

College Avenue Presbyterian Church
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Welcome to CAPC Oakland!

We are a reformed, multicultural, politically purple, community of followers of Jesus seeking to live our faith seriously in word, deed and relationships in the East Bay.

If you've never celebrated with us, you can follow along using this paper or the projection on the screen. Hymnals and Bibles are in the pews. We invite you to join us for a moment of community connection afterwards with a drink and simple snack.

CHILDREN

We have a quiet play area for children in the front of the sanctuary with toys and coloring sheets that can be played with during services. We also have a lounge, off the entryway, where the service is broadcast if you need more space.

We invite children 3 years old to 6th grade to depart for Godly Play following our second song. You can gather your child(ren) after worship upstairs in the GP room.

PRAYER CARDS

You're invited to share your prayers of concern or gratitude by filling out the cards, located in the pews, and placing them in the glass vase on the table. We'll use them during today's service.

WIFI & SOCIAL MEDIA

2wire927 is our open wifi. The password is 7304088568. If you do social media during the service we invite you to add #capcoakland to include others.

NESTLÉ PARKING LOT

We're able to park in the lot behind the church. They ask us to enter and exit off of Chabot Road, using the pedestrian door there near Crossroads Trading.

CCL #1137062

December 8, 2019

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

GATHERING SONG "Now The Heavens Start To Whisper" - *Insert*

CALL TO WORSHIP – sung and spoken Advent Wreath Liturgy - *Insert*

SONG OF PRAISE "Lo How A Rose" - *Blue Hymnal # 48*

Children from 2 years to 6th grade are invited to gather at the front of the sanctuary and depart for our Godly Play time. You can collect your child(ren) after the service upstairs.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

ACT OF CONFESSION

OPENING OURSELVES TO BEING UNDONE, THAT WE MIGHT BE REDONE

SUNG CHORAL RESPONSE "When The Silence Takes A Voice" - *CAPC Choir*

DECLARATION OF GRACE.

THE IN-BREAKING OF GOD'S GRACE DISRUPTS OUR HUMAN CONDITION OF SIN

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Call and response liturgically prayed at the conclusion of sharing a prayer card - *Deacon Janet Majors*

Leader: God, in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

To pray with someone after the service, look for today's liturgist after today's service

GIVING OF OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS TO EMPOWER THE WORK OF GOD IN THE CHURCH

OFFERTORY SONG "Raise a Song of Gladness" - *Insert*

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE Isaiah 11:1-10 & Matthew 3:1-12 *Pew Bible pp. 673, 935*

SPEAKING OF FAITH "Stopping to Ask for Directions" - *Monte McClain*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SONG OF RESPONSE "When John The Baptist Preached" - *Insert*

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING CALL AND RESPONSE

Leader: God is good!

Leader: And all the time!

People: All the time!

People: God is good!

EXHORTATION & SUNG CHORAL BENEDICTION "The Lord Bless You And Keep You"

PASSING THE PEACE OF GOD "Salam almasih" or "المسيح سلام" (Arabic)

We pass the peace weekly using languages native to the cultures of our church community as an audible sign of the Dominion of God at work towards the healing transformation of the world.

Thoughts on Today's Readings Isaiah 11:1-10 & Matthew 3:1-12

"Conversion is a permanent process in which very often the obstacles we meet make us lose all we had gained and start anew."
- Theologian Gustavo Gutierrez

The great prophet writes a word that while it sounds beautiful to us was probably hard to hear when it was originally spoken to a people in despair, exiled, captive far from their home in ancient Babylon. Their capital city has been laid waste in 687. All seemed to be darkness and desolation. The prophet talks of the royal line of David as a tree cut down, yet which sprouts anew. But instead of getting revenge this new ruler to come will bring about a peace that is beyond words. It can only be described in word pictures of hunting animals living at peace with their prey. It's a mutuality, balance, order that seems unnatural, yet is God's deepest desire.

In Matthew we hear of the dawning of the ministry of John the Baptizer. So radical, that he's describes as a voice calling out in the desert, or wilderness. It represents a solitary, lonely, desolate, uninhabited place, deserted, unfit or overlooked as a place where life can be sustained. It's the opposite of human civilization, know-how and independence. The people stream out to him in this dry place because they too are spiritually thirsty, morally desolate, politically overlooked.

