

# Lake Merritt **United Methodist Church**

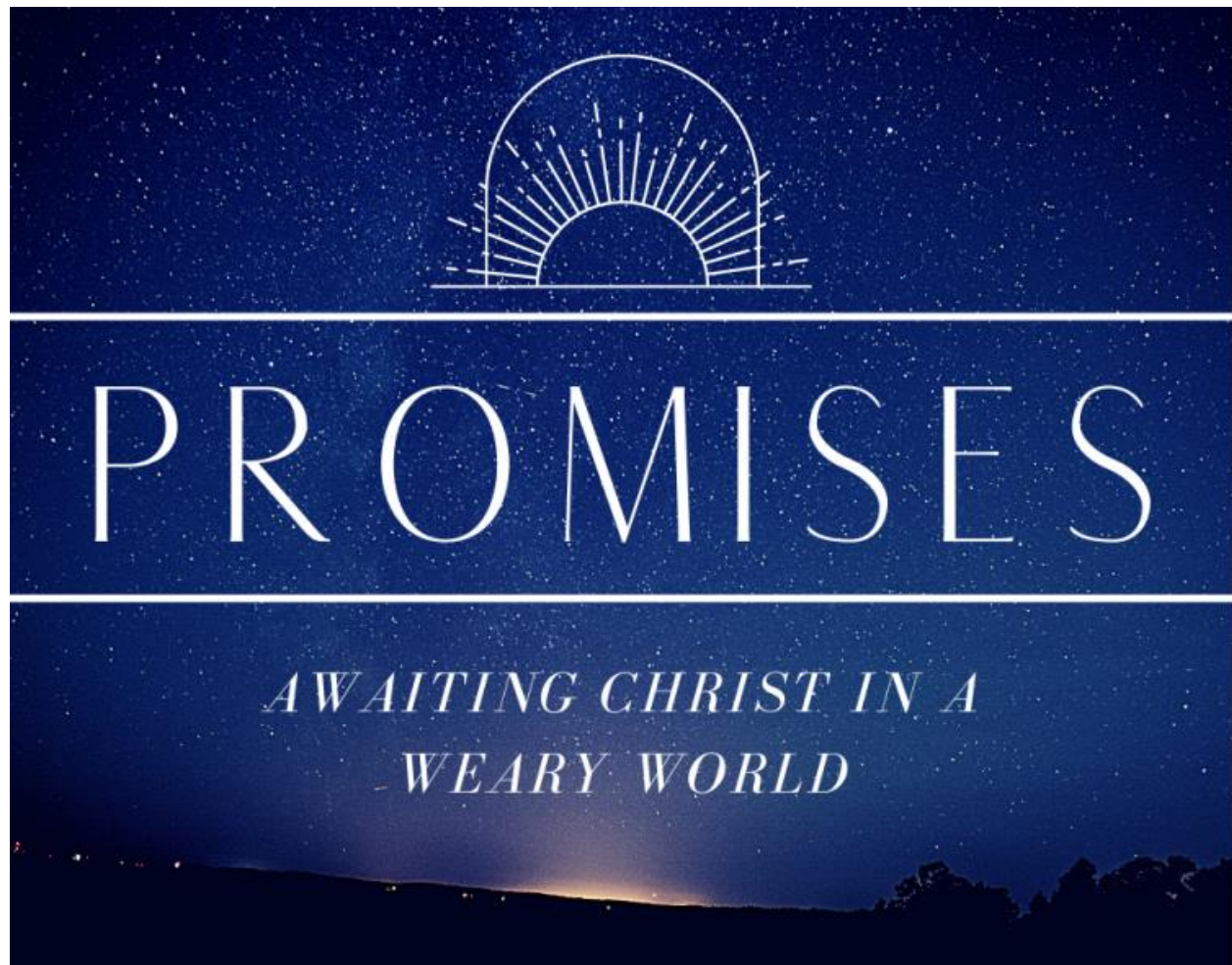


An Inclusive Christian Community of Oakland

*Sustaining a vibrant and growing congregation through Christian spiritual transformation, making our work and the church relevant and visible.*

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*"A Promise to Put Our Hope In"*

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December 1, 2024  
First Sunday in Advent  
CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

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PRELUDE [ORGAN]

Pastorale

Giuseppe Valentini

WELCOME

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

INTROIT

An Advent Song

Michael Bedford

LMUMC Choir

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Grant and Dee Thompkins

Leader 1: We are the people who wait with hope.

