

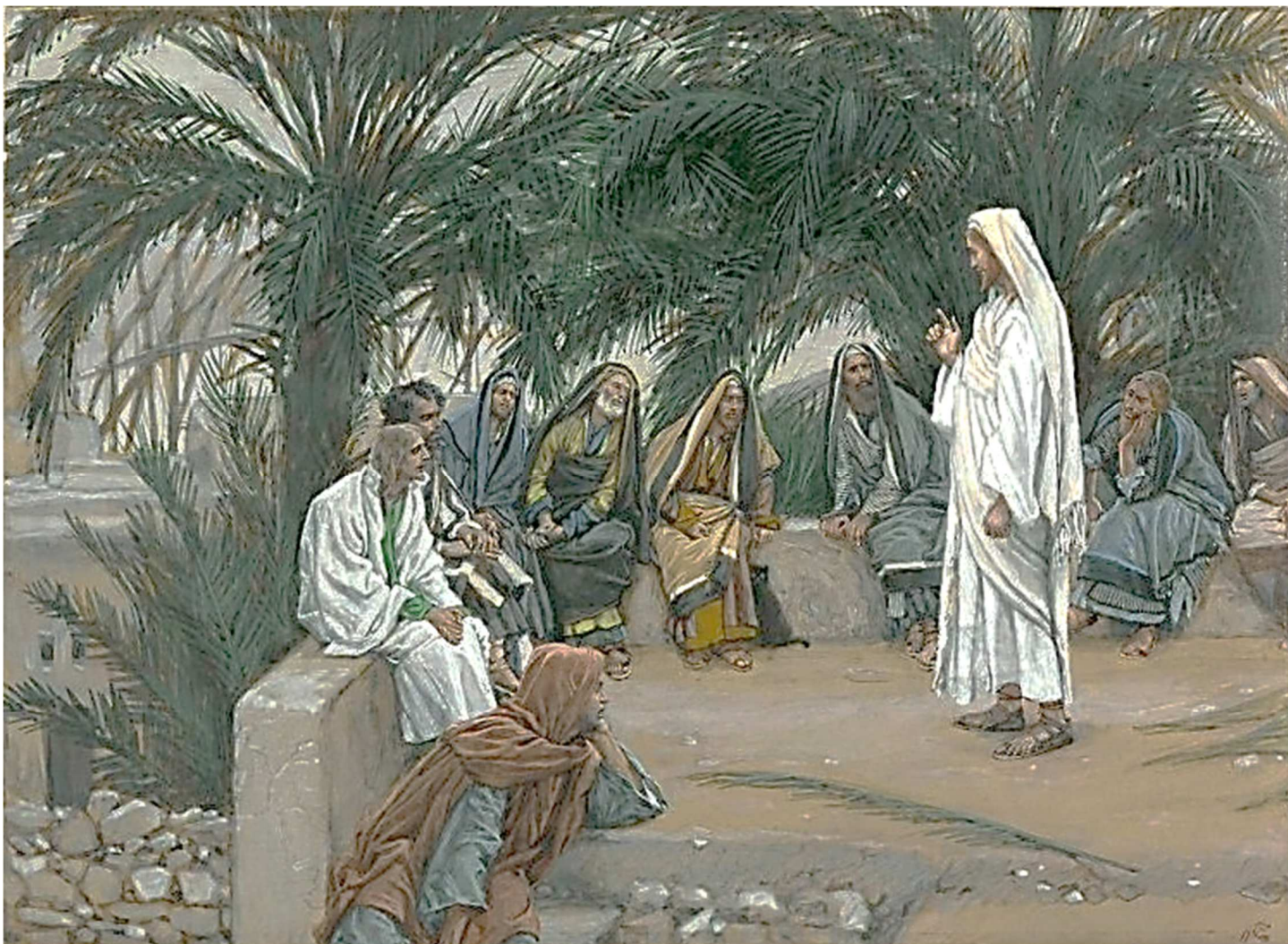
St. Columba's Episcopal Church

1251 Las Posas Road, Camarillo, California 93010

(805) 482-8831 www.stcolumbaca.com

The Rev. Dr. Michael P. Anderson, Rector

Brett Hanley, music director



"The First Shall Be Last," watercolor, (1886-1894), James Tissot, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The 22nd Sunday after Pentecost / Proper 24
October 20, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

THE WORD OF GOD

Prelude – “Praise the Lord through Every Nation” (P. Nicolai) – Brett Hanley, organ

Welcome – The Rev. Dr. Michael P. Anderson

Welcoming Prayer

C: Holy Spirit living within us, guide our hearts and minds as we welcome today all those who worship with us at St. Columba’s. Give us discerning hearts so that everyone who crosses our threshold feels welcomed in the warmth of your love. Amen.

