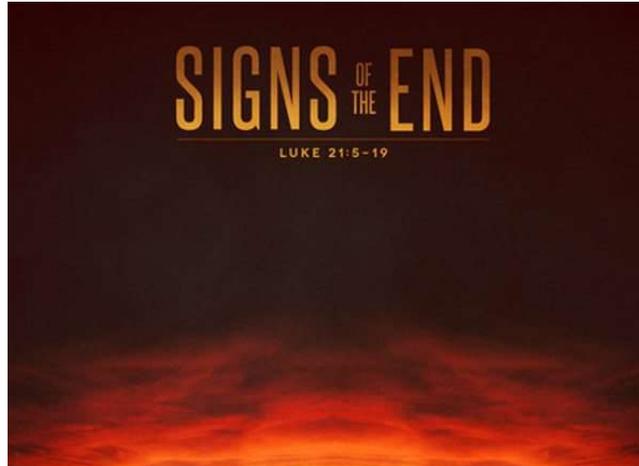


Central United Methodist Church

3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204

ORDER OF WORSHIP
Sunday, November 13, 2022



GATHERING

PRELUDE

Rain Down

Monica Adams

GATHERING MOMENT

Laura Dinges (8:30am)
Lester Low (11:00am)

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Laura Dinges (8:30am)
Lester Low (11:00am)

Leader: Thank you God for this time of worship.

All: You give us this time of worship and fellow worshippers.

Leader: Thank you God for this community of love.

All: You have given us friends and family to live together and support each other.

Leader: Thank you God for this life on earth.

All: We have enjoyed your creation and our lives in it.

Leader: Thank you God for all the challenges.

All: You have given us strength to endure and opportunities to grow. We have become stronger and wiser. We are ready to take many tasks now. Use us for your mission and ministries. Amen!

INTROIT

When Morning Gilds the Skies
[Arr. John Carter]

Chancel Choir

*OPENING HYMN

There is a Great Question
ANGEL'S STORY 7.6.7.6 D ("O Jesus, I Have Promised")
***There is a mighty question we ask when nations rage:
Just when will be Christ's coming, the ending of the age?
Take care, said Jesus clearly, for many will appear;
They'll claim to be Messiah, yet people should not fear.***

*For in the days of Noah, the people went along
In eating and in drinking, in merriment and song —
Then suddenly the world changed with great, surprising power;
So too will be Christ's coming, and no one knows the hour.*

*So keep awake and watchful; salvation is at hand!
Our hope is in Christ Jesus, and by God's grace we stand.
The night is almost over, we wait for God's new day,
And through the Holy Spirit, we follow Jesus' way.*

*Be ready in your living, for when you feed the poor,
Or give to thirsty children the water they long for,
And when you welcome strangers and help the ones in need,
Christ says: "Receive my kingdom, for you are serving me."*

CHILDREN'S MOMENT (11:00am)

Carol Willson

PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED (11:00am)

RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Lester Low (11:00am)

*PASSING THE PEACE

(Stand, bow or wave, with the word "Peace be with You!")

All Sing: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (2x).*

Laura Dinges (8:30am)

Lester Low (11:00am)

ANTHEM

Sing To the Lord A Joyful Song

By J. Monsell and W. G. Darst

Chancel Choir

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 65:17-25 (Pew Bible NRVs, pages 696)

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Laura Dinges (8:30am)

Lester Low (11:00am)

*HYMN

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

UMH #126

SCRIPTURE

Luke 21:5-19 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 85)

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Laura Dinges (8:30am)

Lester Low (11:00am)

SERMON

"By Your Endurance You Will Gain Your Souls"

Rev. Sungho Lee

QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME (8:30am)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Laura Dinges (8:30am)

Lester Low (11:00am)

After a concern, the worship leader will say "Let us pray to the Lord," and the congregation will reply, "Lord, hear our prayer!"

After a joy, the worship leader will say "Let us pray to the Lord," and the congregation will reply, "Lord, we give thanks!"

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Sungho Lee

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.

THANKSGIVING

WORSHIP WITH OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

Laura Dinges (8:30am)
Lester Low (11:00am)

OFFERTORY

O Waly, Waly
[Howard Helvey]

Monica Adams

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH #94

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Laura Dinges (8:30am)
Lester Low (11:00am)

SENDING FORTH

***CLOSING HYMN**

Soon and Very Soon

UMH #706

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Sungho Lee

***POSTLUDE**

Prelude in D
[Fischer]

Monica Adams

* Indicates please stand as you are able.

SERVING YOU TODAY

Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee
Laura Dinges, Worship Leader, 8:30am
Lester Low, Worship Leader, 11:00am
Ric Campero, Choir Director
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist
Carol Willson, Children's Moment
David Campero, Media
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator
Rupert Cooper, Audio



ADVENT BIBLE CHALLENGE

Starting November 27, read the Gospel of Matthew. It will take 28 days to finish it if you read a chapter a day. It will end on December 24. Pastor Lee will send 3 questions every day for each chapter. If you have done the Summer Bible Challenge, you will receive email from Pastor Lee. If you have not done the Summer Bible Challenge, please sign up and give your email address to Pastor Lee. slee@cumcstockton.org

BLUE CHRISTMAS

We will have our Blue Christmas Service in the Fireside Room on December 21, 7.00pm, the longest night of the year (Winter Solstice) to honor those who feel "blue." Some lost their beloved one and they have to have their first Christmas without them. If you go through the longest dark night in your life, come and share your story. Some say Joy to the World, and we say Grief in our hearts! Participants will have communion and blues music.

