LABC
Worship, Witness and Work
...Striving to embody peace and wholeness in a broken world.

TRANSMITTER

OF THE LAKESHORE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
3534 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

February, 2024

MLK Day 2024

Allow me to share a story from the life of Dr. King. If you would like to read it for yourself you can find it on page 162 of **Parting the Waters: America In The King Years 1954-63**, by Taylor Branch.

It was January 1956 and the Montgomery Bus Boycott was in its second month. The tensions and demands Dr. King faced were immense. Because he was regularly receiving threatening phone calls, some of his friends armed themselves and began to drive him everywhere he needed to go.

There was also pressure from the boycott participants and community supporters. How long would the boycott continue? How much longer would their lives be disrupted? Was any progress being made? Were King and the boycott leaders up to the task or were they in over their heads?

After another long day *King buried his face in his hands at the kitchen table. He admitted to himself that he was afraid, that he had nothing left, that the people would falter if they looked to him for strength. Then he said as much out loud. He spoke the name of no deity, but his doubts spilled out as a prayer, ending, "I've come to the point where I can't face it alone." As he spoke these words, the fears suddenly began to melt away. He became intensely aware of an "inner voice" telling him to do what he thought was right. Such simplicity worked miracles, bringing a shudder of relief and the courage to face anything. It was the first transcendent religious experience of his life…It confirmed for him his belief that the essence of religion was not a grand metaphysical idea but something personal, grounded in experience – something that opened up mysteriously beyond the predicaments of human beings in their frailest and noblest moments.*

As I read this story, the word that comes to mind is ineffable. In a moment of personal crisis, Dr. King experienced the ineffable, "too great or extreme to be

expressed or described in words (Oxford Dictionary), presence of the Eternal.

Thus, along with sharing a story, allow me to share a hope, a hope that, with Dr. King, each of you, in the midst of often struggle filled lives, at the beginning of what might be a very difficult year, also will experience the ineffable presence of the Eternal; that you too will hear an inner voice telling you that you can face what needs to be faced, do what needs to be done.

I cannot promise when such an experience will come, I can say that they do, just as one did for King on a January night sixty-eight years ago.

It may be that prayer ending "I've come to the point where I can't face it alone" will serve as the gateway for just such an experience. Ineffable.

Pastor Jim Hopkins
Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church

Prayer for Annual Meeting

God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, we gather to plan for the year ahead and to reflect on the year past. In these twelve months, we experienced a variety of chapters from the book of life. We experienced the joy and hope of birth. Our lives were enriched by the noisy enthusiasm of our Vacation Bible Camp and the exuberance of our Sunday school.

Our church family expanded as we welcomed new members. We have been touched by the dedicated service of our staff, committees and volunteers. Music soothed our spirits and lifted our hearts. We comforted each other in times of sorrow. We lifted up our prayers in the face of great human tragedy across the globe. We came unto you, O God, with heavy burdens and received your rest and strength.

In our church family as in every family, we encountered both grief and joy. We received your words of grace that told us we are loved, forgiven and cherished. Now we stand poised to welcome in a new church year. Bless us once more that we may endeavor to share your light and promise, near and far. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Susan J. Foster

Pastor of Public Witness **Allison J. Tanner**

Lakeshore's Ceasefire Banner - Public Witness

The statement below offers some context for Lakeshore's "Love Demands Permanent Ceasefire Now" banner. Let me know if you would like to display a window poster or bumper sticker version of the banner.

On Christmas Eve, 2023, Lakeshore put up a Ceasefire banner. This banner represents the church's commitment to end the violence taking place in Gaza, in Israel, in Oakland, and throughout the world. This banner is part of an interfaith effort in the Bay Area to offer a moral voice of love in response to the heartbreak of violence and warmongering that surrounds us. Our faith calls us to love, and love demands we find ways to put the weapons down. You can learn more at https://bit.ly/Interfaith4CeasefireStatement.

Lakeshore has spent more than a decade working for Ceasefire in Oakland. We've borne witness to too much death, too many destroyed lives, and too much fear in our cities. We work with our larger community to find better ways to address the problems in Oakland and offer opportunities for the whole community to thrive. Likewise, these values apply to the mass destruction unfolding in Gaza. While deploring the violence taking place in Gaza, Israel and the West Bank, including war crimes perpetrated by Hamas and Israel, we again insist that there has been too much death, too many destroyed lives, and too much terror taking place. We lament the tragic deaths of over 25,000 Gazans, 1200 Israelis and 300 people living in the West Bank, as well as the forced displacement of nearly two million people, all within the past four months.