Opening Hymn – # 410 – “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”



1. Praise, my soul the King of heav - en; to his feet thy tri - bute bring;
2. Praise him for his grace and fa - vor to his peo - ple in dis - tress;
3. Fa - ther - like he tends and spares us; well our fee - ble frame he knows;
4. An - gels, help us to a - dore him; yet be - hold him face to face;



ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en, ev - er - more his prais - es sing:
praise him still the same as ev - er, slow to chide, and swift to bless:
in his hand he gen - tly bears us, res - cues us from all our foes.
sun and moon, bow down be - fore him, dwell - ers all in time and space.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in his faith - ful - ness.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly yet his mer - cy flows.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

Words: Henry Francis Lyte, 1793-1847, alt.

Music: LAUDA ANIMA (87. 87. 87), John Goss, 1800-1880.

Opening Acclamation and Collect for Purity

P: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

C: Glory to God forever and ever.

P: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise – “Glory to God” (Powell)

1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly
King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy
on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -
ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most

High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Collect of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

C: **Amen.**

First Lesson – Job 38:1-7

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?”

L: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 104:1-9, 25, 37b

- 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul; *
O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!
you are clothed with majesty and splendor.
- 2 You wrap yourself with light as with a cloak *
and spread out the heavens like a curtain.
- 3 You lay the beams of your chambers in the waters above; *
you make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind.

- 4 You make the winds your messengers *
and flames of fire your servants.
- 5 You have set the earth upon its foundations, *
so that it never shall move at any time.
- 6 You covered it with the Deep as with a mantle; *
the waters stood higher than the mountains.
- 7 At your rebuke they fled; *
at the voice of your thunder they hastened away.
- 8 They went up into the hills and down to the valleys beneath, *
to the places you had appointed for them.
- 9 You set the limits that they should not pass; *
they shall not again cover the earth.
- 25 O Lord, how manifold are your works! *
in wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- 37 Hallelujah!



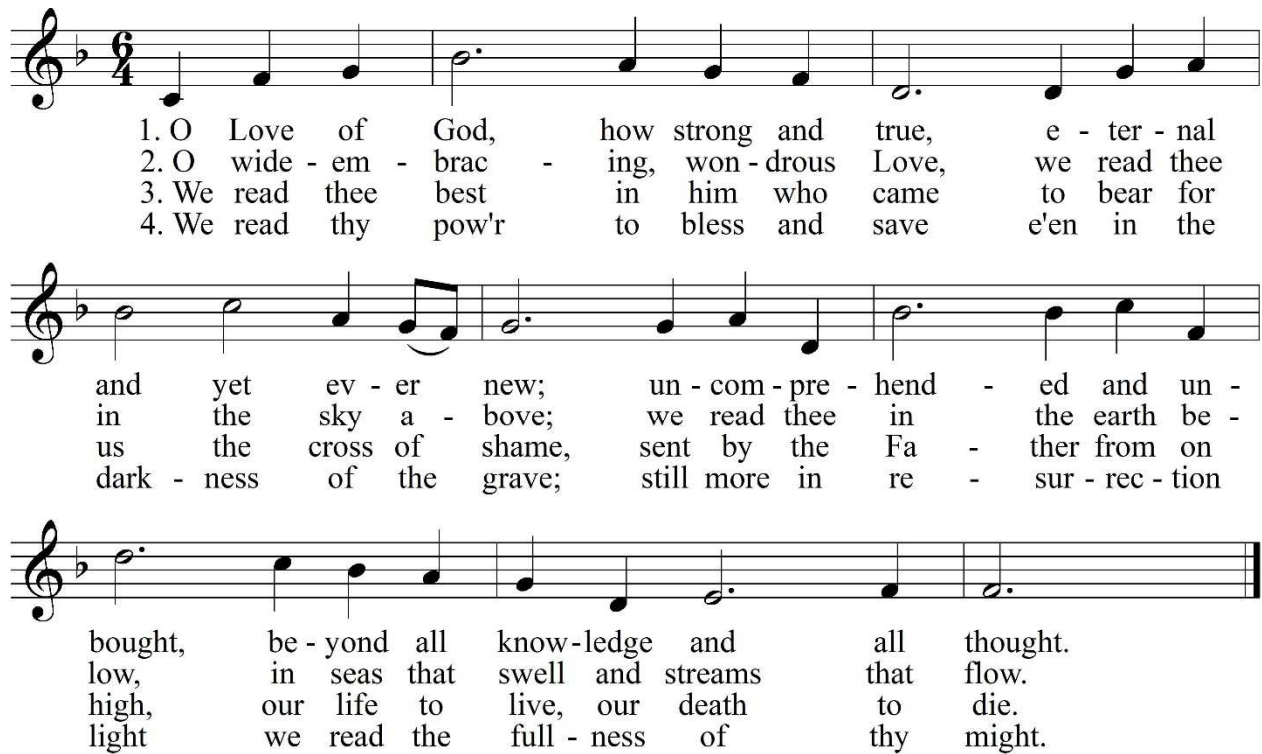
Second Lesson – Hebrews 5:1–10

Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

L: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn – # 455 – “O Love of God, How Strong and True”



