

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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“Love Yourself Unconditionally”

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January 7, 2024

First Sunday after the Epiphany / Baptism of the Lord
CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Mary, Did You Know

Mark Lowry/Buddy Greene
arr. Mark Hayes

WELCOME

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

OPENING PRAYER (*RESPONSIVE*)

Stanley Huston

Leader: Heavenly Creator, we come before you with hearts
that long to fully embrace the love that you have poured into us.

**People: Fill us with the understanding that we are worthy of love
and capable of loving ourselves as you love us.**

All: May your love flow to us and through us as we worship you. Amen.

prayersaves.com (adapt)

OPENING SONG

(Please stand if able)

This is a Day of New Beginnings
UMH 383

1. This is a day of new beginnings,
time to remember and move on,
time to believe what love is bringing,
laying to rest the pain that's gone.
2. For by the life and death of Jesus,
God's mighty Spirit, now as then,
can make for us a world of difference,
as faith and hope are born again.
3. Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,
Step from the past and leave behind
our disappointment, guilt and grieving,
seeking new paths, and sure to find.
4. Christ is alive, and goes before us,
to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.
5. In faith we'll gather round the table,
To taste and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Margaret LeWright

SCRIPTURE Jeremiah 31:3 (NLT)

Stanley Huston

Long ago the Lord said to Israel:

“I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love.
With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself.”

Mark 1:9-11 (NLT)

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

SERMON “LOVE YOURSELF UNCONDITIONALLY” Rev. Sunae Cho, Pastor

HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

INVITATION

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin
and seek to live in peace with one another.

Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

CONFESSION & PARDON (*UNISON*)

ALL: Merciful God,

We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have failed to be an obedient church.

We have not done your will,

We have broken your law,

We have rebelled against your love,

We have not loved our neighbors,

And we have not heard the cry of the needy.

Forgive us, we pray.

Free us for joyful obedience,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SILENCE IS KEPT FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION & HOPE

Pastor: Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while you were yet sinners;

That proves God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: Glory to God. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Let us offer one another signs of peace and love.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through the prophet.

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(Please sing along, TFWS 2257-b)

ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Blest is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Pastor: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

Your Spirit anointed him

to preach good news to the poor,

to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

and to announce that the time had come

when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus ascended,
he promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to the disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it,
In remembrance of me.”

And so,
In remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
We offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
As a holy and living sacrifice,
In union with Christ’s offering for us,
As we proclaim the mystery of faith.

(Please sing along, TFWS 2257-c)

ALL: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Pastor: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever.

(Please sing along, TFWS 2257-d)

ALL: Amen, Amen, Amen.

Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

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.*

SHARING IN THE BREAD AND CUP

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

**All: Generous Lord, in word and eucharist we have proclaimed the mystery of your love: help us so to live out our days
that we may be signs of your wonders in the world;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

OFFERING & THANKSGIVING

Lord, We Come To Ask Your Service

TFWS 2230 vs 1, 4 (sung to UMH 526)

1. Lord, we come to ask your blessing
on the love that makes us one;
here, as Christians, to acknowledge
you are Lord, and you alone.
4. Lord, we come to ask your blessing
in the presence of our friends:
grant us joy that blesses others,
grant us love that never ends.

LIVING AS THE CHURCH

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
 joy of heaven, to earth come down;
 fix in us thy humble dwelling;
 all thy faithful mercies crown!
 Jesus thou art all compassion,
 pure, unbounded love thou art;
 visit us with thy salvation;
 enter every trembling heart.

3. Come, Almighty to deliver,
 let us all thy life receive;
 suddenly return and never,
 nevermore thy temples leave.
 Thee we would be always blessing,
 serve thee as thy hosts above,
 pray and praise thee without ceasing,
 glory in thy perfect love.

4. Finish, then, thy new creation;
 pure and spotless let us be.
 Let us see thy great salvation
 perfectly restored in thee;
 changed from glory into glory,
 till in heaven we take our place,
 till we cast our crowns before thee,
 lost in wonder, love, and praise.

CLOSING PRAYER (*UNISON*)

Stanley Huston

All: Lord of Lords, we pray that you will help our souls be content.

Let us be satisfied with who we are
 and who you are molding us to be.
 May we never doubt our importance in this world.
 May we live in confidence, courage, and faith
 as precious children of God. Amen.

inspiredwithamanda (adapt)

POSTLUDE

Behold that Star

Thomas W. Talley

arr. Mark Hayes

Thank you to our guest pianist, Ellen St. Thomas