

**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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*“Downsize the Burdens You Carry  
and Travel Lightly”*

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January 14, 2024  
Second Sunday after the Epiphany  
CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

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PRELUDE      We Three Kings of Orient Are      John Henry Hopkins, Jr.  
arr. Becki Slagle Mayo

WELCOME      Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

OPENING PRAYER (*RESPONSIVE*)      Alex Banash

Leader: New every morning is God's love for us.

**People: New every day is our opportunity to  
practice gratitude for what we have,**

Leader: to speak truthfully, to love fiercely,  
and to draw closer to our Creator.

**All: So let us worship God. Amen.**

Beth Merrill Neel (adapt)

OPENING SONG      (Please stand if able)

Where Charity and Love Prevail  
UMH 549 v. 1-3, 6

1. Where charity and love prevail,  
there God is ever found;  
brought here together by Christ's love,  
by love are we thus bound.

2. With grateful joy and holy fear  
true charity we learn;  
let us with heart and mind and strength  
now love Christ in return.

3. Forgive we now each other's faults  
as we our faults confess;  
and let us love each other well  
in Christian holiness.

6. Love can exclude no race or creed  
if honored be God's name;  
our common life embraces all  
whose Maker is the same.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT      Margaret LeWright

## SCRIPTURE

1 John 4:16-19 (NIV)

Alex Banash

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.

Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON " **DOWNSIZE THE BURDENS YOU CARRY  
AND TRAVEL LIGHTLY**"

Rev. Sunae Cho, Pastor

## RESPONSE

**Live Where Love Can Grow**

Written and performed by Margaret LeWright

1. I want to live where love can grow  
Where it can spread and overflow  
I want to live where love can grow  
God help me plant your seeds, so love can show

2. O God I pray for love today  
Show me the path that leads the way  
O God I pray for love today  
Shine on the road ahead, to guide my way

3. Let love be in the words I say  
And from your path let me not stray  
Let love be in the words I say  
Grow words of love in me, to give away

4. So when the world your love is shown  
So much its deep and overgrown  
so when the world your love is shown  
To all your people here, you love is known

## PRAYERS & GRATITUDES

## 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.*

## PASSING THE PEACE

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH

## OFFERING & THANKSGIVING

### Lord, We Come To Ask Your Service

TFWS 2230 vs 1, 4, 1 (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.
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.

## CLOSING SONG

### Just a Closer Walk With Thee

(Please stand if able)

TFWS 2158

1. I am weak, but thou art strong;  
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;  
I'll be satisfied as long  
as I walk, let me walk close to thee.

Just a closer walk with thee,  
grant it, Jesus, is my plea,  
daily walking close to thee:  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

2. Through this world of toil and snares,  
if I falter, Lord, who cares?  
Who with me my burden shares?  
None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.

Just a closer walk with thee,  
grant it, Jesus, is my plea,  
daily walking close to thee:  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

3. When my feeble life is o'er,  
time for me will be no more;  
guide me gently, safely o'er  
to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore.

Just a closer walk with thee,  
grant it, Jesus, is my plea,  
daily walking close to thee:  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

## CLOSING PRAYER *(RESPONSIVE)*

Alex Banash

Leader: Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that.

**People: Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.**

Leader: Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it.

**People: Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it.**

Leader: Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.

**All: I have decided to stick to love...**

**Hate is too great a burden to bear. Amen.**

Martin Luther King Jr.

## POSTLUDE

Fum, Fum, Fum

Traditional Catalonian Carol  
arr. Mark Hayes