1. O Love of God, how strong and true, e - ter - nal
2. O wide - em - brac - ing, won - drous Love, we read thee
3. We read thee best in him who came to bear for
4. We read thy pow'r to bless and save e'en in the

and yet ev - er new; un - com - pre - hend - ed and un -
in the sky a - bove; we read thee in the earth be -
us the cross of shame, sent by the Fa - ther from on
dark - ness of the grave; still more in re - sur - rec - tion

bought, be - yond all know - ledge and all thought.
low, in seas that swell and streams that flow.
high, our life to live, our death to die.
light we read the full - ness of thy might.

Words: Horatio Bonar, 1808-1889.

Music: DUNEDIN (LM), Vernon Griffiths, 1894-1985.

Gospel – Mark 10:35-45

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark

C: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Homily – The Rev. Dr. Michael P. Anderson

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively.

LEM: Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

C: That we all may be one.

LEM: Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

C: That your Name may be glorified by all people.

LEM: We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons; for our Bishops **Justin** (Archbishop of Canterbury), **Michael** (Presiding Bishop), **Sean** (Presiding Bishop-elect), and **John**; for our Clergy, Staff, and Vestry; and for all ministers and people;

C: That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

LEM: We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world; for those who serve our country and the world;

C: That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

LEM: Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

C: That our works may find favor in your sight.

LEM: Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble; we pray especially for Jerry, John, Ann, Jordan, Shelby, Wendie, Robb, Heather, Bruce, Keli, Jack, Chris, Gail, Cameron, Jenée, Maggie, Eileen, Declan, John, Emily, Bobbie, Alison, Chance, John, Linda, Mary, Richard, Lisa, and Ivan.

C: That they may be delivered from their distress.

LEM: Give to the departed eternal rest.

C: Let light perpetual shine upon them.

LEM: We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

C: May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

LEM: Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Silence may be kept.

[The people may add their own petitions.]

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

P: Loving One, in Jesus you have taught us that for you all things are possible: Hear the prayers of your people, that we may persevere in generosity and continually be given to good works, through Jesus Christ our Savior, who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit, our One, Triune God, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

(Our Prayers are from the Book of Common Prayer, Form III, and by David Adam, Traces of Glory: Prayers for the Church Year.)

Confession and Absolution

LEM: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.
Silence may be kept.

ALL: Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name.
Amen.

P: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
C: Amen.

The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
C: And also with you.

Announcements


Birthdays and Anniversaries

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your *servants* as *they* begin another year. Grant that *they* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *their* trust in your goodness all the days of *their* lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Offertory – “Chorale in F Minor” (J.S. Bach) – Brett Hanley, organ



Presentation Hymn – # 379 – “God Is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him”



1. God is Love, let heav'n a - dore him; God is Love, let
2. God is Love, and love en - folds us, all the world in
3. God is Love; and though with blind-ness sin af - flicts all

earth re - joice; let cre - a - tion sing be - fore him
one em - brace: with un - fail - ing grasp God holds us,
hu - man life, God's e - ter - nal lov - ing kind - ness

and ex - alt him with one voice. God who laid the
ev - 'ry child of ev - 'ry race. And when hu - man
guides us through our earth - ly strife. Sin and death and

earth's foun - da - tion, God whospread the heav'ns a - bove, God who
hearts are break - ing un - der sor - row's i - ron rod, then we
hell shall nev - er o'er us fi - nal tri - umph gain; God is

breathes through all cre - a - tion: God is Love, e - ter - nal Love.
find that self - same ach - ing deep with - in the heart of God.
love, so Love for ev - er o'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

Words: Timothy Rees, 1874-1939, alt.

Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH (8 7 8 7 D), Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1907-1991.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Eucharistic Prayer (Prayer A from *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 361)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

P: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

[Here a proper preface is sung or said.]

P: Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Setting: Robert Powell, 1932-

The people stand or kneel.