CHRISTMAS SUNDAY

Share your story

Do you know that this year Christmas is on Sunday? We will have only one service on 10.am because we will have 2 Services on **Christmas Eve** (7.00pm for families, 9.00pm Traditional Christmas Eve Service). We will sing Christmas Carols and share our Christmas stories. If you want to share "My Best Christmas Memory" let Pastor Lee know. Pastor Lee will let you share your Christmas story to share the meaning of Christmas.

FAITH AND LEARNING SUNDAY

Mark your calendar! On January 22, 2023 we will have Faith and Learning Sunday featuring our guest speaker, Mary Lomax-Ghirarduzzi. She is a Professor of Communication and the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The President of UOP will also be in attendance. After the service we will host a nice reception in the Fellowship Hall for our guests.

SERMON IN A NUTSHELL: "BY YOUR ENDURANCE YOU WILL GAIN YOUR SOULS."

PASTOR LEE, Sunday, November 13, 2022

Everything that has substance will change its form.

Everything that has substance will change its form. Babies were born, grew, and became grown-ups. We are getting older and weaker and later we will become a part of the nature again. We just had All Saints Sunday last week and confirmed the fact that we would all become Saints someday.

When some were speaking about the temple that Herod was building, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

This is the fate of everything that we see with our naked eyes, that we touch with our hands, and experience in our lifetimes. A giant building, a hard stone, beautiful flowers, and we are all going away.

We are likely to have failure when we plan our lives based on looks.

When I perform marriage coaching, I ask the couple to examine their VIPs. When we are attracted by the looks of others, the bond between partners will not last long because we are getting older and there will be better looking people all the time. In our lives, we will face physical and financial challenges. If our decision to marry a person was based on these conditions, we are likely to fail.

However, when we make a covenant with our partners according to biblical VIPs, we can endure all those challenges better. Whether we are healthy or sick, rich, or poor, young or old, we will stay together to make our partner a better person than before. Our goal is to make the other person to be loved by God and others. We sanctify each other in our covenant relationship because we see inner value of the other person through our faith.

Our goal is not to build a care-free world, but an immune system that can overcome all challenges.

The disciples asked Jesus, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" And he said, "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified, for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes and in various places famines and plagues, and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven."

Some people feel that these things are now happening. However, truthfully, these things have happened throughout human history. We had World War I and II. We had Spanish Flu and Pestilence. We had the Great Depression, Vietnam War, and 9/11. A war between Russia and Ukraine is still going on. Life is full of challenges and the world is always full of news of human and natural disasters.

Everybody has his or her challenges in life. There is no life without suffering. However, as Jesus said, they are not the signs of end times. They are parts of our "daily" "normal" challenges. We cannot dream of a world without virus or bacteria. Viruses and bacteria are parts of our eco-system. We cannot have a carefree life. Sufferings are part of our life journey. Our goal is not to create a carefree world, but to build up an immune system to overcome all those challenges. We want to create a community where we all can carry the burden together.

Let us not worry about challenges. Let us strengthen our inner resistance and community.

Jesus even said, "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify."

Jesus said that all those sufferings would be opportunities for us to testify the Gospel. An Amish group used a tragic suffering as an opportunity to show how we should forgive and bless our enemies. People who lost their loved ones use their sufferings as opportunities to serve others as wounded healers.

Endure sufferings with patience with hope!

These qualities of unconditional love and forgiveness are not naturally given. It is developed in a community. We need to practice God's love and forgiveness in our daily lives and in our communities. Every musician knows this: We need practice every day. Every athlete knows this: We need practice all the time. Every Christian should accept this: We need practice holiness in every area of our lives.

Jesus promised to help us in such enduring ministries. Jesus said, "So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance, for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and siblings, by relatives and friends, and

they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls.

The end result of our endurance will be glorious.

Isaiah 65:17-25 shares God's promise for those who endure sufferings with patience and daily practice. God says, "I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating, for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as a delight."

When we endure all the challenges with hope and love, peace and joy will be given as God's gift. "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old person who does not live out a lifetime, for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed."

We want to build a community of disciples for our future.

We want to build a community of disciples. God says, "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well."

We will do our part. We will organize small groups where people can share their life stories and encourage each other. We will be accountable to each other in our small groups. That was what John Wesley did in the 19th Century for the people who suffered miserable life conditions. When we do our part, God will do God's part. God says, "Before they call, I will answer, while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord."

Now is the time for us to count our blessings.

Even though we have many challenges in our lives, we can still count our blessings. We become what we think of all the time. When we always meditate on Jesus, we become like Jesus. When we think of our enemies all the time, we become like our enemies. We become like those whom we hate.

When we think about challenges all the time, we become worrisome. When we count our blessings, we become thankful and joyful. In the middle of all the challenges, we can count at least a couple blessings every day. My sister in Korea sends me five blessings that she is thankful for every day. When I read them every day, I am inspired to count my blessings also.

Count your blessings and have an abundant life!

This is my practical counsel for all of us. Let us count our blessings. Start with small thanks. Consider eternal things. Practice will make us perfect in love and joy. Make this Thanksgiving a time of counting our blessings and share them. May God bless you many more blessings while you are counting your blessings! Amen.