John calls the people to *Metanoia* which literally means "change your mind" or "go beyond your mind" (see Matthew 4:17 and Mark 1:15). Unfortunately, in the fourth century, St. Jerome translated the word into Latin as *paenitentia* ("repent" or "do penance"), initiating a host of moralistic connotations that have colored Christians' understanding of the Gospels ever since. The word *metanoieite* referred to a primal change of mind, worldview, or way of processing and perceiving—and only by corollary about a specific change in behavior. This common misunderstanding puts the cart before the horse; we think we can change a few externals while our underlying worldview often remains narcissistic and self-referential.

John is calling the people to a new truth. Today we might say that he's challenging his audience to stop and ask for directions, to reject fake news, to leave behind constrictive views of how the world is. There is no way to understand or believe in the prophetic-poem of Isaiah without such a change of mind and perspective. We're called not just to way of thinking and seeing (others, the world, ourselves) but also a way of being and living.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXAMEN & CONTEMPLATION

- **What word, phrase or image grabs your attention?**
- **How do you struggle with the notion of metanoia?**
- **How do you hear the Spirit of God inviting you to ask for new directions, or to embrace metanoia?**

Some of today's text is taken from a devotion of Richard Rohr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMUNITY NEWS

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

8 Taylor Beatty Cristina Ramirez-Fonua
9 Laura LaMotte 10 Carol Zappin
13 Lane Stahl 15 Janet Majors
31 Gianelle Beatty

COMMUNITY LIFE CALENDAR

Join our Choir! Tuesdays 5:30-6:30p, Sundays 12-1p | Contact Pete Feltman in person or by email at petefeltman@gmail.com The choir is singing each Sunday in Advent – warm ups at 10am.

Celtic Prayer Group, Wednesdays 6:45-8:15pm

Friday Night Meal, 6-7pm (12/6) put on by a group from Montclair Presbyterian Church, hosted by Monte. We need folks to "host" the meal – not cook, but welcome and orient other teams. *Interested? Talk to Monte.*

Women's Group, Saturdays 8:30am | in the church library (meets 1st, 2nd, 3rd Saturdays)

The Vocabulary of Faith | Sundays 9:30-10:15am
A weekly intro to learning how to read the Bible.

Advent e-Devotions @ www.montemclair.com

Happy Half-Hour Thursdays 6-6:30pm – wind down your week with a communal spiritual practice then grab a bit or drink along the Ave.

Advent Family Dinner – today – potluck and game night at church 5-7pm. Bring a dish and game to share! Talk to Elaine or Cristina.

Tastes of India - Meal next Sunday after worship. Pick up a flyer. RSVP to Beth Beatty (510) 851-2235 or bethbeatty22@gmail.com

La Ceiba Coffee Holiday Pack for sale for \$15

The Longest Night Luminary Labyrinth Walk Saturday 12/21 @ sunset (5:00pm)

Christmas Carol Sing-Along 12/22 @ 2:30pm

Christmas Eve Service, 12/24 @ 7pm | Instant Christmas Pageant, Carols, Candles & Chocolate!

Leadership for next week, 12/15/19:

Counting: Jeff Trowbridge, Albert Hussian
Deacon Liturgist: Janet Majors
Fellowship: Elaine Price,
Janet Majors Myrna Shadley,
Godly Play: Cam Beatty (ST), F. Darmstadt (DK)
Greeters: Biruta Vinerts, Elaine Price

LYRICS & WRITTEN RESPONSES FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION

"Now The Heavens Start To Whisper"

Mary Louise Bringle (2005) | *Glory to God Hymnal #94*
© 2006 GIA Publications, Inc. | *Inspired from the scriptures: Isaiah 11:1; Isaiah 40:3-8; Isaiah 60:1-3*

1. Now the heavens start to whisper,
As the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen
To the stirring, faint within:
Seed of promise, deeply planted,
Child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frost-line,
Hearts grow soft to welcome him.
2. Heavy clouds that block the moonlight
Now begin to drift away.
Diamond brilliance through the darkness
Shines the hope of coming day.
Christ, the morning star of splendor,
Glams within a world grown dim.
Heaven's ember fans to fullness;
Hearts grow warm to welcome him.
3. Christ, eternal Sun of justice,
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,
Come to bless with fire and fragrance
Hours of yearning, hurt, and need.
In the lonely, in the stranger,
In the outcast hid from view:
Child who comes to grace the manger,
Teach our hearts to welcome you.

