

**Lake Merritt United Methodist Church**

An Inclusive Christian Community of Oakland



**LAKE PARK**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

*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)

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*“Our Lives Are Precious”*

*from an Epiphany series: “God is Holding Your Life”*

**Rev. Pamela Kurtz, Pastor**

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January 23, 2022  
Third Sunday After the Epiphany  
*Celebration of Divine Worship*

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WELCOME

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, *Pastor*

INTROIT

Prelude and Fugue in B-flat

comp. Johann Sebastian Bach

OPENING PRAYER [*responsive*]

readers: Fran Cooper & Naomi Martin

Lift up your eyes, behold the hills.  
From where will help and rescue come?

*We call the One who made the earth,  
Who blessed the stars, the moon and sun.*

*God is holding your life*

*God is holding your life, we believe.*

Holy and Just God, you have shown us what is right and good.  
Open us this day to a vision of the world made all-right  
so that we might follow your ways and know the peace of your reign  
on earth as it is in heaven.

*We praise you for your steadfast presence,  
holding our lives together in love. Amen.*

## A SONG, SCRIPTURE AND A PRAYER

Opening Song

Jesus Shall Reign

UMH 157

- 1. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does its successive journeys run;  
his kingdom spread from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.*
- 2. To Jesus endless prayer be made, and endless praises crown his head;  
his name like sweet perfume shall rise with every morning sacrifice.*
- 3. People and realms of every tongue dwell on his love with sweetest song;  
and infant voices shall proclaim their early blessings on his name.*
- 4. Blessings abound where'er he reigns; all prisoners leap and loose their chains;  
the weary find eternal rest, and all who suffer want are blest.*
- 5. Let every creature rise and bring honors peculiar to our King;  
angels descend with songs again, and earth repeat the loud amen!*

Scripture

Psalm 72:1-7; 10-14 (MSG)

Naomi Martin

Give the gift of wise rule to the king, O God, the gift of just rule to the crown prince.

May he judge your people rightly, be honorable to your meek and lowly.

Let the mountains give exuberant witness; shape the hills with the contours of right living.

Please stand up for the poor, help the children of the needy,

come down hard on the cruel tyrants.

Outlast the sun, outlive the moon—age after age after age.

Be rainfall on cut grass, earth-refreshing rain showers.

Let righteousness burst into blossom and peace abound until the moon fades to nothing.

Rule from sea to sea, from the River to the Rim.  
Foes will fall on their knees before God, his enemies lick the dust.  
Kings remote and legendary will pay homage,  
    kings rich and resplendent will turn over their wealth.  
All kings will fall down and worship, and godless nations sign up to serve him,  
Because he rescues the poor at the first sign of need, the destitute who have run out of luck.  
He opens a place in his heart for the down-and-out, he restores the wretched of the earth.  
He frees them from tyranny and torture—  
    when they bleed, he bleeds;  
    when they die, he dies.

**Scriptural Response** [VIDEO] *These Lives Are Precious*      Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

**Prayers of the People**      **Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, Pastor**

**The Lord's Prayer**      Ecumenical Version (UMH 894)

\*Please feel free to use the name of your choice for God that speaks to your soul.

**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** [*responsive*]      Fran Cooper and Naomi Martin

God of starlight, shine your love into the darkness of our lives.

*Preoccupied with ourselves, we forget the needs of others;  
we participate in systems that oppress; we accept violence as a way of life;  
we fail to respond to the cry of others.*

May your love fall upon us like rain on the mown grass. May your love wash away our indifference and water the tender shoots of our care and compassion.

*Nourished in the sunlight of your love, may we grow into people who live in righteousness and who work for justice for all your children. Amen.*

*Ministry Matters*

## TIME OF SILENCE FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND HOPE

**Assurance of Grace**      **Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, Pastor**

In Jesus Christ, God has revealed the mystery that brings grace and forgiveness. The light of God's love transforms us so that we may act with boldness and confidence. Know that you are forgiven in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Ministry Matters (Adapt.)*

## PASSING THE PEACE

*As forgiven people Living in the season of hope,  
let us share peace with our siblings in the world!*

## SHARING IN COMMUNION OF THE BREAD AND CUP

## MESSAGE

## “Our Lives are Precious”

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, Pastor

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### "In My Life"

song by: McCartney & Lennon

Performed by LMUMC Choir

*There are places I'll remember  
All my life though some have changed  
Some forever, not for better  
Some have gone and some remain  
All these places have their moments  
With lovers and friends I still can recall  
Some are dead and some are living  
In my life I've loved them all  
But of all these friends and lovers  
There is no one compares with you  
And these memories lose their meaning  
When I think of love as something new  
Though I know I'll never lose affection  
For people and things that went before  
I know I'll often stop and think about them  
In my life I love you more  
Though I know I'll never lose affection  
For people and things that went before  
I know I'll often stop and think about them  
In my life I love you more  
In my life I love you more*

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH, GRATITUDES, OFFERINGS

Living as the Church

Gratitude Times

Offering Time

Offering Words

## THANKSGIVING SONG

In the Lord, I'll Be Ever Thankful

TFWS 2195

*In the Lord, I'll be ever thankful,*

*In the Lord, I will rejoice.*

*Look to God, do not be afraid.*

*Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.*

*Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.*

1. You are salt for the earth, O people:

**Salt for the Kingdom of God!**

Share the flavour of life, O people:

**Life in the Kingdom of God!**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy, bring forth the Kingdom of peace;**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

2. You are a light on the hill, O people:

**Light for the City of God!**

Shine so holy and bright, O people:

**Shine for the Kingdom of God!**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy, bring forth the Kingdom of peace;**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

3. You are a seed of the Word, O people:

**Bring forth the Kingdom of God!**

Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,

**Grow in the Kingdom of God!**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy, bring forth the Kingdom of peace;**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

4. We are a blest and a pilgrim people:

**Bound for the Kingdom of God!**

Love our journey and love our homeland:

**Love is the Kingdom of God!**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy, bring forth the Kingdom of peace;**

**Bring forth the Kingdom of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

## CLOSING PRAYER

Fran Cooper

*Now go in the knowledge that God is holding your life even as we hold each other.*

*You are not alone. You are loved. Amen.*

## POSTLUDE

Gigue Fugue

Dietrich Buxtehude

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