

# Central United Methodist Church

3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

### Human Relations Day

Sunday, January 15, 2023



## GATHERING

### PRELUDE

*Give Me Jesus, What a Friend We Have in Jesus*  
(Mark Hayes)

Monica Adams

### GATHERING MOMENT

Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

**Leader:** What is the purpose of your life?

**All:** I am called to share the Good News of the Lord.

**Leader:** How do you share the Good News of Jesus?

**All:** I want to share how I met Jesus in my small group.

**Leader:** Who will be in your small group?

**All:** I will invite my friends to my small group.

**Leader:** May Jesus meet people directly in your small group and transform them!

**All:** May Jesus meet the spiritual needs of us! Amen.

### \*OPENING HYMN

*I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*

UMH #521

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT (11:00am)

Mary Juarez Dalton

### PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED

### MISSION & MINISTRIES MOMENT

Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

### RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

**\*PASSING THE PEACE** Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

(Stand, bow or wave, with the word "Peace be with You!")

**All Sing: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (2x).***

**ANTHEM**

*Precious Lord, Take My Hand*  
In honor of Martin Luther King Jr.  
(WORDS and MUSIC by Thomas A. Dorsey)

Chancel Choir

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

**SCRIPTURE**

Isaiah 49:1-7 (Pew Bible NRVs, page 679)

Alexis Easton (8:30am)

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**\*HYMN**

*There Is a Balm in Gilead*

UMH #375

**SCRIPTURE**

John 1:29-42 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 92)

Alexis Easton (8:30am)

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

"We Have Found the Messiah"

Rev. Sungho Lee

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

After a concern, the worship leader will say "Let us pray to the Lord," and the congregation will reply,

**"Lord, hear our prayer!"**

After a joy, the worship leader will say "Let us pray to the Lord," and the congregation will reply, **"Lord,**

**we give thanks!"**

**PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER**

Rev. Sungho Lee

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**THANKSGIVING**

**WORSHIP WITH OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS**

Alexis Easton (8:30am), Nedy Tovera (11:00am)

**OFFERTORY**

*A Place at the Table*  
(Please see the music insert)

Monica Adams  
Singers: Jennifer and Zack Alcover,  
Alexis Easton, and Susan Perez

**All Sing Refrain:**

***And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, yes,  
God will delight when we are creators of justice, justice and joy!***

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

UMH #94

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Rev. Sungho Lee

**SENDING FORTH**

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*

UMH #519

**\*BENEDICTION**

Rev. Sungho Lee

**\*POSTLUDE**

*This Little Light of Mine*  
(arr. Mark Hayes)

Monica Adams

\* Indicates please stand as you are able.

**SERVING YOU TODAY**

Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee  
Alexis Easton, 8:30am Worship Leader  
Nedy Tovera, 11:00am Worship Leader  
Mary Juarez Dalton, Children's Moment  
Ric Campero, Choir Director  
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist  
David Campero, Livestream  
Mark Wharff, Media  
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator  
Rupert Cooper, Audio

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**SERMON IN A NUTSHELL: "WE HAVE FOUND MESSIAH." Pastor Lee**

**What is the purpose of your life?**

This is the question that I asked in the ICU after my surgery. I could have been killed by the drunken driver at the accident, but God spared my life and protected me. Many people prayed for my speedy recovery, and I am here now because of the power of prayer. I owe my life to many people and to God. When I came back to church, I heard the news of the passing of three of our church members within two weeks. Why am I still alive? I am going to share my story, and I pray that you think about your purpose in your life while you are listening to my story.

**Speak the truth in love!**

Isaiah said, "The Lord called me before I was born; while I was in my mother's womb, he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand, he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away."

Like Isaiah when I entered the Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, I thought that I was called before I was born to speak the biblical truth in love. I studied the Bible and got my Ph. D in the Hebrew Bible. I loved debates on the difficult issues in the Bible. I felt that God said to me, "You are my servant in whom I will be glorified."

However, after many decades of ministry, I found out that people did not change their lifestyles because of my sermons and Bible studies. When I won a debate, I lost ten people. I understood why Isaiah said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord and my reward with my God."

**Brilliant lectures do not transform the lives of God's people! Small Groups do.**

I was invited to many revival meetings as a keynote speaker. I have led many Bible Studies at national and international workshops and seminars. However, people enjoyed what they heard as an audience. Some people love debates for the argument's sake. I was a performer and God's people were the audience. I needed to change my role.

God wants to transform God's people. God does not want my success as a biblical scholar. God wants God's people to enjoy abundant life! The focus is on God's people. I should be a coach, and the people should be field players. I changed my way of speaking the truth. I asked challenging questions for people to ponder and meditate. When they shared their answers in small groups, they learned from each other and made a resolution as a community. They became disciples of Jesus! They do mission works together!

### **Jesus called people to be disciples!**

I did not invent this small group ministry idea. The idea came from Jesus. John the Baptist was a successful preacher. He preached the message of law and order and demanded repentance. He preached to a crowd, and people responded to him. They came to be baptized by John. However, John the Baptist knew what I knew. People responded to a great sermon and repented their sins, but they would go back to their old lifestyle and repeat what they did. They would come again to a gathering and sin again in their private lives.

