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How does a weary world rejoice?

Love | The Fourth Week of Advent



December 24, 2023 at 10:30am
 in Person & on Zoom

Welcome to CAPC Oakland!

We are a reformed, multicultural, politically purple, community of followers of Jesus. Together we seek to vigorously live our faith in our words, actions, and relationships in the East Bay.

In our community, face masks are not required, but always welcome. Masks are available in the entry.

As a community we are committed to being safe, open and real. We'd love to know you better. Use this QR Code to share your contact info or questions with our staff so we can follow up. We will not sell, share or abuse your personal info.



CHILDREN

We have Godly Play – “Sunday School” for children during our service. It’s a Montessori-like approach to teaching children language to use to learn to express faith through the telling of Bible Stories. The Godly Play group and leaders leave for their arranged learning space after the 2nd song.

PRAYER CARDS

To operationalize participation in our Prayers of the People we invite you to fill out a prayer card and share it with the liturgist or to share you requests in the chat on ZOOM labeling it with ‘prayer.’

WI-FI

Want Wi-Fi during our gathering?
 Select our network – Capc1.
 Our password is 5106583666

CCL #1137062

GATHERING AROUND GOD’S WORD BOTH IN PERSON & VIA ZOOM

- PRELUDE “Sweet Little Jesus Boy”
- CALL TO WORSHIP - Elaine Price
- GATHERING SONG “O Come O Come Emmanuel” - Blue Hymnal #9
- LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH - Janet Majors
- SONG OF PRAISE “Jubilate Deo” - Glory to God #155
- LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD
- HEARING SCRIPTURE Luke 1:46-66 & 1:67-80 - Chickwendu Okereke & Louise Hirschman
- PROCLAIMING GOD’S WORD “Game Changer” - Rev. Monte McClain
- THE PRACTICE OF LECTIO DIVINA
- RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD
- AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - Marge Harvey
- SONG OF RESPONSE “Mary Did You Know” - Insert
- PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER
 WE USE A CALL AND RESPONSE LITURGICALLY PRAYED AT THE CONCLUSION OF SHARING A PRAYER .
- Leader: God, in your mercy.
People: Hear our prayer.
- COLLECTION OF THE OFFERING
- OFFERING SONG “Rise Up Shepherd And Follow”
- SENDING SONG “Go Tell It On The Mountain” - Blue Hymnal #29
- SENDING CALL AND RESPONSE
- Leader: God is good! Leader: And all the time!
People: All the time! People: God is good!
- EXHORTATION & BENEDICTION
- PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST “Salam almasih” | سلام المسيح - Arabic
- POSTLUDE “Christmastime Is Here”

You can give electronically using this QR Code



Reflections on Today's Readings Luke 1:46-66 & 1:67-80



Our readings today are songs of praise – “psalms” sung by Zechariah and Mary in response to their game-changing encounters with God. There are many songs throughout the Hebrew scriptures in similar circumstances, including Moses and Miriam at the Exodus crossing of the sea. They name the tension between the past, the present & God’s intended future.



Mary sings of a new world order based on past experiences with God. Her joy is found in remembering what the world has the potential to be based on the presence of God in all things. God has shown strength. God has scattered the proud. God has brought down the powerful. God has lifted the lowly. God has filled the hungry. God has helped those who have served God according to the

promise made to Abraham. God has already done things that should allow a weary world to rejoice. Mary radically proclaims this in her song of hope and in the story of justice, joy, and a righteous peace.

Hannah’s song, found in 1 Samuel 2:1-10, is very similar to Mary’s Song and rightfully so. Mary knew Hebrew stories well and would have probably aligned her words based on the words she had buried in her heart. Hannah’s joy seemed to radiate from the victory in an answered prayer. The birth of her son, after being deemed barren, was a victory over the enemies who did not see God’s blessing on her life. Hannah sings a song of hope for current situations. Her reminder to us and the world is to let God be the rock on which we stand. Let God be the one who brings things to life. Let God make poor and let God make rich; for only God can raise up the poor from the dust, the needy from the ash heap, to place them in places with royalty and to inherit seats of honor. God will be the one and only reason a weary world can rejoice.

Zechariah sings a song of hope for the future. His song ignites the thrill of hope that awaits us after a long silence. He bursts into thanksgiving for God’s favor. He acknowledges that God has something better for those who await the future. *

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged, enraged, or surprised you in the text?
- Recall a memory when singing was part of a meaningful event—perhaps a funeral, a baptism, a birthday party, a protest, a bedtime routine, etc. When have you sung a story of hope? How did the act of singing change you?
- Mary’s song closely mirrors Hannah’s song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Portions of Zechariah’s song pull inspiration from Malachi 3:1-2 and 4:5-6, as well as from Isaiah 9:2 and 42:7. Luke weaves together the past, present, and future in telling God’s unfolding story. From whose mouths do you hear the Magnificat sung today?
- What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – or to us, as a church – to act, speak, be, or change, through this word of scripture?

*redacted from a commentary written by Rev. Cecelia D. Armstrong for A Sanctified Art.

December Birthdays

15 Janet Majors

31 Gianelle Beatty 2011

Today at & around CAPC Oakland

Post Service Sanctuary Party! Join us for light snacks and the chance to connect after our service.