In a world of cynicism and despair, we refuse to give in or give up.  
Our Advent candles are a sign of our defiance,  
the light of hope to dispel the gloom.

The first candle is the Candle of Hope.

We put our hope in God, who has promised good to us.  
We hope for the day when God's will is done on earth  
as it is in heaven, and we see a world made new.  
Hear the promise of the prophet Jeremiah:

Leader 2: "The days are surely coming, says the Lord,  
when I will fulfill the promise I made  
to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.  
In those days and at that time  
I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David;  
and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.  
In those days Judah will be saved  
and Jerusalem will live in safety.  
And this is the name by which it will be called;  
'The Lord is our righteousness'"

Leader 1: Jesus Christ, help us to hold tight to your promises,  
hoping even in the darkest night for your power to break through.  
In you alone we hope, and for you alone we wait this day. Amen.

Song Leader: Let us sing today's verse of O Come, O Come Emmanuel:

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear:  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Deep Well Worship

OPENING SONG [ORGAN]

(Please stand if able)

## Hail to the Lord's Anointed

UMH 203

- 1. Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
great David's greater Son!  
Hail in the time appointed,  
his reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free;  
to take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.**
- 2. He comes with succor speedy  
to those who suffer wrong;  
to help the poor and needy,  
and bid the weak be strong;  
to give them songs for sighing,  
their darkness turn to light,  
whose souls, condemned and dying,  
are precious in his sight.**
- 3. He shall come down like showers  
upon the fruitful earth;  
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,  
spring in his path to birth.  
Before him on the mountains,  
shall peace, the herald, go,  
and righteousness, in fountains,  
from hill to valley flow.**
- 4. To him shall prayer unceasing  
and daily vows ascend;  
his kingdom still increasing,  
a kingdom without end.  
The tide of time shall never  
his covenant remove;  
his name shall stand forever;  
that name to us is love.**

## SCRIPTURE

Psalm 25: 1-10 (NIV)

Grant and Dee Thompkins

In you, Lord my God,  
I put my trust.

I trust in you;  
do not let me be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.  
No one who hopes in you  
will ever be put to shame,  
but shame will come on those  
who are treacherous without cause.

Show me your ways, Lord,  
teach me your paths.  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long.  
Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love,  
for they are from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth  
and my rebellious ways;  
according to your love remember me,  
for you, Lord, are good.

Good and upright is the Lord;  
therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.  
He guides the humble in what is right  
and teaches them his way.  
All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful  
toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 (NIV)

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the  
presence of our God because of you?  
Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply  
what is lacking in your faith.  
Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us  
to come to you.  
May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for  
everyone else, just as ours does for you.

May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

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

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON

A Promise to Put Our Hope In

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

RESPONSE

Will We Know Him?

Don Besig

LMUMC Choir

HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Sunae Cho, *Pastor*

Rev. Stephanie Gameros, *Deacon*

INVITATION

Pastor: In this season of expectant waiting,  
we are invited to Christ's table to experience the grace of God.  
We come together to confess our sins and remove the barriers  
we have built between ourselves, our brothers and sisters, and our God.  
Therefore, let us confess together our sins.

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CONFESSION & PARDON (*UNISON*)

**All: Ever Present Peace, you came to save us,  
but that is so hard to remember in this hectic season.  
Our impatience for Christmas to arrive  
gets in the way of listening to our children sing.  
We let the blinking lights blind us  
to your quiet presence in a noisy world.**

**We get so caught up in the stories of violence,  
we cannot hear your voice reminding us not to be afraid.  
Shower us with your grace and forgiveness,  
so our eyes will be opened to all your wonders,  
our ears will echo with the anthems of the angels,  
and our emptiness will be filled with the life gifted to us  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

SILENCE IS KEPT FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION & HOPE

Pastor: Dear ones of God, this is the good news:

God comes to us to bring the healing of hope and the  
joy of justice into our hearts. You need wait no longer.

Go and tell everyone what you have seen and heard!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

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

## PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Let us offer one another signs of peace and love.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The God who is coming to us be with you!

**People: And also with you!**

Pastor: Lift your hearts to the One who turns barren deserts into seas of grace.

