

Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be downloaded to our website on Monday morning.

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Lay Reader: Debbie Rippard

Prayer partner: Brenda Swoope

Audio-Visual Operator: Julian Baker

Greeter: Joanne Rooks

Pastor: Rev. Ned Alderman

Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance

Financial Secretary: Edna Bess

Coastal Virginia Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Beth Givens

Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Bishop Sue Haupert-Johnson



Oaklette United Methodist Church "God's Body in this Community"

"Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people."

February 1, 2026
Fourth Sunday of Epiphany



Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A cry room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and directions to these rooms.

GREETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS AND CONCERNS

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER

Loving, sustaining God, like the mighty oak, may our branches at Oaklette church embrace those around us in this community. Use us as an instrument to welcome and shelter your people. Deepen our roots so that our branches are strong. Let the Holy Spirit flow like a river through our church, so that we may do your will. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 29:13-16 AND JEREMIAH 9:24 CEB

The Lord says: Since these people turn toward me with their mouths, and honor me with lip service while their heart is distant from me, and their fear of me is just a human command that has been memorized, I will go on doing amazing things to these people, shocking and startling things.

The wisdom of their wise will perish, and the discernment of their discerning will be hidden. Doom to those who hide their plan deep, away from the Lord, whose deeds are in the dark, who say, "Who sees us? Who knows us?" You have everything backward!

Should the potter be thought of as clay? Should what is made say of its maker, "He didn't make me"? Should what is shaped say of the one who shaped it, "He doesn't understand"?

No, those who boast should boast in this: that they understand and know me. I am the Lord who acts with kindness, justice, and righteousness in the world, and I delight in these things, declares the Lord.

PRELUDE

"COMMUNION PRAYER"

DANA MOODY

PASSING OF THE PEACE

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

We are blessed when we hunger for justice and thirst for reconciliation.

Our souls are nourished by God's hope and grace.

We are blessed when we grieve over the brokenness of the world,
choosing, as God does, to be with those who are weak and powerless.

We are blessed when we become God's fools,
willing to do what is right and good, not what is easy.

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OPENING PRAYER

As the sun rises, so does our prayer, loving God. With each new dawn, renew our trust in you, our delight to do justice, and our gladness to be in your presence. Amen.

Worship & Song, Worship Resources Edition, copyright 2011 by Abingdon Press

HYMN

“AS WE GATHER AT YOUR TABLE”

TFWS #2268

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.

Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's victory known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.

Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.

There no more will envy blind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Called to be weak, we idolize the powerful; called to be foolish, we hunger for the world's wisdom; called to be poor in spirit, we thirst for more and more. Let us confess how following Jesus is often a stumbling block for us.

How do we approach you, Exalted God, with our confessions? We make you weary with our inability to do justice for the poor and outcast. We gossip about those who are close to us, instead of being their loving friend. We make promises, and then go back on our word.

Forgive us, God of hope, and bless us with your mercy. By your peace, we can do justice. By your love, we can act kindly. By your grace, we can walk with you as humbly, and hopefully, as did our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

call, our response to your grace, and our witness to your hope. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

HYMN

“LIFT HIGH THE CROSS”

#159

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
Come, Christians, follow this triumphant sign.
The hosts of God in unity combine.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
Each newborn servant of the Crucified
bears on the brow the seal of him who died.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw the world to thee.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the crucified for victory!

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

BENEDICTION

Go into a world that needs to hear you. Let your words and actions point to the one whom we serve.

Mosser, David. *The Abingdon Preaching Annual 2011* (p. 34). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition

POSTLUDE

“BECOME TO US THE LIVING BREAD”

DANA MOODY

Silence is kept

It is through foolishness that God makes us wise; it is through weakness that God strengthens us to serve; it is through forgiveness that God makes us whole.

We cannot boast in what we have done, but only in the grace and joy of our God, who showers us with mercy. Amen.

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ANTHEM

“THERE IS A TABLE SET FOR YOU”

CHANCEL CHOIR

EPISTLE READING

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are being destroyed. But it is the power of God for those of us who are being saved. It is written in scripture: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will reject the intelligence of the intelligent. Where are the wise? Where are the legal experts? Where are today's debaters? Hasn't God made the wisdom of the world foolish? In God's wisdom, he determined that the world wouldn't come to know him through its wisdom. Instead, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. Jews ask for signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called – both Jews and Greeks – Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Look at your situation when you were called, brothers and sisters! By ordinary human standards not many were wise, not many were powerful, not many were from the upper class. But God chose what the world considers foolish to shame the wise. God chose what the world considers weak to shame the strong. And God chose what the world considers low-class and low-life – what is considered to be nothing – to reduce what is considered to be something to nothing. So no human being can brag in God's presence. It is because of God that you are in Christ Jesus. He became wisdom from God for us. This means that he made us righteous and holy, and he delivered us. This is consistent with what was written: The one who brags should brag in the Lord!

LESSON

“THE POWER OF THE GOD AND THE WISDOM OF GOD”

REV. NED ALDERMAN

RESPONSE TO THE WORD/THE LORD'S SUPPER

Creator of the cosmos, Breath of heaven, Lover of us all, you are our praise, our life, our joy. You are there through desert wanderings and willful murmurings, rebellious running and tears of complaint. You are there when sorrow becomes our daily food; you rescue us from ruin and anoint us with blessing. You are there in stable and temple, river and hillside, cross and tomb and even beyond the grave.

Rising Sun, Soaring Spirit, Radiant Lord, you are there in shining glory, overcoming death and welcoming us to life. You meet us in the breaking of bread, you pour out the wine of salvation; you feed us with grace and overwhelm us with love. By your Spirit, make these gifts your body and your blood. By your Spirit, make us one with you and with each other.

By your Spirit, make us strong that we might share your love with your blessed and broken world.

Fount of mercy, Fire of justice, Dearest friend, bind us to you and send us out to seek and serve and sing your praise, until you gather us up in glory and bright, unending song. **Amen.**
Long, Kimberly Bracken. Easting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 (pp. 184-185) Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Kindle Edition

THE LORD'S PRAYER (sung)

The Lord's Prayer [sung]

Our Father; **Our Father**

In Heaven; **In Heaven**

Holy is Your name; **Holy is Your name.**

Your kingdom come; **Your kingdom come,**

Your will be done; **Your will be done,**

On earth; **On earth,**

As in heaven; **As in heaven.**

Give us today; **Give us today,**

Our daily bread; **Our daily bread.**

And forgive those; **And forgive those,**

Who sin against us; **Who sin against us.**

Save us from the time; **Save us from the time,**

Of trials; **Of trials.**

And deliver us; **And deliver us,**

From evil; **From evil.**

For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours forever.

For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours forever.

Forever; **Forever,**

And ever; **And ever.**

Our Father; **Our Father**

In Heaven; **In Heaven,**

ALL: Holy is Your name.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

With what shall we come before the Lord this day? We come with a love of justice and a passion for sharing God's love. Let us walk in humble gratitude, offering to God a portion of the gifts that God freely shares with us, gifts for the healing of the world.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

God of Justice and Mercy, you do not ask for thousands of offerings or rivers of oil, only that we live with love, humility, and a hunger for what is right. Accept these gifts we bring – not as bargaining chips, but as signs of our desire to follow you. Use them and us to pour out kindness where the world is aching, to walk alongside the weary, and to bring your healing presence into troubled places. May our giving be our “yes” to your