ADVENT WREATH SPOKEN & SUNG LITURGY

This year's Advent Wreath Litanies are written by Martha Spong and can be found at <https://marthaspong.com>
The People read the BOLD print

One: Isaiah the Prophet reassured the people,
God is sending words of comfort to you,
speaking tenderly to you. God promises that
your hard labor is over, your sentence has
been served and your penalty has been paid.
You are forgiven not once but double all that
is needed.

**ALL: Go up to a high mountain, and call out
the good news! Lift your voices up with
strength and call out the good news! Do
not be afraid! Your God is coming.**

One: Our God is mighty, but our God is also
gentle. God loves the flock and will feed it
just the way a shepherd would, holding us
close like lambs and guiding us, old and
young.

ALL: We wait for God's peace and live in God's
hope as we light these candles.

WE'LL SING AS WE LIGHT THE CANDLES...

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

Wayne L. Wold (1984) | *Yiddish folk tune*
Glory to God #85 | | Inspired from Psalm 23:2; 24:7-10;
Isaiah 40:1-11; Matthew 25:1-13

1. Light one candle to watch for Messiah;
let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel,
God fulfills the promise.
2. Light two candles to watch for Messiah;
let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
gently lead them homeward.

**All: Loving God, come and shine your light
in the world!**

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

German, 15th cent. | Translator: Theodore Baker;
Tune: ES IST EIN ROS (5556553)
Blue Hymnal #48 | Inspired from Isaiah 11:1

1. Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung.
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
By faithful prophets sung.
It came a floweret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.
2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore for us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

3. This flower who's fragrance tender with
sweetness fills the air
Dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere
Enfleshed yet very God
From sin and death he saves us
and lightens every load

Prayer of Confession

*Today's prayer is adapted from an Advent 2 prayer posted
on RevGalPrayerPals.*

**ALL: Holy One,
We trust that your Spirit of Wisdom
rests upon us,
as it did your chosen Messiah:
A spirit of understanding and knowledge.**

**Yet we do not always act to live in harmony
paying your mercy forward to our neighbors.**

**We too easily react to harsh words
and hard circumstances
rather than center ourselves
in your steadfast love.**

**We too easily turn a deaf ear to
Those voices crying out in the wilderness -
Women living in fear, children hiding
immigrants hungering,
those sleeping on our streets,
the whispers of self-doubt that paralyze,
the blinding pride of power.**

**We too easily turn away from
our neighbor who thinks differently than us,
our neighbor who looks different,
our neighbor who believes differently,
our neighbor that we have not chosen.**

**Clear from our shoulders
the burdens of fear, mistrust, and hurt
that we might bear your light burden
and transforming yoke,
embracing your Spirit of harmony
that your joy and peace
might further fill our hearts,
and we pay your mercy forward.**

"Raise a Song of Gladness"

Taizé Community (1978)

Language: English; Latin

Glory to God Hymnal #155

Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth.
Christ has come, bringing peace, joy to every heart.
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!

"When John the Baptist Preached"

Biblical Reference: Matthew 3:1-12

*Tune: Traditional English melody ("The Snow Lay on the
Ground") (MIDI)*

Text: Copyright © 2010 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

1. When John the Baptist preached for all to hear,
He said, "Repent! The kingdom has come near!"
His rough, prophetic manner caused surprise,
But people heard his words and were baptized.
Prepare the Lord's own way!
Make his paths straight!
It's time to change! We can no longer wait!
2. Among the crowds that day were mighty men
Who proudly traced their line to Abraham.
But John proclaimed that they should change their
ways —
For trees that don't bear fruit are set ablaze.
Prepare the Lord's own way!
Make his paths straight!
It's time to change! We can no longer wait!
3. O God, we harm creation by our greed;
We overlook our neighbors in their need.
We let our lives be ruled by hate and fear;
Your call to change is one we need to hear:
Prepare the Lord's own way!
Make his paths straight!
It's time to change! We can no longer wait!
4. And Lord, you call for change in your church, too,
For even here we've wandered far from you.
Renew in us a vision of your Way,
And give us strength and courage to obey.
Prepare the Lord's own way!
Make his paths straight!
It's time to change! We can no longer wait!