Letters of Love: *Everyone loves getting mail!* Pick up an addressed envelope in the back and write a note of encouragement and love to someone who could use a good word. Recipients and their situations are explained on the magnetic board.

This Week at & around CAPC Oakland

Christmas Eve Service • tonight @ 7pm.

Sunday Bible Study Before Worship • (from 9:30-10:15am). We’ll discuss the text for worship each Sunday. Find text study sheets online if you want to read in advance. There is no study this next Sunday 12/31.



Quilters Club Mondays 10a-12p, in the library.

Friday Night Meal – Fridays 6-7:00pm.

Sign up online to help with set-up, serving, & clean-up! *A team of the Piedmont Community Service Crew is cooking. Tim Hsu is the meal host.*



Women's Group: Saturday 9:30-10:30am on Zoom.

Next Sunday we’re having a weekly normal gathering at 10:30am as we mark the last day of 2023.

Upcoming Book Series• We’re thinking of offering an upcoming book series on *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life In The Second Mountain* by David Brooks. It explores the four commitments that define a life of meaning and purpose: to a spouse and family, to a vocation, to a philosophy or faith, and to a community. And wrestles with how we navigate that in the second-half of life. (post 40/50). If you’d be interested in this book group talk to Monte

Meeting of the Congregation • Sunday, December 7th to elect new elders and deacons, and receive our 2024 budget.


Thank You to Today’s Leadership:

WORSHIP PLANNING TEAM: Ben Bencomo, Marge Harvey, Chickwendu Okereke, Louise Hirschman.
MUSIC: Pete Feltman, Dave Eagle Roger Kim, Ben Kramarz, Kate Rose.
COOKIE-FEST provided by the Womens’ Group
VIDEO TECH: Dann Wilkens, Albert Hussian, Thom Faulkner

LYRICS & RESPONSES FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION

We affirm that God is neither male nor female – but wholly and holy other. In doing so, we seek to empower each person to participate fully in worship, able to identify with the lyrics of songs and the words of our communal prayers through our use of gender inclusive language.

Call to Worship Opening Litany

 WRITTEN BY: REV. SARAH SPEED | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

One: How does a weary world rejoice?

**ALL: We sing songs of hope.
We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.
We tell the stories of what could be.
We listen for God's word.
We resist the temptation to give up or give in.
We remember Mary's song.
We gather for worship.
We hope.
We hope.
Against all odds, we hope.**

One: Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making.
Let us worship holy God.

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

Translator: J. M. Neale (1851) | Blue Hymnal #9

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

3. O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

 WRITTEN BY: REV. SARAH SPEED | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

One: How does a weary world practice love?
ALL: By sending cards, and picking up the phone.

Continued next column...

One: By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others. By learning people's stories and finding common ground.

ALL: By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.

One: There are a million ways to practice love. So today we light the candle of love as a reminder and a charge.

ALL: With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen.

"Jubilate Deo"

*Taizé Community | Jacques Berthier
Glory to God#155*

Latin:

Jubilate Deo omni terra.
Servite Domino in laetitia.
Alleluia, alleluia, in laetitia!
Alleluia, alleluia, in laetitia!

English:

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

Affirmation of Faith

 WRITTEN BY: REV. SARAH SPEED | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

**We believe
that hope can change the world.
We believe
that God uses ordinary people,
like an unwed teenage mother,
for extraordinary good.**

**And we believe
that each of these ordinary people
can make a difference.**

**We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound.
We know that suffering quells joy
and makes it harder to hope.**

**But we choose hope anyway.
In the face of hardship,
we hope together.
We hope with God.
We hope for a better world.
This is our song.**

“Mary Did You Know”

This powerful revisioning of the popular song “Mary, Did You Know?” (original lyrics by Mark Lowry) is inspired by Mary’s Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55), written by Jennifer Henry.

Mary did you know,
that your ancient words
would still leap off our pages?

Mary did you know,
that your spirit song
would echo through the ages?

Did you know that your holy cry
would be subversive word,
that the tyrants would be trembling
when they know your truth is heard?

Mary did you know,
that your lullaby
would stir your own Child’s passion?

Mary did you know,
that your song inspires
the work of liberation?

Did you know that your Jubilee
is hope within the heart
of all who dream of justice,
who yearn for it to start?

The truth will teach,
the drum will sound,
healing for the pain
The poor will rise,
the rich will fall.
Hope will live again.

Mary did you know,
that we hear your voice
for the healing of the nations?

Mary did you know,
your unsettling cry
can help renew creation?

Do you know, that we need your faith,
the confidence of you,
May the God that you believe in,
be so true.

“Rise Up Shepherd And Follow”

Traditional Spiritual | The Blue Hymnal#50

1 There’s a star in the East on Christmas morn,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.
It will lead to the place where the Christ was born,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Refrain:
Follow, follow,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.
Follow the Star of Bethlehem,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

2 If you take good heed to the angel’s words,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.
You’ll forget your flocks, you’ll forget your herds,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

*African American spiritual | Arranger: John W. Work II
Blue Hymnal #29 | Glory to God #136*

Refrain:
Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o’er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior’s birth.

3 Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.