P: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

P: Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P: We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

C: **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

P: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

C: **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,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**



Fraction Anthem

Cantor or Choir

My flesh is food in - deed, and my blood is drink in -
deed, says the Lord. My Lord. Those who eat my
flesh and drink my blood dwell in me and I in them. My
flesh is food in-deed, and my blood is drink in-deed, says the Lord.

Setting: Ray W. Urwin.

The Invitation

P: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

All are invited to come forward to the two stations for Communion at the direction of the ushers. Receive the wine by drinking from the chalice as it is offered to you, or by retaining the wafer, and a Lay Eucharistic Minister will dip it in the wine and place it back in your hand. If you are not receiving, you may cross your arms over your chest and receive a blessing. If you are unable to physically come to the rail, please indicate to an usher that you would like to receive Communion at your seat.

Post-Communion Prayer

C: Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Closing Hymn – # 397 – “Sing Ye Faithful, Sing with Gladness”



1. Sing, ye faith - ful, sing with glad - ness, wake your no - blest,
2. Sing how he came forth from hea - ven, bowed him - self to
3. So, he tast - ed death for mor - tals, he, of hu - man -
4. Now on high, yet ev - er with us, from his Fa - ther's



sweet - est strain, with the prais - es of your Sa - vior,
Beth - l'hem's cave, stooped to wear the ser - vant's ves - ture,
kind the head, sin - less one, a - mong the sin - ful,
throne the Son rules and guides the world he ran - somed,



let his house re - sound a - gain; him let all your
bore the pain, the cross, the grave, passed with - in the
Prince of life, a - mong the dead; thus he wrought the
till the ap - point - ed work be done, till he see, re -



mu - sic hon - or, and your songs ex - alt his reign.
gates of dark - ness, thence his ban - ished ones to save.
full re - demp - tion, and the cap - tor cap - tive led.
newed and per - fect, all things gath - ered in - to one.

Words: John Ellerton, 1826-1893, alt.

Music: FINNIAN (87. 87. 87), Christopher Dearnley, 1930-2000.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude – “Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus!” (J. Bakewell) – Brett Hanley, organ

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*Thank you for your continued support of **St. Columba's Episcopal Church** (www.stcolumbaca.com). Your financial donations help us to continue our ministries. Thanks for all you do in helping St. Columba's to be a beacon of God's hope and love to our community.*

Rector—Our rector is the **Rev. Dr. Michael P. Anderson**. If you need to reach him during the week, his email address is michael.anderson@stcolumbaca.com.

Coffee Hour—All are welcome to enjoy Coffee Hour in our parish hall and on the patio after worship.

Morning Prayer—Fr. Michael Anderson invites you to join him in the Chapel to start your day with Morning Prayer at **9:00 a.m.**, on **Mondays and Wednesdays**. All are welcome.

Stewardship Reflections—Our annual Stewardship pledge campaign is “Walk in Love,” and includes weekly reflections printed on the last page of the bulletin. We invite you to study these reflections each week as you “walk in love.”

Celtic Christmas Faire—Our annual fundraiser, the Celtic Christmas Faire, will be November 2-3. We are collecting book and puzzle donations to sell at the Faire, and these items can be dropped off in the parish hall. Questions, see Carol Rocco.

Vestry Meeting—The Vestry meets **today at 11:45 a.m.** in the parish hall.

Pub Theology: Beer, Conversations and God—Come join Fr. Michael Anderson at **Institution Ale Co.** tomorrow, **Monday, October 21, at 7:00 p.m.** for fellowship and conversation. All are welcome. The address is 3841 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo, CA 93012.

Rescheduled Adult Forum—The St. Columba’s Health Ministry October 6 Adult Forum on POLST had to be canceled but will be presented on **October 27 at 11:30 a.m.** What is the difference in a POLST and Advance Health Care directive. While everyone 18 and over should have an Advance Health Care directive, not everyone should have a POLST. Come and learn the difference.

Lunch Bunch—Lunch Bunch is on **Wednesday, October 30, at Noon**. **Sign up** on the bulletin board in the narthex for this time of food and fellowship.

Episcopal Relief & Development Donations Needed—Help is desperately needed by those affected by Hurricane Helene. Please give today to the Episcopal Relief & Development’s **Hurricane Relief Fund** and help their partners and dioceses reach vulnerable communities devastated by hurricanes and other catastrophic storms. Your urgent gift will enable them to respond now—and in the long run to aid in recovery. Give online at <https://bit.ly/ERDHurricaneHeleneAid>.

