



*Sustaining a vibrant and growing congregation through Christian spiritual transformation, making our work and the church relevant and visible.*

(510) 465-4793      [www.lakemerrittumc.org](http://www.lakemerrittumc.org)  
1255 First Avenue      Oakland, CA 94606

## **LIVE-STREAM WORSHIP SERVICE**

*Join us as we worship in spirit through our live-streamed worship celebration via Zoom and Facebook Live. Visit our website for connection instructions.*



*At a Distance*  
Dave Smallen, cousin of Laurel Williams

***Joan Miller, Music Director***  
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Sunday, August 9, 2020  
10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
*Celebration of Divine Worship*

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WELCOME

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, Pastor

MOMENT OF SILENCE *Let us prepare our hearts and minds in silence to worship God.*

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Through It All*

by: Andre Crouch

CALL TO WORSHIP [*Responsive*]: **“Pandemic”**

*by: Lynn Ungar*  
Patty Staggs & Tamra Hege

**ONE:**      What if you thought of it  
                 as the Jews consider the Sabbath-  
                 the most sacred of times?

**Cease from travel.**

**Cease from buying and selling.**

**Give up, just for now,  
on trying to make the world  
different than it is.**

Sing. Pray. Touch only those  
to whom you commit your life.

**Center down.**

And when your body has become still,  
**reach out with your heart.**

Know that we are connected  
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

**(You could hardly deny it now.)**

Know that our lives  
are in one another's hands.

**(Surely, that has come clear.)**

Do not reach out your hands.

**Reach out your heart.**

**Reach out your words.**

**Reach out all the tendrils  
of compassion that move, invisibly,  
where we cannot touch.**

Promise this world your love-  
**for better or for worse,  
in sickness and in health,  
so long as we all shall live.**

OPENING SONG

**He Touched Me** (UMH 367)

Joan Miller, Song Leader

1. *Shackled by a heavy burden,  
'Neath a load of guilt and shame.  
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,  
And now I am no longer the same.*

**[Refrain:]**

***He touched me, Oh He touched me,  
And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
Something happened and now I know,  
He touched me and made me whole.***

2. *Since I met this blessed Savior,  
Since He cleansed and made me whole,  
I will never cease to praise Him,  
I'll shout it while eternity rolls.*

***He touched me, Oh He touched me,  
And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
Something happened and now I know  
He touched me and made me whole.***

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 29:1-14 (CEB)

Tam Hege

The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the few surviving elders among the exiles, to the priests and the prophets, and to all the people Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Babylon from Jerusalem. The letter was sent after King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the court officials, the government leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen and smiths had left Jerusalem. It was delivered to Babylon by Elasah, Shaphan's son, and Gemariah, Hilkiah's son—two men dispatched to Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar by King Zedekiah.

The Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims to all the exiles I have carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and settle down; cultivate gardens and eat what they produce. Get married and have children; then help your sons find wives and your daughters find husbands in order that they too may have children. Increase in number there so that you don't dwindle away. Promote the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because your future depends on its welfare.

The Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims: Don't let the prophets and diviners in your midst mislead you. Don't pay attention to your dreams. They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I didn't send them, declares the Lord.

The Lord proclaims: When Babylon's seventy years are up, I will come and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope. When you call me and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you search for me, yes, search for me with all your heart, you will find me. I will be present for you, declares the Lord, and I will end your captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have scattered you, and I will bring you home after your long exile, declares the Lord.

MESSAGE

**“Living in Exile: Living in the Distance”**

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Pam will lift up prayer requests previously sent to her.

*When the pastor says “Lord,” the people respond: “**Hear Our Prayer.**”*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*\*We invite you to use any other name to refer to the Divine with which you are comfortable ~ God, Father, Mother, Creator, etc.*

***Our \*Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.***

***Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.***

***Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.***

***Amen.***

# OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

## INVITATION & PRAYER OVER OFFERINGS

*Please prepare your checks for mailing, or cash for drop off at the church office while our Music Director leads us in our Thanksgiving Song.*

THANKSGIVING SONG

**On Eagle's Wings**

UMH 143

***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.***

## CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & RESOLVE

by Paul Douglass Walfall,  
United Church of Canada (Sister Church of the UMC)

Patty Staggs

***Holy God***

***As we continue to live in this time of responding to the pandemic Covid-19,  
It has not been easy for us to live in a state of physical distancing.***

***We cannot offer an embrace to comfort, a handshake to greet, a pat on the  
shoulders to encourage.***

***To keep ourselves and each other safe,***

***We must keep apart***

***Give us strength to keep each other safe***

***Give us grace to seek new ways to be social even as we keep our distance***

***When we feel overwhelmed and unable to go on, provide the brother or sister who  
will be your grace at that moment.***

***When we feel frustrated and impatient because we are tired of staying away from  
others,***

***Give us the love that helps us see the need to keep each other safe***

***Holy One***

***We know that the race is not for the swift***

***And we sense that this race will be a marathon***

***But, in this race, remind us that we are not alone.***

***So we run with perseverance, mindful that you journey with us.***

***Amen.***

# SILENT PRAYER FOR CONFESSION & HOPE

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*from the London Black Women's Project*

Hear the Good News of these words: Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Know that you are forgiven. Amen.

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Go to your windows now, open them, and with joyful noise proclaim,  
*"Peace be with you all!"* then come back!

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION & SHARING HOLY COMMUNION

GRATITUDE TIMES *Gratitudes previously sent to Rev. Pam will be shared.*

## CLOSING SONG

### **From A Distance**

*written by: Julie Gold*

*originally sung by: Bette Midler*

*From a distance the world looks blue and green  
And the snow-capped mountains white.  
From a distance the ocean meets the stream  
And the eagle takes to flight.*

*From a distance there is harmony  
And it echoes through the land.  
It's the voice of hope,  
It's the voice of peace,  
It's the voice of everyone.*

*From a distance we all have enough  
And no one is in need;  
And there are no guns, no bombs and no disease  
No hungry mouths to feed.*

*From a distance we are instruments  
Marching in a common band.  
Playing songs of hope,  
Playing songs of peace,*

*They are the songs of everyone.*

***God is watching us  
God is watching us  
God is watching us within this distance.***

*From a distance you look like my friend  
Even though we are at war.  
From a distance I just cannot comprehend  
What all this fighting's for.  
From a distance there is harmony  
And it echoes through the land;  
And it's the hope of hopes,  
It's the love of loves,  
It's the heart of everyone.  
It's the hope of hopes,  
It's the love of loves,  
This is the song for everyone.*

***God is watching us  
God is watching us  
God is watching us within this distance***

***God is watching us  
God is watching  
God is watching us within this distance***

BENEDICTION

Rev. Pam

*All raise hand, palm facing outward and wave goodbye.*