



Saving Small Groups

Knowing Who We Are

Sunday, September 6, 2026

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Largo

Henri Eccles/Arr. Hopson
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Call to Worship

One: Family of God, we live in a world full of conflict and division.

All: God calls us to be a people of reconciliation.

One: Jesus reminds us to speak directly with one another when relationships become damaged or unhealthy.

All: God calls us to speak truth with compassion and honesty.

One: When two or three gather in Christ's name, Christ is among us.

All: Together we listen, confess, pray, and seek healing.

One: Come, let us worship God, who gathers us across households, congregations, and nations.

All: We gather to receive God's grace so that we are strengthened and sent to practice love in the world. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Introit

Surely the Presence

UMH 328

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;

I can feel his mighty power and his grace.

I can hear the brush of angels' wings, I see glory on each face;

surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

Welcome

† Opening Hymn

In the Midst of New Dimensions

TFWS 2238

1. In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

2. Through the flood of starving people, warring factions and despair,
who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care?

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

3. As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams.

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

4. We are man and we are woman, all persuasions, old and young,
each a gift in your creation, each a love song to be sung.

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

5. Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
may your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again.

Refrain

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

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.

Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Exodus 12:1-14 (NIV)

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire—with the head, legs and internal organs. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover.

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

“This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance.

Matthew 18: 15-20 (NIV)

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Scriptural Response

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

All: Thanks be to God! Amen

Special Music

In Heaven's Eyes
Lisa Corporon, Soloist

Phill McHugh
©1985 River Oaks Music Co.

Message

Saving Small Groups

Pastor Rob Shearer

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Peaceful Piano #9

Mark Hayes
©2023 Lorenz Publishing Co.

† 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: Gracious and loving God, open our hearts so that we may offer you our whole lives. We have loved with conditions, judged one another, and spoken around people rather than speaking with them. Forgive us. Give us the courage to listen with compassion, speak with honesty, confess our sins, and pray for one another. By your grace, help us seek reconciliation and healing together. Amen.

One: Sisters and brothers in Christ, the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting. Christ is present among us, and grace restores us to God and to one another. 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**

They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love

TFWS 2223

1. We are one in the Spirit we are one in the Lord,
we are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
and we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

2. We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
we will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
and together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

3. We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
we will work with each other, we will work side by side,
and we'll guard human dignity, and save human pride:

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

4. All praise to the Father from whom all things come,
and all to Christ Jesus, God's only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one:

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

† **Benediction**

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

Flowers: Flowers in celebration of the remodel of the Tower in the Fireside Library.
More information about this project can be found in the Announcements

Liturgist: Joyce Theilacker

Organist: Robert Wuertz

Pianist: Rebecca Cosford

Ushers: Beau Brandon, Dave Grundies, Peter McCreight, Don Rushing, Lon Showley

Tech Team: AJ Prat, Cam Rhodes

LJUMC Ministry Team

Pastor Bob Rhodes, Lead Pastor; Pastor Rob Shearer, Director of Children & Youth Ministries
Bob Wuertz, Music Ministries Director; Theresa Erb, Office Manager;
Emilio Valente, Information Technology Director; Erin Wyer, NS Executive Director