



Growing in Grace

Knowing Who We Are

Sunday, September 27, 2026
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
www.lajollaunitedmethodist.org

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Bloom

Andy Zahn

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Call to Worship

One: Paul calls us to let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus.

All: God is at work in us through grace.

One: Christ emptied himself, took the form of a servant, and became obedient even to death on a cross.

All: God is at work in us through grace.

One: One son refused his father's call, and later went to work in the vineyard.

All: God is at work in us through grace.

One: Come, let us worship God, who calls us to answer with our words and our lives.

All: God is at work in us through grace. With holy tenacity, we will cooperate with grace and grow in love. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Introit

Grace Alone (v1)

TFWS 2162

1. Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith,
every difference we will make is only by his grace.
Every mountain we will climb, every ray of hope we shine,
every blessing left behind is only by his grace.

Refrain

Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown he will provide.
Christ in us our Cornerstone; we will go forth in grace alone.

Welcome

† Opening Hymn

Open the Eyes of My Heart

W & S 3008

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;

I want to see you, I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.
Pour out your power and love as we sing. Holy, holy, holy.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you, I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.
Pour out your power and love as we sing. Holy, holy, holy.

Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy. I want to see you.
(Repeat)

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

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

TFWS 2193

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Philippians 2:1-13 (CEB)

Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort in love, any sharing in the Spirit, any sympathy, complete my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, being united, and agreeing with each other. Don't do anything for selfish purposes, but with humility think of others as better

than yourselves. Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others. Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus:

Though he was in the form of God,
he did not consider being equal with God something to exploit.
But he emptied himself
by taking the form of a slave
and by becoming like human beings.
When he found himself in the form of a human,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.
Therefore, God highly honored him
and gave him a name above all names,
so that at the name of Jesus everyone
in heaven, on earth, and under the earth might bow
and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my loved ones, just as you always obey me, not just when I am present but now even more while I am away, carry out your own salvation with fear and trembling. God is the one who enables you both to want and to actually live out his good purposes.

Matthew 21:23-32 (CEB)

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him as he was teaching. They asked, “What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? Who gave you this authority?”

Jesus replied, “I have a question for you. If you tell me the answer, I’ll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. Where did John get his authority to baptize? Did he get it from heaven or from humans?”

They argued among themselves, “If we say ‘from heaven,’ he’ll say to us, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ But we can’t say ‘from humans’ because we’re afraid of the crowd, since everyone thinks John was a prophet.” Then they replied, “We don’t know.”

Jesus also said to them, “Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. “What do you think? A man had two sons. Now he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’

“‘No, I don’t want to,’ he replied. But later he changed his mind and went.

“The father said the same thing to the other son, who replied, ‘Yes, sir.’ But he didn’t go.

“Which one of these two did his father’s will?”

They said, “The first one.”

Jesus said to them, “I assure you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering God’s kingdom ahead of you. For John came to you on the righteous road, and you didn’t believe him. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Yet even after you saw this, you didn’t change your hearts and lives and you didn’t believe him.

Scriptural Response

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

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

Anthem

A Clean Heart

Benjamin Harlan
©1992 Glory Sound

Message

Growing in Grace

Rev. Bob Rhodes

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

Arr by Jay Rouse
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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: Holy God, we have run from you, ignored your call, closed our eyes to your presence, disregarded your words, diminished ourselves, and forsaken others. Forgive us. Reconcile us to God and to one another. Give us the mind of Christ, and continue your work within us, so that our actions may embody the grace we proclaim. Amen.

One: Receive the good news: God loves us all, forgives us, and reconciles us to God and to one another. God is at work in us still. 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

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

UMH 384

1. Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven, to earth come down;
fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.
2. Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast!
Let us all in thee inherit; let us find that second rest.
Take away our bent to sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.
3. Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return and never, nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.
4. Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee;
changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

† Benediction

Postlude *Variations on "God of Grace and God of Glory"*

Arr. Hal H. Hopson
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Liturgical elements from *Discipleship Ministries (UMC)* and *The Abingdon Worship Annual*.

Flowers: in celebration of Rhodes Family Birthdays
Liturgist: Lisa Corpron
Organist: Robert Wuertz
Pianist: Rebecca Cosford
Ushers: Rod Betts, Don Lincoln, Dan Martin, Peter McCreight, 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 & Lisa Valente, Office Administration;
Emilio Valente, Information Technology Director; Erin Wyer, NS Executive Director