



WRESTLING WITH  
**DOUBT**  
FINDING FAITH

Doubt and the  
Existence of God

**Sunday, January 11, 2026**  
**First Sunday after the Epiphany**  
[www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org](http://www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org)

## WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

*Bagpipe*

Mark Dorian  
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### Call to Worship

One: Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Don't rely on your own understanding.

**All: It is hard to trust when so much is unknown; when we can't see the next step; when the way isn't clear.**

One: All things are possible for the one who has faith.

**All: It is hard to have faith when religion seems like empty promises; when prayers seem unheard; when there is no answer for suffering.**

One: Happy are those who find trust and wisdom, who have faith and seek understanding.

**All: Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief.**

### Congregational Introit

*Change My Heart, O God*

TFWS 2152

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true. Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.  
You are the Potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.  
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true. Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

### Welcome

#### † Opening Hymn

*Blessed Assurance*

UMH 369

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

#### *Refrain*

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;  
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

#### *Refrain*

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;  
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love.

*Refrain*

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;  
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

### **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**

*I Love You Lord*

CCLI Song #25266  
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## **WE HEAR THE LOVE OF CHRIST**

### **Scripture**

Psalm 19:1-4a (CEB)

Heaven is declaring God's glory;  
the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.  
One day gushes the news to the next,  
and one night informs another what needs to be known.  
Of course, there's no speech, no words—  
their voices can't be heard—  
but their sound extends throughout the world;  
their words reach the ends of the earth.

Psalm 139 13-14a (CEB)

You are the one who created my innermost parts;  
you knit me together while I was still in my mother's womb.  
I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set apart.

Mark 9:24 (NRSVue)

Immediately the father of the child cried out [to Jesus], "I believe; help my unbelief!"

**Scriptural Response**

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

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

**Anthem**

*There Is a Balm in Gilead*

Arr. Boesinger/McDonald  
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**Message**

*Doubt and the Existence of God*

Rev. Bob Rhodes

**WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST**

**Response to the Word**

**Invitation to the Offering**

**Offertory**

*Peaceful Piano #9*

Mark Hayes  
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**† 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 of mystery and wonder, we bring our doubts to you. We confess that all too often, we have allowed doubt to overcome faith. We have turned away when our questions became too hard or too painful. We have preferred easier, smaller imitations of the truth to the life and faith you desire for us. We have sought refuge in certainty. Forgive us, we pray. Lead us to a heartfelt belief that is unafraid of doubt, that welcomes mystery, that trusts in you. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

One: Hear the good news. Doubt is not the enemy of faith. Believe and rejoice. 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

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

UMH 381

1. Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need thy tender care;  
in thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use thy folds prepare.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.
2. We are thine, thou dost befriend us, be the guardian of our way;  
keep thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.
3. Thou hast promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be;  
thou hast mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse and power to free.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! We will early turn to thee.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! We will early turn to thee.
4. Early let us seek thy favor, early let us do thy will;  
thou hast mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse and power to free.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast loved us, love us still.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast loved us, love us still.

### † Benediction

### Postlude

*Toccata in C Major*

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Liturgical elements from *Discipleship Ministries (UMC)* and *The Abingdon Worship Annual*.

**Liturgist:** Don Rushing

**Organist:** Robert Wuertz

**Pianist:** Rebecca Cosford

**Ushers:** Rod Betts, Dave Grundies, Peter McCreight, Russell Toppi

**Tech Team:** AJ Prat, Cam Rhodes

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**LJUMC Ministry Team**

Rev. Bob Rhodes, Lead Pastor; Bob Wuertz, Music Ministries Director;  
Theresa Erb, Office Manager; Emilio Valente, Information Technology Director;  
Erin Wyer, NS Executive Director