

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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ASH WEDNESDAY

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

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February 22, 2023

Ash Wednesday

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

WELCOME

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

INTROIT *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent* UMH 626 (ORGAN)

OPENING PRAYER (*RESPONSIVE*)

Barbara Ganitch

Leader: In the softness of evening, in the solace of silence,
we come to you, O Lord.

**People: We come for acceptance; we come for community;
we come for forgiveness and love.**

Leader: In the serenity of day's end, in the restfulness of worship,
we come to you O Lord.

**People: We come to you for respite; we come to you for completion;
we come to you for forgiveness and love.**

Leader: In the quiet of the night, in the comfort of darkness,
we come to you, O Lord.

**People: We come for peace; we come for comfort;
we come for forgiveness and love.**

All: We come, O Lord of Light, seeking the illumination of your Word.

We come for the path we can't find; we come for the life we don't have.

We come to you for our lives are death and you alone have breath and being.

Amen.

Lisa Frenz (adapt)

OPENING SONG

Sanctuary TFWS 2164

(Please stand if able)

1. Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary
Pure and holy, tried and true;
With thanksgiving I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you.

2. It is you, Lord, who came to save
The heart and soul of every man.
It is you Lord who knows my weakness,
Who gives me strength with thine own hand.

3. Lead Me on Lord from temptation,
Purify me from within.
Fill my heart with your holy spirit,
Take away all my sins.

4. Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary
Pure and holy, tried and true;
With thanksgiving I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you.

SCRIPTURE

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 NIV

Barbara Ganitch

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill.
Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming.
It is close at hand—
a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness.

Like dawn spreading across the mountains
a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times
nor ever will be in ages to come.

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping
and mourning.”

Rend your heart and not your garments.

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and
abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing—
grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly.

Gather the people, consecrate the assembly;

bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride, her chamber.

Let the priests, who minister before the Lord, weep between the portico and the altar.

Let them say, “Spare your people, Lord. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a
byword among the nations.

Why should they say among the peoples,

‘Where is their God?’”

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 NIV

Laurel Williams

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do,
you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in
the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have
received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know
what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who
sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the
synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received
their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your
Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to
show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But
when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to
others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees
what is done in secret, will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and
where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where
moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where
your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

SERMON “RENDER YOUR HEART TO GOD YET EVEN NOW” Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

PASTOR'S PRAYER

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.*

CLOSING SONG

(Please stand if able)

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart UMH 500, verses 1, 3, 4 (ORGAN)

1. Spirit of God, descend upon my heart,
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move.
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,
and make me love thee as I ought to love.

3. Hast thou not bid me love thee, God and King,
All, all thine own, soul, heart and strength and mind?
I see thy cross; there teach my heart to cling.
O let me seek thee, and O let me find!

4. Teach me to feel that thou are always nigh;
teach me the struggles of the soul to bear.
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER (UNISON)

Barbara Ganitch

All: In the footsteps of centuries of pilgrims, we go now to embark on our Lenten journey.

We will consider how we may simplify our days, so that we may travel lightly.

We will be alert to all that could side-track us and will notice that which beckons alluringly, or with apparently greater urgency, than the pilgrim journey Christ invites.

We will not try to cover more than one good day's journey at a time.

We will know when to stop for food and sleep, so that the journey will not be too great for us.

We will walk humbly, knowing that the goal is not recognition, achievement or reward, but simply to have come to know Christ and ourselves more intimately.

We will be on the lookout for other pilgrims, caring for those who limp, or fall; those who cannot see the way forward: pilgrimage is richer in community.

We will go now: placing our hand into the outstretched hand of Jesus Christ, allowing the words of the story to guide us, and praying for purity of heart and mind. Amen.

Ann Siddall (adapt)

POSTLUDE

I've Been 'Buked and I've Been Scorned

Spiritual

arr. Calvin Taylor

