, then, life-giving Spirit, brood over these bodily things and make us into one body with Christ, that we, who are baptized into his death, may walk in newness of life; that what is sown in dishonor may be raised in glory and what is sown in weakness may be raised in power. We praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

**Amen.**



*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."*

*September 1, 2024*

*Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost*



**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**

**Song of Solomon 2:8-13 [TANAKH]**

Hark! My beloved! There he comes, leaping over mountains, bounding over hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or like a young stag. There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the window, peering through the lattice. My beloved spoke thus to me, “Arise, my darling; my fair one, come away! For now the winter is past. The rains are over and gone. The blossoms have appeared in the land, the time of pruning has come. The song of the turtledove is heard in our land. The green figs form on the fig tree, the vines in blossom give off fragrance. Arise, my darling; my fair one, come away!

**PRELUDE**

**“The Communion Table”**

**Dana Moody**

**MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)**

Welcome, Beloved of God! For truly, you are deeply, wonderfully, beautifully loved by the God of all creation!

**Come, let us worship God who loves us!**

Whether your week was filled with mountain-high joys or valley-low sorrows, peace like a gently flowing river, or stress like a stormy gale, this is the time to rise and come away to worship God who sustains and tends to you.

**Come, let us worship God who loves us and tends to us!**

In a world that pulls us this way and that, God’s love is our True North, guiding us with an uncommon wisdom through all that life brings us.

**Come, let us worship God who loves us and guides us!**

Beloved, the time for singing has come, because God’s love, care, and wisdom sustain and guide us wherever we go.

**Come, let us worship and sing to the God who loves, tends, guides, and sustains us! Amen!**

OPENING PRAYER\* (in unison)

Unchanging God, you have blessed us forever through the Beloved One, Jesus Christ our Lord. Born again by your word of truth, let us live out your love, doing your word, caring for the weak and vulnerable in their distress, and ever pursuing your reign of justice, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Long, Kim, Long, Kim. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: 2 (p. 142). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition

HYMN “Maker in Who We Live” #88

1. Maker, in whom we live, in whom we are and move,  
The glory, power, and praise receive for thy creating love.  
Let all the angel throng give thanks to God on high,  
While earth repeats the joyful song and echoes to the sky.
2. Incarnate Deity, let all the ransomed race  
Render in thanks their lives to thee for thy redeeming grace.  
The grace to sinners showed ye heavenly choirs proclaim,  
And cry, “Salvation to our God, salvation to the Lamb!”
3. Spirit of holiness, let all thy saints adore  
Thy sacred energy, and bless thine heart-renewing power.  
Not angel tongues can tell thy love’s ecstatic height,  
The glorious joy unspeakable, the beatific sight.
4. Eternal, Triune God, let all the hosts above,  
Let all on earth below record and dwell upon thy love.  
When heaven and earth are fled before thy glorious face,  
Sing all the saints thy love hath made thine everlasting praise.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (responsively)

Holy God,  
**We do not deserve to be in your dwelling place. We have not led a blameless life. We have not done what is right in your sight or spoken the truth that you have sealed in our hearts. We have done evil to both those we love and to those we refuse to love as we should. We have not been faithful stewards of that which we have been blessed and have hoarded that which should be shared with the least of these. Hear our cry, God of our hope, as we confess that which weighs us down...**  
Redeeming God,  
**save us from our foolishness and guide us to your wisdom. Gather us in your righteousness and redemption. Forgive us for we are seeking your light and your salvation. Cleanse us of our brokenness that we might do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Because we are not worthy to enter God’s dwelling, God came to dwell with us through the body and being of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Christ came to be with us, amongst us, and for us.

Hear the good news of the Gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!  
**Alleluia! Amen!**

Written by Stephen Fearing and posted on “Wild and Precioius Life,” <http://www.stephenmfearing.com/>

ANTHEM “You Feed Us, Gentle Savior” Chancel Choir

SCRIPTURE James 1:17-27 [The Message]

So, my very dear friends, don’t get thrown off course. Every desirable and beneficial gift comes out of heaven. The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Father of Light. There is nothing deceitful in God, nothing two-faced, nothing fickle. He brought us to life using the true Word, showing us off as the crown of all his creatures.

Post this at all the intersections, dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. God’s righteousness doesn’t grow from human anger. So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life.

Don’t fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear! Those who hear and don’t act are like those who glance in the mirror, walk away, and two minutes later have no idea who they are, what they look like.

But whoever catches a glimpse of the revealed counsel of God – the free life! – even out of the corner of his eye, and sticks with it, is no distracted scatterbrain but a man or woman of action. That person will find delight and affirmation in the action.

Anyone who sets himself up as “religious” by talking a good game is self-deceived. This kind of religion is hot air and only hot air. Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.

SERMON “Lighting Up the Room” Rev. Ned Alderman

HYMN “I Come With Joy” #617

1. I come with joy to meet my Lord, forgiven, loved and free,  
in awe and wonder to recall his life laid down for me, his life laid down for me.
2. I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed,  
the new community of love in Christ’s communion bread, in Christ’s communion bread.
3. As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud division ends.  
The love that made us makes us one and strangers now are friends, and strangers now are friends.
4. And thus with joy we meet our Lord, His presence, always near,  
Is in such friendship better known; we see and praise him here, we see and praise him here.
5. Together met, together bound, we’ll go our different ways,  
and as his people in the world, we’ll live and speak his praise, we’ll live and speak his praise.

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Every generous act of giving, as with every perfect gift, is from above. May God’s word of truth, implanted within us at birth, bloom in acts of loving faithfulness. May that word shape our lives so that we become doers of the word using God’s gift for all.

OFFERING PRAYER

Here, Lord, we put our love into practice. These gifts we offer come from your love for us. Now, let them express our love for you, as they reach out to others with your love for them. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

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

HYMN

“Take My Life, and Let it Be”

#399

1. Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.
2. Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee.  
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.
3. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine,  
Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.  
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasurestore.  
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

BENEDICTION

Beloved, may God bless you with the uncommon wisdom to know deep in your hearts the vastness of God’s love for you, and in that knowing, may God’s love bubble up and overflow from your heart into the world around you. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Listen to the life-giving words of the Beloved One, Jesus Christ our Lord! Look into God’s perfect law of liberty and persevere in God’s blessing! Live in God’s love, caring for those in need from a heart filled and blessed by the power of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

POSTLUDE

“Go Now in Peace”

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 Chip Payette, in memory of his mother, Lucille Payette.

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



PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Nursery Care Providers: Barbara Bennett & Joanne Rooks

Organist/Director of Music: Dana Moody

Prayer Partner: Barbara Bennett

Lay Reader – Brenda Swoope

Audio–Visual Operator – Ericka Litten

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