This banner was put up on Christmas Eve in response to cries for help from Christians in Bethlehem. It recognizes that we cannot celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace without decrying the ways of war. Neither can we simply pray for peace on earth without taking action to participate in the inbreaking of God's peace in the world. In solidarity with the people of Gaza, Bethlehem, Oakland, Burma, Uganda, Ukraine, Nigeria, Latin America and throughout the world, we commit to following the ways of peace.

A Prayer for Peace

Prince of Peace,
We plead with you for an end to war
Too many have been slaughtered
Too many are fighting daily for their survival
Traumatized and fearful.
Death abounds. Dehumanization abounds.
And we long for your coming.
We need you. We need your peace.
Not the peace that comes from bombs or bloodshed.
But the peace that demands the humanity of every one of your precious children.
The peace that builds bridges and offers community care.
The peace that refuses to ignore the suffering of one another.
The peace that connects us to one another.
The peace that invites us to work together toward healing.

As we work for your peace,
Give us eyes to see the needs of our neighbor
Give us ears to hear the concerns of the world
Give us hearts that can break at the suffering around us
Give us hands to do the work of peace-making
– in ourselves and in our communities
– in our cities and in our world
For we are all in need of Your peace, Your saving grace, Your healing power.

Amen.

Pastor of Christian Education — Carolyn Matthews

Opportunities Ahead

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." (Philippians 4:8, NIV)

We are still at the beginning of the year and it is not too early to be reminded to think on good things. Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is February 14, which means Easter is just six weeks behind (March 31). There is much going on in our world, local community, and even in our own homes. There are African American History Month preparations, Ash Wednesday vigils, Easter Hat parade, Easter music preparation, along with the regular weekly routines. We can get bogged down in the length of the task list and forget to look at what is behind each task.

First and foremost, we are on this journey with the help and guidance of God's Holy Spirit. However and wherever we may be traveling, we are not alone. Although the lyric of the gospel song, "There's No Hiding Place," sounds ominous, the text from which it has its origin though is more reassuring:

Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
8 *If I go up to the heavens, you are there;*
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
9 *If I rise on the wings of the dawn,*
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
10 *even there your hand will guide me,*
your right hand will hold me fast.
11 *If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me*
and the light become night around me,"
12 *even the darkness will not be dark to you;*
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you. (Psalm 139:7-12, NIV)

Surely this text takes us to a place that is right, pure, lovely, and worthy of praise. As we take to heart what lies before us, may we not forget who resides within us. And it is together that we make our way through these days. So we press ahead in hope as we, together, minister in our church, community, and the world.

Growing Together in Christ,
Pastor Carolyn

February 2024 Preaching Schedule
Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church
Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.

February 4 (Fifth Sunday After The Epiphany, Service of Communion, First Sunday of African American History Month, Fellowship Fund Offering)
Pastor Jim will preach
“Grasshoppers Unite”
Isaiah 40:21-31
Though the prophet tells humans that we are grasshoppers, that is not necessarily a bad thing.

February 11 (Last Sunday After The Epiphany, Second Sunday of African American History Month)
Pastor Carolyn will preach
“**I See You, I Know You, I Love You”**
Psalm 139:7-12
In all of our living, in all of life's journey, there is no place or time where we are outside of God's care.

February 18 (First Sunday in Lent, Third Sunday of African American History Month)
The Reverend Dr. Dwight Webster, Senior Minister, Beth Eden Baptist Church, will preach
Subject to be announced
Scripture to be announced

February 25 (Second Sunday in Lent, Fourth Sunday of African American History Month, Soul Food Dinner Sunday)
Pastor Jim will preach
“Jesus Was Not A Positive Thinker”
Mark 8: 31-38
Jesus did not teach positive thinking, he practiced truth telling. It is the truth that sets us free.

