

COMMUNITY CHURCH, CONGREGATIONAL / NOVEMBER 5TH SERVICE

- Processional Hymn
- Call to Worship – “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” Luke (6:37-38)
- Invocation – “Let us pray...Almighty and most merciful God, we thank You for bringing us together to remember, before You, all of our neighbors in need whom it would be very easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body and spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, who for our sake became poor.”
- Organ Meditation
- We Recall – “Let us recallIt is necessary for us as Christians to pray every day, to study some portion of the Scriptures each day, seeking in grace and praise to discover God’s will for our own lives on a daily basis. As part of our discipleship, we also work to increase our love for one another. We tithe to “our” church, that the Kingdom may increase its resources. For the same reason, we tithe our time and our conversation. Finally, we hope that our faith and love and discipline will increase until they flow beyond our fellowship and become a blessing to others...”

- Introductions – “Good morning, my name is Joe DiChiro and I am your lay minister today”, introduce Heidi, the Marshallese contingent and any other guests.....
- Announcements – **Weekend Mission Trip** - You are all invited to attend the weekend mission trip to La Mision, Baja, Mexico on Friday afternoon, December 8th - Sunday, December 10th. This trip will include 'work projects' at 'Open Arms' Day Care Center and visiting the orphans at 'Door of Faith Orphanage.' The cost is \$25 per day per person. Sign-ups are available on the patio. For more information please contact Joe DiChiro @ (949) 721-9250 or Mary Anderson @ (949) 721-1434. “Please join us on the patio, after the service, for coffee and fellowship and also, Heidi and Rev. Charley will be available to answer any of your questions as well.”
- Offertory– “We continue to worship God with our tithes and offerings”
- Offertory Hymn
- Doxology – “Praise God” (worship song)
- Prayer of Dedication – Dear Lord, we humbly offer these financial gifts to You as a small token of our appreciation for everything that You do for us. These gifts are critical in moving your kingdom forward, here on earth and please let us never take our ‘giving to You’ lightly or for granted. For all good things come from You, our Savior and Redeemer! (Place collection plates on each end of the Alter).
- Hymn

- The Scripture – Matthew 25:34-46 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance that the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you **did** for one of the **least** of these brothers of mine, you **did** for me.’

Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.

‘They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

“He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you **did not do** for one of the **least** of these, you **did not do** for me.’

Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.’

The Word of God for the people of God.

- The Sermon – ‘The Relationship and Involvement of Christian Mission’

In behalf of the Board of Christian Mission, I would like to thank our Senior Pastor, Chip Fisher, for the opportunity to discuss with you this morning some thoughts on the framework and vision for Christian Mission at our church in addition to ways that you can become involved, if so called.

First off, I would like to discuss briefly, what Christian Mission is all about at this church. Our mission statement says that ‘our mission is to reach out to our neighbors in need and invite them into a life-changing **relationship** with our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope to help them combat the ignorance, illness, abuse, and poverty that often prevent them from discovering and following a life dedicated to this Christian path. With the aid of the Holy Spirit, we wish to nurture a spirit of growth and self help in the lives of those less fortunate to rise above whatever dead ends and patterns of defeat imprison them. Our purpose is to **inspire our congregation and involve it** in sharing our church’s material and spiritual blessings to help others realize their potential as sons and daughters of Christ. We do so in absolute dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Whose direction we diligently seek through a foundation of prayer and meditation.

I know it sounds a bit wordy, but believe me, we debated this ‘mission statement’ for about a year and found it very difficult to leave anything out! The most important component of this mission statement is the word **‘relationship.’** Relationship with our fellow missionaries, relationship with those in need and above all, our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. ‘Relationship’ is the key, not enabling.