**People: We lift them to the Lord!**

Pastor: Beloved of God, let us come to the table with songs of joy on our lips.

It is right to give you thanks and praise,  
Great God of the Coming Dawn,  
for in each new day you surprise the earth with splendor.  
Your Spirit moves across the face of the waters and brings forth life.  
At the dawn of all things, in a garden, you worked the earth.  
Elbow deep in mud you fashioned us, gifted us, gave us work to do.  
Made from the earth,  
made by your hand,  
we forgot who we were.  
We forgot who you were,  
and we tried to remake ourselves.  
We rejected your love and fell into sin and death.  
Yet even in our darkness you continued to speak light and life.  
And so we come to live on the edge of your new and promised day.  
We come to wait for your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

His coming was announced by wilderness prophets  
and he arrived to the song of angels  
in the choir stall of a manger.  
He was the One promised.  
He announced the new day  
when blind folks would see  
and poor folks would rejoice,  
when captives would be set free,  
and the oppressed would once more walk upright in liberty.

In stories he spoke of waiting bridesmaids and prodigal sons,  
With tears and compassion he brought a dead man to life,  
and gave a woman at a well the living water she sought.  
With anger he overturned tables and challenged the powerful.  
On the cross he revealed the power of weakness,  
and in the emptiness of the tomb,  
he gave us a glimpse of your tomorrow  
that does not end in death.

On the night when he was betrayed  
he sat at a table with his friends.  
He took bread, blessed it, broke it, served it to them, and said,  
“Take this. Eat it. It is my body, given for you.  
Do this to remember me.”  
In the same way he took the cup,  
blessed it, served it to them, and said,  
“Drink from this every one of you.  
This is my blood poured out for you  
and for many for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this to remember me.”  
And so we remember.

And so we offer our praise and thanks and our very selves  
as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ’s offering for us.  
May the gift of your Spirit, Advent’s Hope and Peace,  
be poured out on the simple gifts of the bread and the cup,  
and on those who come simply to find healing and hope.  
And when we have been fed by your surprising grace  
and filled with your peace, may we go forth to the world,  
where our weak hands will become calloused by compassion;  
where we will bend our feeble knees, reaching down to lift up the fallen;  
where we will become fountains of living water  
for those parched by the wilderness of their lives.  
Then, when sorrow and sighing have been chased away from us,  
and we gather with all generations around your Table in heaven,  
everlasting joy will be our song, and gracious hope will be our refrain,  
as we sing to you through all eternity, God in Community, Holy in One.

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

(sung to "O for A Thousand Tongues to Sing" UMH 57)

**All: Jesus! The name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease;  
'tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.**

**My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim,  
to spread through all the earth abroad, the honors of thy name. Amen.**

## OFFERING & THANKSGIVING [ORGAN]

### Come, Thou Almighty King

UMH 61 v. 1, 4

**1. Come, thou almighty King,  
help us thy name to sing,  
help us to praise!**

**Father all glorious, o'er all victorious,  
come and reign over us,  
Ancient of Days!**

**4. To thee, great One in Three,  
eternal praises be,  
hence, evermore.**

**Thy sovereign majesty may we in glory see,  
and to eternity  
love and adore!**

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH

### CLOSING SONG

### All Earth Is Waiting

(Please stand if able)

UMH 210 v. 1-3

**1. All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,  
and the open furrows, the sowing of the Lord.  
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;  
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

**2. Thus says the prophet to those of Israel:  
'A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel,'  
For his name is "God with us" our brother shall be,  
with him hope will blossom once more within our hearts.**

**3. Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain;  
open new highways, new highways for the Lord.  
He is now coming closer, so come all and see,  
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.**



## CLOSING PRAYER *(RESPONSIVE)*

Grant and Dee Thompkins

Leader: Gracious God, sometimes  
we struggle to find peace  
in our lives, our world, and even in ourselves.

**People: Calm what is frenzied in our souls;  
sooth what is injured in our relationships;  
purify what is hateful in our communities;  
refine us to be messengers of your peace.**

**All: Give us strength to walk in the footsteps  
of our Lord and Saviour, the Prince of Peace. Amen.**

Deep Well Worship

POSTLUDE [ORGAN]

The Fifers

Francois Dandrieu