



Orinda Community Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ
Reverend Elizabeth Robinson, Senior Pastor

Order of Worship
Sunday, September 4, 2022, 10 am



The Prodigal Son, by Paulus Hoffman

Reflection:

People who have come to know the joy of God do not deny the darkness, but they choose not to live in it. They claim that the light that shines in the darkness can be trusted more than the darkness itself and that a little bit of light can dispel a lot of darkness. They point each other to flashes of light here and there, and remind each other that they reveal the hidden but real presence of God.”

— Henri J.M. Nouwen, from *Return of the Prodigal Son*

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

David Milnes

BRINGING OF THE LIGHT AND RINGING OF THE HOUR

The Acolytes

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP*

Marilyn Welland

One: May the extravagant love of God fill our hearts and minds, and may God's embrace hold us when we feel unworthy to be called God's children.

All: **May the friendship of Jesus, our companion rid us of any notion that we are nothing and may we find our home with him in his Kingdom.**

One: May the Spirit of life release us from a world of duty so that a new joy wells up in our lives.

All: **Let us go and reconfigure the world in our friendships, in our workplaces, in our families, in our streets and in our world.**

HYMN* **RH** 145

Morning Has Broken

COMMUNITY PRAYER

Marilyn Welland

**God of the lost, the least,
and all who long for home,
when we wander from your ways
and waste the gifts you have given us,**

**welcome us back, we pray,
so that we may celebrate and rejoice
in your presence forever.**

**Stand as you are able*

**We give thanks and worship, praising
the name of you, the Father,
you, the Son,
and you, the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

WORD OF ASSURANCE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

WE LISTEN

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Marilyn Welland

Luke 15:11-32

And Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’” And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

**Stand as you are able*

“Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

SERMON

A Meditation on Mercy

Reverend Lee Cruise

WE RESPOND

HYMN* BH 283

Spirit of the Living God

A TIME OF PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

Our God, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

MOMENT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SOLO

**Stand as you are able*

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Elizabeth Kersten

COMMUNION PRAYER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION PRAYER

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

SOLO

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

HYMN* BH 547

Amazing Grace

BENEDICTION*

**Stand as you are able*

Orinda Community Church

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Reverend Elizabeth Robinson, Senior Pastor

David Milnes, Director of Music

Anna Gregory, Office Administrator

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Alta Mesa Center for the Arts, under the leadership of Mary Volmer, is an interfaith arts and spirituality hub, housed within and sponsored by Orinda Community Church.

Next up at AMCA
A reading and discussion of
LA VIEJA
by writer, feminist, and ecological thinker
Deena Metzger



September 11th, at 4:00pm (Pacific)

Go to www.orindacommunitychurch.org, under Arts/Alta Mesa Center to register.

Fall Writing Workshop

September 22nd and September 29th
6:00pm - 8:00pm (on zoom)

Writing Young Characters Authentically With Dallas Woodburn



How does one create teenage characters who feel honest and compelling to the reader? Whether writing fiction for teenagers or adults, it can be difficult to present teenage characters in an interesting and genuine way. This workshop will provide guidelines and examples, as well as writing prompts and exercises, to help writers create young characters authentically in fiction.

\$150.00

Scholarships and Payment Plans Available.

Register Here: (<http://www.maryvolmer.com/writing-young-characters-authentically---with-dallas-woodburn.html>)

Weekly Events

Each week, in addition to our 10 a.m. Sunday worship, the church offers regular programming.

- ✚ Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel, we host **Centering Prayer**.
(*please note, there will be no Centering Prayer on 9/5/22).
- ✚ Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., we hold a brief **Contemplative Service** in the chapel, which includes readings, music, prayer time, and silence. This service also goes out electronically.
- ✚ **Life and Loss Group** meets every Thursday in the Fireside Room at 12 noon. You are welcome to simply attend, or if you have questions, please call or email the office.
- ✚ Thursday afternoons at 2:00 p.m., our **Theology and Scripture** group meets via Zoom to discuss theology and the bible, and other topics. Our next meeting is Thursday, September 8, at 2:00 pm.

Every other week:

- ✚ Two Tuesdays a month, the **Writers' Group** shares and discusses their writings via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. (Their work is featured in the narthex; take a look!) Next meeting is Tuesday, September 6, at 10 am.
- ✚ Two Thursdays a month, starting at 3:45, the **Reading Group** is doing a close study of the novels of Marilynne Robinson, starting with Gilead. We meet via Zoom. Next meeting is Thursday, September 8, at 4 pm. The room will open at 3:45 pm for welcome and chatting.

Ushers & Greeters



THANK YOU TO OUR USHERS THIS WEEK:

Leslie Darwin O'Brien is back at Ristorante Amoroma on Tuesday Nights:

A yellow poster with a dark wood-grain border. At the top center, it reads "Ristorante Amoroma Presents 37¢". To the left of this text are two musical notes. Below the text is a dark blue rectangle containing the text "Tuesdays from 6-7:30 on the patio". To the right of the text are two photographs: one of Leslie Darwin O'Brien and one of Karen Weichert. Below the photos are their names and roles: "Leslie Darwin O'Brien Vocals" and "Karen Weichert Piano". At the bottom left, it says "360 Park Street, Moraga, CA 925-377-ROMA". There are also musical notes and blue circles scattered on the poster.

Ristorante Amoroma
Presents
37¢

Tuesdays from 6-7:30
on the patio

Leslie Darwin O'Brien
Vocals

Karen Weichert
Piano

360 Park Street, Moraga, CA
925-377-ROMA



Supporting the Elva Rust Scholarship Foundation

Saturday, September 17, 2022

10:00 am – 2:00 pm

ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH PATIO
10 Irwin Way, Orinda

presented by:
P.E.O. Chapter OT, Orinda
Philanthropic Educational Organization
supporting higher education for women

If you would like to participate, you can rent a table for \$20. (You will retain the proceeds from everything you sell.)