Our other key message in our mission statement is “inspiring our congregation and **involving it** in sharing our church’s material and spiritual blessings to help others realize their potential as sons and daughters of Christ.” Boy, this sure sounds familiar to something else that we chant on a regular basis..... “Finally, we hope that our faith and love and discipline will increase until they flow beyond our fellowship and become a blessing to others.” It is difficult to effectively help others without getting **involved**. ‘Involvement’ and ‘relationship’ is true Christian Mission and the type of Christian Mission that we practice at this church. A specific example of this is the ten year relationship with the UCC Marshallese Ministry of Orange County. The Marshallese are considered our church based mission and under the tremendous leadership of Rev. Tarbwij Charley and with assistance from our Board of Christian Mission and our congregation, the Marshallese Ministry’s growth and financial condition have never been better. If you missed the opportunity to join us at the ‘Night of the Marshall Islands,’ you lost a chance to clearly understand the importance of ‘involvement’ and ‘relationship’ taking place at the root of our Christian Mission effort.

Another area where this concept is taking hold has been our involvement with D.J. and Lynette at ‘Door of Faith’ Orphanage and with Heidi and Dan at ‘Open Arms’ Day Care Center in La Mision, Mexico. You will shortly hear Heidi’s testimonial of her calling. These individuals are true missionaries that place total trust in the hands of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis and never place themselves ahead of their true calling and purpose.

In our various trips to these facilities, I am always taken back by the spirit, love and gratitude of the people we meet and the fact that the same people that we are attempting to assist are always looking for ways to help others less fortunate than them; if it's D.J. working on programs to assist some of the estimated 6,000 children living on the streets of Tijuana or Heidi leaving the construction of her own facility to travel eighteen hours on a bus with a group of women from La Mision to help start construction on a new church in southern Baja.

I am often asked, "Why are you so involved in volunteering your time?" or "What motivates you to assist others?" To answer these questions, I would have to go back a few years ago to one of Chip's first sermons on becoming involved in mission work. I was sitting in this church, as you are this morning, listening to his plea to assist Berry Piper in her efforts to assist the Marshallese as well as other outreach programs. After prayer time and reflection, both my wife Janet and I decided to join the Mission and Outreach board and get 'involved.' Both Janet and Berry have been tremendous inspirations in my life for always 'giving of themselves' and coming to the aid of others. At the time, I knew that Christian Mission felt 'right' for me; however, it wasn't until experiencing the Men's retreat in 2002 on 'vocatio' and a tremendous amount of prayer work after the retreat, did I realize that this was my true calling in life; my 'vocatio.' I believe that is what God is asking me to do with my spare time in this realm and I truly feel that He is in charge of the show.

One of my favorite Proverbs is 16:3 ‘Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.’ I attempt to be a faithful servant, always getting back **much more** than I give, and I believe this is consistent with the others in our congregation who have become involved with our Christian Mission effort. And of course, it all started for me by listening, praying, praying some more, hearing and deciding to take that first step of **‘involvement.’** Christian Mission may not be your ‘vocatio’ or even your desire; however, it would be pretty difficult to determine this, if you do not try a weekend mission trip to Mexico or the inner-city or getting involved with a Marshallese event or activity, at least once.

Christian Mission at this church is about hands-on **involvement** and sustaining life-long **relationships**. If you are willing to listen, pray, pray some more and listen to His very soft voice, you may be surprised on what bounces back.....

At this time, please give us a minute to set-up, and we would like to welcome Heidi Elizarraraz from ‘Open Arms’ Day Care Center, La Mision, Baja Mexico...

- Heidi’s Presentation
- Communion Hymn
- Sacrament of Communion – Rev. Charley to administer Communion with help from some of the Marshallese Deacons.....
- Recessional Hymn

- Benediction – Dear Lord, please help us open our hearts to those who are less fortunate than us. Give us the courage to become involved and have relationships with those in need; relationships that are sustaining and life-changing. Give us the courage to step out of our comfort zone and to step into their lives, if You so call us to do so. Go forth and love one another in God's name. Amen.
- Benediction Response
- Postlude