

Central United Methodist Church

3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204

ORDER OF WORSHIP

2nd Sunday after Easter

Sunday, April 21, 2024



*Indicates please stand as you are able.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Monica Adams

GATHERING MOMENT

Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

Leader: This is the day our God has made.

All: **In our awakening, let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Leader: We have come to worship the God who turns our yawnings into yearnings for justice and mercy.

All: **May our praise and service be daylong, until we say again tomorrow the words we say today.**
Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Lead On, O King Eternal

UMH #580

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Sungho Lee

MISSION & MINISTRIES MOMENT

Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS (11:00am)

June Sullivan

*PASSING THE PEACE

Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

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

All Sing: ***And God will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand.***

ANTHEM

How Firm A Foundation
[arr. Dale Wood]

Chancel Choir

PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE John 10:11-18 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 103) Alexis Easton (8:30am)
Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God. June Sullivan (11:00am)
All: Thanks be to God.

***HYMN** *The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want* UMH #136

SERMON "Jesus Dies for His Sheep and Leads Them to Green Pastures." Rev. Sungho Lee

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

PASTOR'S 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 Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

OFFERTORY Monica Adams

***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 DEDICATION Alexis Easton (8:30am), June Sullivan (11:00am)

SENDING FORTH

***BENEDICTION** Rev. Sungho Lee

***RESPONSE** *Shalom to You* UMH #666

***Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.***

***POSTLUDE** *I Got Peace Like A River* Judy Kim, Piano
[by Marvin Frey]

***The flowers on the altar are given by Jonnie Sullivan in memory of her
beloved husband Chuck Sullivan.***

SERVING YOU TODAY

Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee
Alexis Easton, (8:30am) Worship Leader
June Sullivan, (11:00am) Worship Leader
Ric Campero, Choir Director
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist
David Campero, Livestream
Steven Adams, Media
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator
Rupert Cooper, Audio

WELCOME CENTER

If you are a visitor, please use this information for your convenience!

Sunday Schedule

- 8:30 am Worship Service at the Fireside Room in the Knoles Building in English
9:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am behind the Sanctuary choir room
10:15 am Worship Service at the Fireside Room in the Knoles Building in Cambodian language.
11:00 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary in English.
- Childcare (under age 5) is available in the Knoles building. A friendly caregiver welcomes you!
 - Godly Play (leave 11 am service Following Children's Moment)

Wednesday Nights

7:00 pm 3700Yth Group in the Youth Rooms upstairs in the Knoles Building.

SERMON IN A NUTSHELL: "JESUS DIES FOR HIS SHEEP AND LEADS THEM TO GREEN PASTURES." (JOHN 10:11-18)

"Following Jesus"

Our conference visions statement says, "Following Jesus, Thriving in community, and Healing the world." I have talked about all three themes at the beginning of the year, but this year (2024), I will focus more on the following Jesus. Next year (2025), I will focus more on Thriving in Community. Then in the year 2026, I will talk about Healing the world. Now you know that I have a long-term plan.

To follow Jesus, we have to see what Jesus did and learn from him. The Gospel lessons tells us what Jesus did. We will learn from those stories. First, we will read the Gospel closely, and find some lessons from it.

Jesus stayed with the disciples.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. When the hired hand sees the wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away. That's because he isn't the shepherd; the sheep aren't really his. So the wolf attacks the sheep and scatters them. He's only a hired hand and the sheep don't matter to him."

In the timeless words attributed to Jesus, he proclaimed, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." This enduring metaphor, resonant with sacrificial love and steadfast commitment, speaks volumes about the essence of leadership and devotion.

Reflecting on these profound teachings, one is reminded of the stark contrast between the good shepherd and the hired hand. When danger looms, the hired hand, lacking the deep connection and sense of responsibility, flees, leaving the vulnerable sheep at the mercy of the wolf. Their allegiance lies not with the flock but with their own self-interest.

Likewise, we are called to remain steadfast in our commitments, particularly in our familial bonds with God. As an UMC pastor, I have one year appointment, yet I have never request move myself. I do not run away from any challenges or difficulties. I stay and work with others to resolve them.

Indeed, challenges are not impediments to be evaded but opportunities for growth and resilience, fortified by God and communal support. If you are a committee chair, the call to serve transcends transient discomforts, demanding a collaborative spirit to surmount obstacles collectively. For those entrusted with the sacred task of shepherding souls, resignation is the last option. It is a divine vocation, a calling that beckons one to stay the course, fortified by faith and fortified by community.

Jesus knew his disciples.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own sheep and they know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. I give up my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that don't belong to this sheep pen. I must lead them too. They will listen to my voice and there will be one flock, with one shepherd.

In the scriptures, Jesus declares, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own sheep and they know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. I give up my life for the sheep." This profound statement encapsulates not only a divine call to leadership but also an intimate bond between shepherd and flock, echoing the depth of compassion and connection.

Central to Jesus' ministry was his unparalleled capacity for empathy and his profound relationship with those he served. For three years, he walked alongside his disciples, sharing in their joys and sorrows, laughter and tears, embodying a model of companionship and solidarity.

As a pastor, the commitment to understanding and engaging with the community is paramount. Beyond the walls of the church, there lies a world waiting to be known and embraced, where genuine connections are forged through shared experiences and conversations.

I tried to follow Jesus' model. I visit church members. I participate in community events. I meet people at the gym, have invaluable opportunities to listen and learn from the stories of others. I assume my role beyond mere pastoral duties; it encompasses a ministry of presence, where genuine relationships are nurtured and cultivated.