That is the limit of the Sacrifice System of the Old Testament. Apostle Paul implored in Romans 7:21-24, saying, "So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"

Unlike John, Jesus took a different way of making disciples. John the Baptist confessed, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." He said, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One."

### **Jesus asked people to come and see how he lived.**

When John's two disciples followed Jesus, he asked them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.

Jesus did not preach the Sermon on the Mount or Beatitudes. Jesus simply invited them to come to where he stayed, and they lived a day with him. This is the first principle of a small group ministry. We should go to each other homes and learn how others live their lives. We should share our life situations and stories to a small group. Many people meet at coffee shops and restaurants in the USA because we have individualistic culture and respect privacy. Jesus recommends us to meet at homes and share our life stories to form a community. People learn from what we do, not from what we say.

### **People invite friends to the small group.**

One of the two who stayed with Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" and he brought Simon to Jesus.

When people come to a functioning small group and experience fellowship in God, they want to invite their families and friends. Group members should share their life stories with transparency, and members should keep confidentiality. What happens in a small group stays in a small group. That is why the Bible did not explain what happened to the two disciples who spent a day with Jesus. They kept confidentiality and just said, "We have found the Messiah."

### **Jesus will meet people directly in a small group and transform them.**

Many times, people hesitate inviting people to a small group or to a church. They feel that they do not know the Bible and theology enough to answer hard questions. They are afraid of getting lots of questions from the non-believers and newcomers when they invite those people. This is my advice. Do not try to

convince people. Do not try to teach them. Just say to them, "Come and See!" or "I pray for you." Some reject our invitation. Some are offended when we pray for them. However, when they come, Jesus would meet them personally. Jesus knows everybody. Jesus is the one who would transform them and give them new names. When Simon came, Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter, a rock).

### **Jesus kept calling people to follow him.**

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Here is the second principle of small group: Keep inviting people to your small group and to our church. We do not have to worry about their responses. People have a fear of being rejected. When people say no to our invitation, some of us take it as personal rejection. However, do not take "no" as a personal rejection.

One of the successful life insurance salespersons told me once that statistically he would get a new client per every 100 new contacts. When he was rejected again and again, he knew that he would come closer and closer to getting a new client. Then voila! After 99 rejections, he would get a new client as the average statistics told him. Keep inviting people to our church or your small groups. You will find your average rejection number. Maybe every 100 or 200 rejections will bring one new visitor. Or every 1,000 rejections will bring you one visitor. Scientists are not afraid of failures. After 50 years of failing experiments finally some scientists succeeded in clean energy fusion method last year. All success stories have many failure stories in them. Do not be afraid of making mistakes and failures.

How to grow a small group or a church? Keep inviting people whenever and wherever you see people. I invite people to come to our church at a restaurant, at a gym, at a library, at a coffee shop, everywhere. I simply say to people, "Come and see our church!" Many ignore my invitation. However, once in a while one person shows interest and once a year, one person actually shows up at a church service! What happens to me can happen to you also. Do not be discouraged and keep inviting. That is what Jesus did. Jesus kept calling people, saying, "Follow me!"

### **Jesus would meet the spiritual needs of people.**

When we invite people, some of them actually come. When they come, Jesus would meet them where they are.

In the Bible, Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." First, Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" People have prejudices. We all do. Do not argue with them. Without any arguments or challenge, Philip said to him, "Come and see." Nathanael came with doubts and hesitation.

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said to him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael was surprised and asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you."

Nathanael prayed to God everyday under the fig tree for the recovery of his nation. He prayed for his community without telling anybody what he was doing. Then how did Jesus know about him and about his prayer life? It was a secret personal life! Surprise! Jesus knows you and me. God knows our secrets in our hearts. Jesus knows which button he should press to make us to repent!

Nathanael had to admit that Jesus was the son of God. He replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus knew the innermost secret of our hearts. When people come to our church, I do

not have to try to convince them to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Jesus himself will talk to them and help them to meet their spiritual needs through worship, fellowship, and small groups.

**Let us bring people to church and to our small groups.**

This is another new year's resolution. Let us bring at least one person to our church in 2023. Just keep inviting people to our special programs like Faith and Learning next Sunday. Youth events, Choir presentation, special gatherings like Chili Cook-Off, and other special worship services, etc., there are many opportunities. Invite them to the Rummage Sale. Let us keep inviting them to Jesus and see what Jesus would do for them. It will be an exciting year for all of us! We will just proclaim that we have met Jesus our Lord and Savior in our lives. We have found the Messiah! May God bring God's workers into God's vineyard! The crops are ripe, and we need more workers! Send us your disciples, Jesus! Amen!



**NO 8:30AM WORSHIP SERVICE NEXT SUNDAY!**

Sunday, January 22, there will be two services: 10:15am (Khmer) and 11:00am. This schedule is due to the fact that we will be having Dr. Mary Lomax-Ghirarduzzi as our featured speaker at our Faith and Learning worship service. The 8:30am service will return to the Fireside Room on Sunday, January 29.