Church Calendar for February

Department Meetings

Educational Ministry February 4, 8:45 Zoom
Social Concerns February 14, 6:00 Zoom
Stewardship February 11, 12:30 library
Worship and Congregational Care February 27, 7:05 Zoom

Other Meetings and Events

Public Witness Bible Study February 6, 6:00; February 7, 10:30, Library, Zoom
[Ceasefire Walk February 9, St. Anthony's Church, 1535 16th Avenue, 6:00]
[Flick Flack February 9, 6:30, 25837 Clausen Ct. Hayward]
Forever Young February 10, 12:30, Family Room
Sanctuary Working Group February 13, 7:05 Pastor Tanner's Zoom
[Ceasefire Walk February 16, At Thy Word, 8915 International Blvd, 6:00]
Church Council February 20, 7:05 Zoom
[Ceasefire Walk February 23, Williams Chapel Baptist, 1410 10th Avenue, 6:00]
LABC Reads February 24, 9-10 Zoom
LCC Advisory Board February 28, 5:30 Zoom

Weekly Meetings

Sunday at 10:00 a.m. - Worship Service, Sanctuary, YouTube, Zoom
Sunday at 11:45 a.m. - Adult Bible Study, Church Library, Zoom
Second Sunday at 11:45 a.m. - Grief and Loss Ministry, Church Library, Zoom
Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting, Zoom
Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. - Bible Study, Zoom
Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. – Bible Study, Zoom
Thursday at 6:00 p.m. - Handbell Ensemble Rehearsal
Thursday at 7:00 p.m. - Voices of Lakeshore Choir Rehearsal
Saturday at 10:00 a.m. – Time for Prayer, Zoom

February 4 LABC Outreach Offering supports the Fellowship Fund

The church office is closed on Fridays. Pastor Hopkins' day off is Friday.

The deadline for March *Transmitter* input is February 12.

The March *Transmitter* will be mailed February 29.

Children and Youth Corner

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NRSV)
6 Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.
7 Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

February Greetings to you all:

February is African American History Month, a time for special events at Lakeshore. We are extending a special invitation to participate in the forum on the second Sunday. There will be a discussion of the book, *Bronx Masquerade*, by Nikki Grimes. Featured in the book are students in a high school class who are encouraged to express themselves through poetry. The teacher encourages them to read their compositions aloud and in so doing, the group comes to understand one another, as well as themselves. The church will provide copies of the book to anyone interested in reading and/or participating.

It is still important to take time to focus on the contributions of African Americans to the culture, history, and building of this nation. We continue to discover the ways in which the inventions, humanitarian and artistic endeavors are part of American society and even influences around the world. We have Gladys West to thank for GPS technology which is found in cell phones, cars, and social media and Mark Dean who helped make computers a household item.

Let us take this opportunity to learn together of the many places where African Americans have had a substantial influence.

Save The Date: Vacation Bible Camp – July 15-19
Theme: SCUBA: Diving into Friendship with God.
Last year we took a trip to outer space, this year we explore the ocean depths.

With Joy,
Pastor Carolyn

Department of Education Dates and Events

African American History Month 2024

The planning committee has been hard at work making plans for February.

First Sunday Coffee Hour
For this first Sunday, we are inviting people to wear traditional African attire and after worship, join us for a special coffee hour.

Preaching
Preaching this year are: Pastor Jim, Pastor Carolyn, and Rev. Dr. Dwight Webster, Pastor of Beth Eden Baptist Church.

Forums
Forums will take place at 11:45 a.m. on the second and third Sundays with the following themes:

Literacy (2nd Sunday) – The ability to read is a powerful tool; this is why it was forbidden, by law, to teach the enslaved to read. The book chosen to showcase the theme of literacy is, *Bronx Masquerade,* by Nikki Grimes. This is a teenage/young adult novel, that explores the power of the spoken and written word. We will have copies available in the church library that may be borrowed.

Music (3rd Sunday) – Music is important in the African American experience, in both secular and religious life. By way of video clips and group singing, we will explore the power and meaning of music in helping to understand the life, history and theological context of African Americans.

Children's Stories
The children's stories this month will feature interviews with people who are educators.

Soul Food Dinner
The soul food dinner is being planned for the fourth Sunday February 25. As we did last year, we will have a set menu and ask people to provide food for the dinner. More information and details will be found in the brochure. The program will feature members and friends of all ages.