Attending church meetings is more than a formality; it becomes a means of deepening connections and understanding the individual journeys of congregants. In these spaces, the sharing of meals and moments of prayer foster a sense of belonging and kinship, transcending the confines of committee work to embrace the fullness of community life. I encourage committee chairs to follow Jesus' model, too.

Indeed, the true essence of fellowship lies not only in the work accomplished but, in the bonds, forged through shared experiences and mutual support. As Jesus exemplified, true shepherding entails not only guiding the flock but walking alongside them, fostering a sense of unity, and belonging that transcends boundaries and differences.

Jesus Listened to the Father

Jesus said, "This is why the Father loves me: I give up my life so that I can take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I give it up because I want to. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it up again. I received this commandment from my Father."

Here, Jesus articulates the essence of his divine mission, rooted in obedience to the will of the Father and marked by sacrificial love. Central to Jesus' ministry was his unwavering commitment to communion with God, exemplified through moments of solitary prayer amidst the busyness of his earthly duties. In mirroring this spiritual discipline, I try to find solace and guidance in personal devotional practices, fostering a deeper connection with God, the source of strength and wisdom.

Yet, in the bustling spheres of leadership, the temptation to prioritize tasks over spiritual nourishment looms large. As seen in the case of weary committee chairs, the absence of intentional communion with God can lead to burnout and disillusionment, underscoring the critical importance of prioritizing personal spiritual well-being.

By engaging in regular devotional rituals such as prayer, scripture reading, and reflective journaling, individuals are afforded the opportunity to realign their priorities and surrender to the divine will. Through acts of worship and offerings, one acknowledges the inherent gifts bestowed by God and embraces a posture of gratitude and humility.

Indeed, the practice of personal spiritual disciplines empowers individuals to navigate life's challenges with courage and resilience, mirroring the steadfast resolve exhibited by Jesus on the Cross. It is through this intimate communion with God that we are equipped to endure the trials of life's race and bear fruits of spiritual growth and transformation.

In a world marked by constant demands and distractions, the call to "take time with God" emerges as a clarion reminder of the transformative power of divine communion, beckoning individuals to cultivate a deeper intimacy with the source of all life and wisdom.

Learn from Jesus to follow him.

In conclusion, a profound lesson unfolds on the art of following in the footsteps of Jesus. It illuminates the necessity of nurturing both horizontal and vertical relationships — with our fellow workers and with God — to truly embody the essence of discipleship.

The symbiotic relationship between our interactions with colleagues in ministry and our spiritual connection with God is paramount. To neglect one is to undermine the efficacy of the other. It's a delicate balance, where the communal bonds forged in shared endeavors complement the intimacy of personal communion with God.

In the tapestry of faith and service, we are called not only to walk alongside our colleagues but also to walk in alignment with the divine will. Just as God and Jesus exemplified this harmonious blend of relationships, so too must we relinquish personal agendas in pursuit of shepherding others into verdant pastures of growth and fulfillment.

Indeed, the narrative of divine leadership is one of selflessness and surrender, a narrative echoed throughout scripture. It's a call to transcend individual ambitions and align us with the greater purpose of fostering flourishing communities rooted in love and compassion.

As we navigate the complexities of modern-day discipleship, let us heed the timeless wisdom embedded in the scriptures and emulate the example set forth by our spiritual predecessors. By intertwining our earthly endeavors with heavenly aspirations, we pave the way for transformative change and collective renewal. May God bless us when we keep our work for the Kin-dom of God! Amen.





TIME AND TALENT SURVEY

Please fill out the time and talent survey insert and send it to pastor Lee.

SUNDAY BOOK GROUP

Hidden Valley Road by Robert Kolker. Discussion date is this Sunday April 21st! Mingle at coffee hour & we'll gather at a table.

OFFICE CHAIRS NEEDED!

The office is in need of 2 new office chairs. One is over 20 years old, and one is...well...just very uncomfortable (it was given to us). Unfortunately, we do not have the money in the office budget for any chairs. If you are able to help financially, please let Susie Wanden know (swanden@cucmstockton.org). Thank you for your consideration.

THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP

Two volunteers are needed to help with our Food Closet. Each week volunteers will fill bags with food for distribution. When different food items are getting low you will be responsible for writing an article for News From 3700 asking for more donations. You may also come up with creative ways to inspire people to give.

Three volunteers are needed for the Little Free Library that is at Cleveland Elementary School. Volunteers will determine which week that they are responsible for putting books into the library. Volunteers will also work together to keep the LFL storage room in order. If book supplies are running low to ask for book donations from our church community.

If you would like more information or you would like to volunteer contact Alan Cook (alancook4138@gmail.com) or sign up on Sunday.

PARENTS GROUP

Join us for community and fellowship and support on the incredible journey of parenthood. Please sign up below and we will send you a reminder of our monthly call. Our plan is to meet the Third Tuesday of every month from 8:00-9:00 pm on zoom. For questions, please call or text Jennifer Robles at 209-969-2935

Link to google form to sign up for reminders: <https://forms.gle/QYsJSorcs9BkqxzN7>

FELLOWSHIP TIME

The Missions Committee is committed to providing Fellowship Time as often as possible as long as nothing else is happening after worship. So, be sure to head over to the Fellowship Hall following worship for coffee, goodies, and friendly faces. If you have questions about how you can participate, call Jackie Bennett at 916-261-1225. Can't wait to see you!