



IN JOINT FELLOWSHIP

*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

## Beguiled By Beauty: Celebrating LGBTQ+ Siblings



### THE SPARKLE CREED

by Rev. Rachel Small Stokes

I believe in the non-binary God whose pronouns are plural.

I believe in Jesus Christ, their child, who wore a fabulous tunic and had two dads, and who saw everyone as a sibling child of God.

I believe in the rainbow Spirit, who shatters our image of one white light and refracts it into a rainbow of gorgeous diversity.

I believe in the church of everyday saints, as numerous, creative, and resilient as patches on the AIDS quilt, whose feet are grounded in mud and whose eyes gaze at the stars in Wonder.

I believe in the calling to each of us, that love is love is love, so beloved, let us love.

I believe, glorious God. Help my unbelief.

Amen.

*“The Beauty of a World Simply Because”*

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

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September 19, 2021  
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
*Celebration of Divine Worship*

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WELCOME

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

INTROIT

*Singing for Our Lives*  
Jim Meredith, *piano*

Holly Near

OPENING PRAYER [*responsive*]

Domo Olali & Ron Fujie

Divine Goodness, Holy One,  
Pause us for this moment,  
bear us up in this time,  
hold us for eternity.

We tune our spirits to truth  
We begin to let go of expectations  
We allow all beings the fullness of their own beauty  
And all the people say, “Amen.”

*Worship Design Studio (WDS)*

## A SONG, SCRIPTURE AND A PRAYER

Opening Song

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

UMH 92 (adapt.)

- 1. For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*
- 3. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony, linking sense to sound and sight;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*
- 4. For the joy of human love, for the different ways we love,  
friends on earth and friends above, for all beauty just because;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*
- 5. For thy church, that evermore lifteth holy hands above,  
offering up on every shore her pure sacrifice of love;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

Scripture

**Romans 1:20 (CEB)**

Ron Fujie

Ever since the creation of the world, God’s invisible qualities—God’s eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through the things God has made. So humans are without excuse.

## Prayer for Reflection from *“Prayers to an Evolutionary God”*

*Boundless Sea of Love and Energy,  
our future and our God,  
may all your dreams for us come true:  
your steady and motherlike imaginings,  
and your fatherly hopes,  
your creative purposes evident everywhere in the world.  
Guide us to our truest selves,  
co-creators with you of this environment.  
Persuade us to be worthy inheritors  
of the astonishing evolving reality in which we live:  
appreciators of the daytime in all its colors and aromas,  
admirers of the heavens at night,  
reverent caretakers of our generous green earth,  
respectful of everything alive -  
especially of our fellow humans  
in all their bewildering diversity.  
May it be so.*

*William Cleary*

## Prayers of the People

Rev. Pamela Kurtz

### The Lord's Prayer

Ecumenical Version (UMH 894)

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.

## HOLY COMMUNION

### Prayer of Confession and Resolve *[unison]*

Domo Olali

*God, who made me in Your image, teach me to love myself as You love me.  
God, who made me in Your image, allow me to show that image to the world.  
God, who made me in Your image, help me to see Your image in all those I meet.  
God, who made me in Your image, teach me to conserve and protect all Your creation.  
God, who made me in Your image, bless, protect, and keep me and all Your children safe.*  
*(More Light Presbyterian, New Orleans, LA)*

## TIME OF SILENCE FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND HOPE

### Assurance of Grace

Here these words of assurance my dear siblings:

The One who breathed life into our lungs continues to be present with us. God, who has made us reflective of God's own image, has forgiven us all and made us new creations. Therefore, since our sins are forgiven, let us go forth with love and peace, honoring and upholding the dignity of all we meet, knowing we see reflections of God's image all around. Amen.

*(More Light Presbyterian, New Orleans, LA)*

## Passing the Peace

*As forgiven people Living with the indwelled Spirit,  
let us share peace with our siblings in the world!*

## SHARING IN COMMUNION OF THE BREAD AND CUP

### MESSAGE

### “The Beauty of a World Simply Because”

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, Pastor

### RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### We Are a Gentle, Angry People

Holly Near

### (Singing for Our Lives)

arr. James Meredith

LMUMC Handbells

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH, GRATITUDES, OFFERINGS

### Living as the Church

### Gratitude Times

### Offering Time

### Offering Words

### Thanksgiving Song

### For Everyone Born

W: Shirley Erena Murray M: Brian Mann

*For everyone born, a place at the table, to live without fear, and simply to be,  
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship, for everyone born, the right to be free.*

*And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace;  
yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, justice, and joy.*

### CLOSING SONG

### God of Many Faces

Tune: Slane (UMH 451)

Songs for the Holy Other W: Amy Cerniglia

- 1. God of many faces, we offer our praise, singing your glory through all of our days.  
Hear ever growing voices, once fragile, now strong, carrying melodies in expansive new songs.*
- 2. God of many genders, our world reflects you, sunrise and sunset uniting our hues,  
woven into a city with jewels of all shades, houses of ruby and walls rowed with jade.*
- 3. God of many names, we invite you to show us the new names that reflect our true souls.  
Breathe with your holy spirit to give us the Word that will indwell dry bones,  
granting new life once heard.*
- 4. God of many bodies, a bid within ours, shifting more each day through time and through  
scars. Come sanctify your bodies, all fashioned by you, holier every day,  
still becoming more true.*

**BENEDICTION** *[unison]*

Domo Olali

*The world is so varied and beautiful  
Seek wisdom wherever it is to be found.  
And may the goodness of the Creator,  
the companionship of the Christ,  
and the insight of the Spirit,  
infuse your life now and always. Amen*

WDS

**POSTLUDE**

**Sunshine and Joy Medley**

arr. Mark Hayes

(Sunshine in my Soul/I've Got the Joy)

Comp. John Sweney; George Cooke

Jim Meredith, *piano*

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