Department of Education Dates and Events, continued

Library Display
Please take the time to check out the display of books in the narthex from the church library and some on loan from the personal collection of members and friends.

Recommended Reading
Below is a partial list of books recommended by church and committee members. Please send us your suggestions which will be shared with the church.

Take My Hand, Dolen Perkins-Valdez
Bronx Masquerade, Nikki Grimes
White Lies: The Double Life of Walter F. White, A. J. Baime
Time on Two Crosses: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin, Bayard Rustin
The House of Dies Drear, Virginia Hamilton
The Personal Librarian, Marie Benedict, Victoria Christopher Murray
In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives, Kenneth C. Davis
Homegoing, Yaa Gyasi

Forever Young
Forever Young will meet on February 10th at 12:30 PM with a special musical presentation from Julian Nesbitt and Justin McCoy.

LABC Reads
The book for February is, *My Face is Black is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations* by Mary Frances Berry. “Acclaimed historian Mary Frances Berry resurrects the remarkable story of ex-slave Callie House who, seventy years before the civil-rights movement, demanded reparations for ex-slaves. A widowed Nashville washerwoman and mother of five, House (1861-1928) went on to fight for African American pensions based on those offered to Union soldiers, brilliantly targeting $68 million in taxes on seized rebel cotton and demanding it as repayment for centuries of unpaid labor. Here is the fascinating story of a forgotten civil rights crusader: a woman who emerges as a courageous pioneering activist, a forerunner of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.”

We continue to work on activities for the month. The brochure will have details of events and information about presentations from other organizations. There also will be periodic updates in the mid-week messages. We hope you are looking forward to a time of worship, learning, and fellowship.

Sunday Adult Bible Study

In February, the adult bible study schedule gets merged with the activities of African American History Month. Check your email and midweek messages on online availability of the forums/classes.

February 4 – **Special Coffee Hour;** Conversation with Pastor Allison and Channing Nesbitt.
February 11 – **Literacy:** Discussion of the book, *Bronx Masquerade*
February 18 – **Music:** Exploring the meaning of music in understanding the life, history, and theological context of African Americans
February 25 – **Class will not meet.** Join us for soul food dinner after worship.

LABC Reads Schedule

February 2024 – April 2024

African American History Month: The book for February is, *My Face is Black is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations* by Mary Frances Berry.

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, Rachel Joyce – March 2024

Miracle Creek, Angie Kim – April 2024

Family News

Memorial Service for Rod Murray will be held on Saturday, March 2nd at 1:00.

Prayers for the family of Oakland Police Officer, Tuan Le, as they mourn his death that occurred while he endeavored to protect the City of Oakland.

Prayers for Paige Bence as she mourns the deaths of both her sister and brother-in-law.

Prayers for LeAnn Flesher and her family as they mourn the death of her nephew.

Prayers for Steve Kirk and his family and his brother's family as they mourn the death of Steve's brother, David.

From the Mail

My dear friends at LABC,

Thank you for your prayers, cards, love. My accident in June left me with two fractured vertebrae. And a long recovery. But I'm getting better every day now! I'm just looking again at all your cards and messages. I love you and thank you,

Mary Alice

From Paige Bence

THANK YOU to my church family and friends for your expressions of sympathy and comfort upon the death of my sister Callie and her husband Dan. Your words, cards, and flowers were all so appreciated and needed. Sharing life's joys and sorrows is so important in ones journey of faith. Paige Bence

Ash Wednesday Vigils

⇒ Self-guided reflection
⇒ Candle lighting,
⇒ Prayer with a pastor

⇒ Wednesday, February 14 in the Sanctuary

7-8 am - 11:30 am-1 pm - 5-6 pm

Hunger Task Force Corner

Save the date! The Hunger Task Force's Spring Business Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, April 14th at 12:30**. The Hunger Task Force Faire featuring the agencies we support will be held during Coffee Hour. HTF agencies also will participate in the Forum that day.

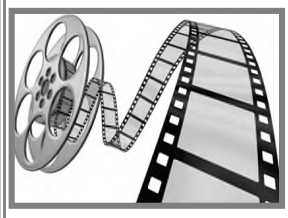
CBSU Drive

This winter the need for coats, blankets, sleeping bags, and **new** undergarments (boxers, underwear, and socks) is great. We're supporting City Team, St. Mary's, Insight Housing, and Family Support Services.

