

Lake Merritt United Methodist Church



An Inclusive Christian Community of Oakland

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
1255 First Avenue Oakland, CA 94606

LIVESTREAM WORSHIP SERVICE



"Known and Called"

Epiphany Season Series

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*
Joan Miller, *Music Director*
Neil Wade, *Office Administrator*

pastor@lakemerrittumc.org
music@lakemerrittumc.org
office@lakemerrittumc.org

Sunday, January 3, 2021
Epiphany Sunday
Celebration of Divine Worship

WELCOME

INTROIT

Christ, Be Our Light
Joan Miller, Music Director

Bernadette Farrell

Longing for light, we wait in darkness, longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness,

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

OPENING PRAYER [*responsive*]: **About the Light** Joseph Karoma & Satu Sheriff
By: Joan van de Laar, with permission
(© Sacredise 2008) (adapt.)

It's always been about the light with you, hasn't it, Jesus?

Magi, braving distance and desert to find you,
and bewildered shepherds, compelled by an angel's invitation,
allowed light to be their guide,

It's always been about the light with you, hasn't it, Jesus?

And it is still the light that calls us to you;
the light of beauty that whispers its truth
in surprising ways and places;
the light of compassion that kneels,
and washes road-soiled, life-battered feet;

It's always been about the light with you, hasn't it, Jesus?

the light of joy that glows
even in the darkness of grief and suffering;
the light that seeks to shine within us,
and through us into the dark corners of our world.

It's always been about the light with you, Jesus;
and it's always about the light for us.

*Please lead us, now and always,
out of darkness and into your marvelous light.*

Amen

1. *We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.*

[Refrain]:

***O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.***

5. *Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies.*

***O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.***

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 72:1-4, 11-14, Matthew 2:9-11 (CEB)

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

God, give your judgments to the king.

Give your righteousness to the king's son.

Let him judge your people with righteousness
and your poor ones with justice.

Let the mountains bring peace to the people;
let the hills bring righteousness.

Let the king bring justice to people who are poor;
let him save the children of those who are needy,
but let him crush oppressors!

Let all the kings bow down before him;
let all the nations serve him.

Let it be so, because he delivers the needy who cry out,
the poor, and those who have no helper.

He has compassion on the weak and the needy;
he saves the lives of those who are in need.

He redeems their lives from oppression and violence;
their blood is precious in his eyes.

Matthew 2:9-11

When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was.

When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

SERMON

Known by The Light: Called to Joy

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

ANTHEM

Christmas Is Here

The Ambalong Family

Tagalog (with English subtitles)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: "Lord,"

People: "*Hear our Prayers.*"

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

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

From All That Dwell (sung to 'The First Noel')

Words: Isaac Watts and Thomas Ken

From all that dwell below the skies,

Let the Creator's praise arise;

Let the Redeemer's Name be sung,

Through every land, by every tongue.

Let the Redeemer's Name be sung,

Through every land, by every tongue.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & RESOLVE *[responsive]*

The coming of Christ was not, and is not, widely welcomed.

Wherever there is epiphany there will also be darkness:

the darkness of old superstitions and dogmas which refuse to fade away easily;

the darkness of pride in the half truths that have masqueraded as wisdom;

the darkness of entrenched evil that hates the light and tries to dispose of it;

the darkness of apathy that cannot be bothered to open the shutters;

Let us make our confession together:

**Most holy and most loving God, we admit to you and to each other,
that we are creatures who either through foolishness or wilfulness
often choose darkness instead of light.**

Here and now, we surrender to you

our fears and proud opinions,

our short-sighted folly and our pompous wisdom,

our deep-seated sins and our apathy towards change and renewal.

Please forgive the darkness and pain we have inflicted on others,

and restore the light-starved hopes and ideals within our own souls.

Trusting your grace, we earnestly pray: "Create in us a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within us." Through Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen!

TIME OF SILENCE FOR PRAYERS OF FORGIVENESS AND HOPE

Assurance of Grace

My friends, Epiphany is good news! The Light comes not to sear and blind us but to save us.

Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners. In his name I declare to you: Your sins are forgiven! Take up your forgiveness with thanksgiving, and live without shame or anxiety.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ enables us. Amen!

Confession and Assurance by Bruce Prewer

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

As forgiven people living in anticipation of Jesus's coming, let us share peace with our siblings in the world.

*We go to our windows and doors and share with the world:
"the peace of Christ be with you!"*

SHARING THE HOLY COMMUNION OF THE BREAD AND CUP

GRATITUDE TIMES

CLOSING SONG

"Love Has Come"

W&S #3059

Tune: Bring a Torch

- 1. Love has come, a light in the darkness!
Love explodes in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it.
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high!*
- 2. Love is born! Come share in the wonder.
Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of His mother.
What is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.
Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.*
- 3. Love has come, He never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to You, God on high!*

BENEDICTION

Epiphany Prayer and Litany

Christine Sine (adapt)
<http://godspace-msa.com>

Arise, shine inheritors of God's light,
You came and heard,

**The light of God has come into our world.
It reached across time and space
into our hearts,
And nations will come to its brightness.**

Arise, shine, bearers of Christ's light.
You came and saw,
**The light of God's son brings salvation,
proclaims God's justice and love,
overcomes the darkness
and gives new life.**

Arise, shine, privileged ones
who live in the light of Christ,
You came and followed.
Christ redeemed our world,

**And draws us into a loving family,
From every tribe and family and culture.**

Arise, shine, sharers of God's light,
No longer be satisfied with your old life.

Go and tell others,
**Learn to love your neighbour as yourself,
So that they too may know Christ,
And the hope his message brings.**

POSTLUDE

Christ Be Our Light

Bernadette Farrell

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.

Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness,

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.