VACCINATIONS FOR RESPIRATORY VIRUSES CUT HOSPITALIZATIONS BY 50%

Vaccines for respiratory viruses are proven to cut hospitalizations by up to 50%, which is particularly important for vulnerable populations like the elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions, and individuals with weakened immune systems. 21,000 people died and 369,000 individuals were hospitalized for the flu during the 2022-2023 influenza season. Please consider getting vaccinated.

Prayer Request Procedures—Prayer is integral to our community, and we would love to pray for you. To add or remove someone from the prayer list, please email the church office at office.manager@stcolumbaca.com or call 805-482-8831.

Food Ministries Help—We are grateful to serve over 60 families three times per month. As we continue to do so, we need the following items: **cereal, oatmeal, pasta sauce, pasta, canned soup, mac & cheese, canned tuna, canned chicken, fresh bread, toilet paper, paper towels, and Kleenex.** If you would like to donate any of these items, you can bring them on Sunday or drop them off at the parish hall during the week. Alternatively, you can donate to our Food ministry fund, by indicating “Food Ministry” in the memo of your check. Your support is so appreciated by our food clients who truly need our help!

Ministers serving today:

Presider: The Reverend Dr. Michael P. Anderson

Altar Guild: Sarah Wigert and Mary Steppes-Cole

Ushers: Gail & Maurice Hill

Lector: Maurice Hill

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Kevin O’Farrell and Bob Waite

Livestream Technicians: Tim Helton, Nancy Miller, Vinita Bhushan, Richard Stone, Carlos Barraza, Bill Hillbrant

Sound Engineer: Tim Brown

IN OUR PRAYERS

We pray for

those with immediate needs:

Jerry Gillespie, John Barcroft, Ann Daniel, Jordan Hyde, Shelby Prather, Wendie Roberts, Robb, Heather, Bruce Anderson, Keli, Jack Shutt, Chris Russell, Gail Morrissette, Cameron Harrison, Jenée John, Maggie Lunsky, Eileen Ely, Declan, John Fredrick, Emily Bianco, Bobbie Shufani, Alison Hillbrant, Chance Kubinak, John Noonan, Linda Lowe, Mary Vasi, Richard Lappine, Lisa, Ivan

and those who need our continuing prayers:

Ann Radzienda

We pray for all those serving at home and abroad:

- **Jesse Meyer, Liam O’Brien, Matthew Bamberger, Matt Zelinskas, Nathan Halpin, Jonah Hershman, and Chris Heney.**

The flowers on the High Altar are given by Diane and Doug Off to the glory of God and in celebration of their wedding anniversary.



To make changes to the prayer list for St. Columba’s, please contact the church office (office.manager@stcolumbaca.com) or 805-482-8831.



Walk in Love Paradox



The phrase “Walk in love” is borrowed from a letter Paul wrote to Ephesians in which he discusses the Christian understanding of love: to “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Indeed, walking in love is integral to the Christian tradition; at the same time, essential and secularly connected to each of our hearts. As a young adult, wishing to honestly engage in a reflection of love, my mind projects past the static, screened portrayals that streamed romcoms and pop lyrics are soaked with into something deeper: love as paradox. Paradox as recognizing the relationship between two highly differing experiences which do not negate each other like contradiction does. Instead, when paired together, vastness opens up so wide, we can hold each separate concept in our hands and feel the infiniteness of life swirl within us. Paradox is a flipped coin, currency; a battery, energy. Love must be a paradox.

In my encounters with paradox, there is a side which is conventionally received within the culture of our society; the other side faces a struggle to accept. I wonder what lies within love – the shadow-side that together completes a whole. Forgiveness blossoms on my lips.

In the spring of 2020, a friend sent me Pádraig Ó Tuama’s reading of Dilruba Ahmed’s poem, “Phase One.” Forgiveness flowers across stanzas, coating a hurt heart like liniment: “... Ointment reserved/ for healers and prophets. I forgive you./ I forgive you.” (Ahmed, 39-41). As the tears fell across my cheeks, a realization was released: to forgive is to love. And so, as I would forgive, or love, another, I must forgive, and love, myself.

As a child, I translated our commandment of love to “Love your neighbor as your [honest] self.” In other words, come as you are to the world; with all your ugliness or beauty, love nonetheless. Now, I see it another way: “Love your neighbor as [you do] yourself.” Society says, “Love begets love,” but this is not always true. Forgiveness begets love. So here, as ourselves and towards our neighbors, we must return to love. | tens.org

Questions for Reflection:

When is the last time you forgave yourself?
How does forgiveness transform love?



Vivian Altopp runs an educational nonprofit, Striving Together Empowering People (STEP), for young people in West Philadelphia out of her home church, Calvary St. Augustine, and is currently working on a novel on the life of the posthumously famous photographer, Vivian Maier.