If you have donations, please leave them at the church, and we will coordinate a pick-up.

Designate your gift to the Hunger Task Force at *www.labcoakland.org/give*.

February Flick Flack



Please join us for Flick Flack, on Friday, February 9th at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Charlene and Jerry Wolf (25837 Clausen Ct. Hayward). The film chosen for February is *Rustin*, a 2023 American biographical drama film about the life of civil rights activist Bayard Rustin. The film was produced by Barack and Michelle Obama's production company, Higher Ground, and stars Colman Domingo. It is based on the true story of Rustin, who helped Martin Luther King Jr. and others organize the 1963 March on Washington. Viewing will begin at 7:00. Those who prefer to participate via Zoom may secure the film in their home, available through Netflix. Discussion will begin at 9:00. Those planning to attend in person should advise the Wolfs by Wednesday, February 7 (kulmgirl@att.net or 510.537.1702). Also let them know if you plan to attend the Zoom discussion at 9 p.m. They will send the Zoom link. Bring an appetizer to share.

Earth Stewardship Task Force Corner

There are so many issues surrounding our saving the Earth for our descendants that it is hard to focus only on what we can do. The answer is we can do quite a bit through purchasing and habit changes, and with food. Actions may seem small until many people adopt them and manufacturers notice a change in buying habits. A person could focus on one issue until the change becomes automatic, then tackle another one. For example, focus on plastic, the miracle substance that shows up everywhere. Plastic for consumers started in the l950s using oil refining sludge. Costing less than wood or glass, plastic lowered the price of manufactured items. It was maleable and lightweight. It also shows up in places we don't think about, such as clothing (polyester) and bedding. It is popuar in throw-away utensils and plates and excess packaging. Consider the problem that results when plastic products break down. Because they are difficult or impossible to repair, they become trash. The trash in compost never disappears. It becomes tiny nurdles that can barely be seen. These fragments often end up in the ocean where they are consumed by fish and may then migrate to our bodies. When cleaning clothes, the tiny plastic parts peel away a bit more at each laundering. Yes, curbing plastic use is something to consider when identifying what you can do. Learn to store food without plastic wrap. Reuse the bags you already have by shopping in stores with bulk bins such as Sprouts and the Food Mill. Reduce your laundry by spacing out wash days. When shopping, determine what you may already have before listing what you need. Sometimes, you will find second-hand options. When buying new, look for quality. Purchase items made from natural fibers that will last much longer than polyester (plastic) fast fashion. Because plastic has so many uses, creative people are developing non-fossil fuel versions. These may take a while to catch on. For example, we have to check out whether a label of *compostable* is really true, not partly true. Since original plastic is made from oil refinery waste, it may be cheaper than the experimental types, but having all manufacturers use compostable plastic is not yet an option available to us. Developing research costs more at the start. Shopping in an actual store rather than by mail-order or on-line can often reduce the extra packing (which uses plastic inside and/or out). One can avoid a plastic jar by washing hair with soft soap bars. It can become a game to see how much daily plastic you can avoid using. I know that you cannot always do this. Just give it a try. Trying, then telling your friends why it's important, will help to change the prediction that by 2050 the ocean will be 50% plastic. Let's work to avoid that!

—Mary Sue Meads

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy birthday to all February birthday folk!

4	Paige Bence	15	Annelle Clute
7	Paul Wilkinson		Luke Oladoja
8	Christian Dawkins	19	Leon Veal
	Sharon Gordon-Greer	23	Jeanette Paige
10	Karen Hopkins	25	Kristen Wilson
14	Valentine Royal Thomas	27	Doug Paulsen

February Children and Youth Birthdays

1 Ricky Hamilton-Weiss

18 Conner McCorkle

21 Amani Hadley

28 Avani Lee

Save the Dates:

The following are important upcoming events that we hope you will not miss:

February: African American History Month

4 Worship Service/Coffee Hour - we invite you to wear traditional African attire.

11 Forum: Discussing the book chosen to showcase the theme of literacy, *Bronx Masquerade,* by Nikki Grimes.

18 Forum: Explore the impact of music through the life, history and theology of African Americans.

25 Soul Food Dinner

TRANSMITTER

OF THE LAKESHORE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
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