**FAITH AND LEARNING SUNDAY**

In 1923 College of Pacific moved to its present Stockton location and this move began a long-term relationship with Central. Presidents Tully Knoles and Robert Burns were active Central members. Other presidents would often walk across Pacific to worship with us on Sundays. In 1958 Central started worshipping in Morris Chapel and our children walked across Pacific Avenue to the new Knoles building for Sunday School. In 1964 our new Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall was completed. Throughout the years Pacific students have worshipped at Central. Many of these students have become elders in the United Methodist Church. Today over forty Pacific alumni worship at 3700 Pacific Ave.

Next Sunday our congregation will celebrate this relationship between Central and the University of the Pacific with our 8<sup>th</sup> Faith & Learning Sunday at the 11:00am service.

Our honored guest speaker will be Dr. Mary Lomax-Ghirarduzzi the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at University of the Pacific. Dr. Lomax-Ghirarduzzi joined Pacific in 2021 as the university's inaugural vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and chief diversity officer. She is also a professor in the Communications Department. Dr. Lomax-Ghirarduzzi is a leader on race, leadership, and faith-informed social justice.

Lomax-Ghirarduzzi grew up in Stockton attending local schools and is an Edison High School graduate. Ben Reddish was one of her mentors. She is a 1989 Pacific graduate and holds a MA in intercultural counseling and social justice education from San Diego State University and an EdD in organizational leadership from Pepperdine University.

Invite your friends who have attended Pacific and those neighbors and family members who you would like

to introduce them to our faith community. Following the service there will be a reception hosted by the graduates of Pacific who attend Central.

### **CELEBRATE THE WINTER IN THE BEST WAY: WITH CHILI, MUSIC, AND FUN!**

The members of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship and the Chancel Choir are beyond excited for the in-person Chili Cook-Off to return to the Central campus **Sunday, January 29**, at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Yes, and Snap Jackson & the Knock on Wood Players will be performing! This event has become one of the biggest "FUN"draisers for these two organizations.

Tickets to the Chili Cook-Off are on sale today. They are \$10 (children 12 and under are free). Everyone who purchases a ticket gets to participate in judging the chili entries. A limited number of tickets will be available the day of the event. Tickets sold at the door will be \$15. If you purchase six tickets you will receive two free tickets, and a table of eight will be reserved for you. Besides chili there will be a baked potato bar. During the Cook-Off guests will have the opportunity to bid on cakes and several special gift baskets.

The funds raised during this event will be divided equally between the Putnam Musical Enrichment Fund and Summer Youth Experiences.

### **CHILI COOKS NEEDED**

Bring a crockpot or slower cooker containing your favorite chili recipe to the Fellowship Hall kitchen Sunday, January 29, no later than 10.30am to enter in one of the three categories:

- Young Chefs (Contestants under age 18)
- Classic (meat & beans)
- Veggie (Vegetarian chili)

Also bring a serving utensil and the recipe or ingredients for our friends with allergies.

Do you know someone who makes a great chili? Invite them to enter. The top vote getter in each category will receive a \$50 cash prize. Register in advance by picking up an application at the Chili Cook-Off table today.

### **APPEARING AT THE CHILI COOK-OFF**

Snap Jackson & the Knock on Wood Players is an award winning acoustic group which has performed during worship services and at the Chili Cook- Off for a number of years. The group consists of Snap Jackson, Shane Kalbach, and Brian Clark. These three gentlemen effortlessly blend Americana, bluegrass, soul, and old-time music to create a unique, fresh, and energetic sound. It is obvious from the moment this group takes the stage that they are ready to have a good time!

*"Snap's original songs have a liveliness that zips across the sound barrier, and if your Feet aren't dancing after a song or two, you must be tied down."* ~ The Bluegrass Breakdown

### **ATTENTION ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

You are cordially invited to CUMC's first Leadership Summit, to be held on January 29, at 1:00pm in the Fireside Room. Pastor Lee will share his vision and plan for ministry in 2023.

Our 13 Committee Chairs (Adult Education, CMNS Advisory Board, Columbarium, Education, Finance, Flower, Godly Play, Lay Leadership Development, Membership, Mission, Reconciling, Staff-Parish Relations, Trustees, and Worship) will also speak to their visions and plans for 2023 as well as discussions about budgets and long-term goals. We hope you can join us!

### **ROTARY READ-IN**

**Save the date: February 23, 2023!** This year Central has been asked to provide readers to the kindergarten-3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms at Cleveland and Madison schools. Each reader is asked to read one or two books to one or two classrooms. The books are then donated to the classrooms for the students to enjoy. It is a wonderful program and lots of fun too. Please consider joining us...the more the merrier!! Watch for sign-ups at the end of the month.

### **THE RUMMAGE SALE RETURNS!**

**Friday and Saturday, March 3 and 4!** The Rummage Sale is back! Please watch Connections and News from 3700 in the coming weeks for more details regarding donation drop off times (the week of) and Rummage Sale times.