

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.*

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“Where Can I Go?”

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

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January 30, 2022
Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany
Celebration of Divine Worship

WELCOME

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, *Pastor*

INTROIT

His Eye is on the Sparrow

arr. Calvin Taylor

OPENING PRAYER *[responsive]*

readers: Alex Banash & Ron Fujie

Turn now your gaze upon the earth
Where is the One who never sleeps?
We call the One who guards you now,
Your spirit safe in holy keep.
God is holding your life
God is holding your life, we believe
Dear and Near God,
you never leave our side.

Open us this day to feeling and knowing your presence deep in our hearts
so that we might show forth love with the same confidence,
offering your reign of right relationship on earth as it is in heaven.

We praise you for your close attention,
holding our lives together in care. Amen.

A SONG, SCRIPTURE AND A PRAYER

Opening Song

Cry of My Heart

TFWS 2165

It is the cry of my heart to follow You
It is the cry of my heart to be close to You
It is the cry of my heart to follow
All of the days of my life

**1. Teach me Your holy ways oh Lord, so I can walk in Your truth
Teach me Your holy ways oh Lord and make me wholly devoted to You**

It is the cry of my heart to follow You
It is the cry of my heart to be close to You
It is the cry of my heart to follow
All of the days of my life

**2. Open my eyes so I can see the wonderful things that You do
Open my heart up more and more and make it wholly devoted to You**

It is the cry of my heart to follow You
It is the cry of my heart to be close to You
It is the cry of my heart to follow
All of the days of my life

Scripture

Psalm 139:1-12, 19-24 (NRSV)

Alex Banash

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.
Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Selah.

O that you would kill the wicked, O God, and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—
those who speak of you maliciously, and lift themselves up against you for evil!
Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?

And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.
Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.
See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Scriptural Response [VIDEO] **Psalm 139 (Were I to Cross)** by New Scottish Hymns

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*]

Alex Banash and Ron Fujie

First
we will need grace.
Then
we will need courage.
Also
we will need some strength.

*We will need to die a little
to what we have always thought,
what we have allowed ourselves to see
of ourselves,
what we have built our beliefs upon.*

We will need this
and more.

*Then we will need
to let it all go
to leave room enough
for the astonishment that will come
should we be given a glimpse
of what the Holy One sees
in seeing us,
knows
in knowing us,
intricate and unhidden*

no part of us
foreign
no piece of us
fashioned from other than love

*desired
discerned
beheld entirely
all our days.
Amen.*

-Jan Richardson (adapt.)

TIME OF SILENCE FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND HOPE

Assurance of Grace

Congregation & Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, *Pastor*

Grace Alone

**1. Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith
Every difference we can make is only by His grace.
Every mountain we will climb, every ray of hope we shine
Every blessing left behind is only by His grace.
*Grace alone which God supplies;
Strength unknown He will provide.
Christ in us, our cornerstone.
We will go forth in grace alone.***

**2. Every soul we long to reach, every heart we hope to teach.
Everywhere we share His peace is only by His grace.
Every loving word we say, every tear we wipe away.
Every sorrow turned to praise is only by His grace.
*Grace alone which God supplies.
Strength unknown He will provide.
Christ in us our cornerstone.
We will go forth in grace alone.***

Know that you are forgiven in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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

“Where Can I Go?”

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, *Pastor*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

“I Know the Lord’s Laid His Hands On Me”

Spiritual, arr. Lena McLin

Christabel Nunoo, Soprano

LIVING AS THE CHURCH, GRATITUDES, OFFERINGS

Living as the Church

Gratitude Times

Offering Time

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.

CLOSING SONG

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

UMH 344

1) Lord, you have come to the lakeshore

looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones;

you only asked me to follow humbly.

O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,

and while smiling have spoken my name;

now my boat’s left on the shoreline behind me;

by your side I will seek other seas.

2) You know so well my possessions;

my boat carries no gold and no weapons;

you will find there my nets and labor.

O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,

and while smiling have spoken my name;

now my boat’s left on the shoreline behind me;

by your side I will seek other seas.

3) You need my hands, full of caring

through my labors to give others rest,

and constant love that keeps on loving.

*O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.*

**4) You, who have fished other oceans,
ever longed for by souls who are waiting,
my loving friend, as thus you call me.**
*O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.*

CLOSING PRAYER

Ron Fujie

*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

Voluntary in G

J.S. Bach

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