

**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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# WITNESS AT THE CROSS

*A Lenten Journey*

## *"The Soldiers"*

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

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March 3, 2024  
Third Sunday in Lent  
CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

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PRELUDE      I've Been 'Buked, An' I've Been Scorned      Spiritual  
arr. Calvin Taylor

WELCOME      Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

OPENING PRAYER (*RESPONSIVE*)      Rev. Mi Chun

Leader: In this season of Lent, we make our way to the cross.

**People: We remember the steps that led Christ there:**

**betrayal and fear, but also trust in God, and love for humanity.**

Leader: In this season of Lent, as we make our way to the cross,  
we strive to follow Christ's example:

**All: to admit betrayal and fear that are part of life,  
to embrace trust in God and love for humanity,  
so we may make our journey, as we worship God. Amen.**

Beth Merrill Neel

OPENING SONG [ORGAN]      (Please stand if able)

To Mock Your Reign, O Dearest Lord

UMH 285

1. To mock your reign, O dearest Lord,  
they made a crown of thorns;  
set you with taunts along that road  
from which no one returns.  
They could not know, as we do now,  
how glorious is your crown;  
that thorns would flower upon your brow,  
your sorrows heal our own.

2. In mock acclaim, O gracious Lord,  
they snatched a purple cloak,  
your passion turned, for all they cared,  
into a soldier's joke.  
They could not know, as we do now,  
that though we merit blame,  
you will your robe of mercy throw  
around our naked shame.

3. A sceptered reed, O patient Lord,  
they thrust into your hand,  
and acted out their grim charade  
to its appointed end.  
They could not know, as we do now,  
though empires rise and fall,  
your kingdom shall not cease to grow  
till love embraces all.

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Margaret LeWright

### SCRIPTURE

John 19:23-24 (CEB)

Rev. Mi Chun

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and his sandals, and divided them into four shares, one for each soldier. His shirt was seamless, woven as one piece from the top to the bottom. They said to each other, "Let's not tear it. Let's cast lots to see who will get it." This was to fulfill the scripture, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing." That's what the soldiers did.

Luke 23:47 (CEB)

When the centurion saw what happened, he praised God, saying, "It's really true: this man was righteous."

Mark 15:39 (CEB)

And when the centurion, who was standing right in front of Him, saw that He died in this way, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

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

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### SERMON

"THE SOLDIERS"

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

### HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

Rev. Dr. Dale Tremper

### 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

### UNISON 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 [ORGAN]

## Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service

UMH 581 vs 1,4

1. Lord, whose love in humble service  
bore the weight of human need,  
who upon the cross, forsaken,  
offered mercy's perfect deed:  
we, your servants, bring the worship  
not of voice alone, but heart,  
consecrating to your purpose  
every gift that you impart.
4. Called by worship to your service,  
forth in your dear name we go  
to the child, the youth, the aged,  
love in living deeds to show;  
hope and health, good will and comfort,  
counsel, aid, and peace we give,  
that your servants, Lord in freedom  
may your mercy know, and live.

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH

## CLOSING SONG

(Please stand if able)

## Open My Eyes, That I May See

UMH 454

1. Open my eyes that I may see  
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;  
place in my hands the wonderful key  
that shall unclasp and set me free.  
Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my eyes, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!
2. Open my ears that I may hear  
voices of truth thou sendest clear;  
and while the wave notes fall on my ear,  
everything false will disappear.  
Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my ears, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!

3. Open my mouth and let me bear  
gladly the warm truth everywhere;  
open my heart and let me prepare  
love with thy children thus to share.

Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my mouth, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!

## CLOSING PRAYER (*RESPONSIVE*)

Rev. Mi Chun

All: May those without hope take heart in you, O Christ.  
May those with no home find shade at your right hand.  
May those near the end see beginnings;  
may those at the last become first.  
At the foot of your cross, O Christ, we come to you.  
O Christ, be our help and our hope.  
Let us go in peace. Amen.

Pamela C. Hawkins (adapt)

## POSTLUDE

## The Old Rugged Cross

George Bennard  
arr. Mark Hayes