

College Avenue Presbyterian Church
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THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 12, 2021
 at 10:30am

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 this time of disruption and new normal we gather hybrid-ly (both in person and via Zoom).
This is our new normal.

It's something that we'll get better at each time we gather, allowing us to gather together and be consistent with our values and commitments. We ask that you wear a mask during worship as some of our community (our children in particular) are not yet vaccinated.

CHILDREN

We've reconfigured out how to do our Godly Play program for children via Zoom. We meet 9:30-10am on Sundays via Zoom. Info in the announcements on the back.

POST-SERVICE GARDEN PARTY

We are serving a light snack and coffee after worship in the garden throughout the summer. You can enjoy that mask-free. We ask you to not touch any of the food or drink, instead let us serve you.

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.'

CCL #1137062.

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

PRELUDE "Twas In The Moon Of Wintertime"

GATHERING SONG "Prepare The Way O Zion"

CALL TO WORSHIP

SONG OF PRAISE "Raise A Song of Gladness"

HEARING GOD'S WORD

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE Ezekiel 37:1-14; Zephaniah 3:14-20;
 Luke 3:7-18

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD "Be Fruitful and Multiply"

- Monte McClain

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SONG OF RESPONSE "Lo How A Rose E'er Blooming"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

- Myrna Shadley

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 OUR OFFERINGS AND GIFTS

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING SONG "Go Tell It On The Mountain"

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 GOD "Salam almasih" (Arabic)

In the season of a pandemic new normal, you're invited to pass the peace of God however and to whoever you can this day as we live our lives of disciples of Jesus sheltering-in-place, as a living sign of the Dominion of God at work moving us toward the healing transformation of the world.

POSTLUDE "In The Heavens Shone A Star"

Reflections on Today's Readings

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Luke 3:7-18

The prophet Ezekiel is a master at dealing with catastrophe. When it strikes a person's world can fall apart. When catastrophe struck in the 6th century BCE, when Babylon invaded Israel, denial was the popular response. Ezekiel found himself living among a people of God who seeing what was right before their eyes chose denial and/or despair. Ezekiel showed them that there was catastrophe, unavoidable, but God *was* at work in the catastrophe, sovereignly *using* the catastrophe to bring about something else.

Our reading today of Ezekiel's prophetic poems and visions is perhaps the most well-known: a vision of life from death, new beginnings from defeat and catastrophe – a rejection of the denial and despair that would move those whose worlds' have fallen apart – to give up. This is what God is up to.



Zephaniah is the name of a prophet who prophesied in the days of Josiah, king of Judah (640–609 BC). In his prophetic poetry he reminds the people of God of the interconnectedness and intersectionality of life. While it's easy to think that our spiritual life is something personal between God and us; Zephaniah reminds us that "Everything you do or think or feel has to do with God. Every person you meet has to do with God." In our vast world of interconnectedness, interdependence and connections, everything is of consequence and impacts others. All of those consequences come together in God. The language of the Bible calls the coming together of these consequences "Judgement Day" or "the Day of LORD". The prophet warns the leaders and the people that there are consequences for their actions of injustice, unfaithfulness, spiritual and moral corruption. They are invited to turn back to God even with the threat of the Assyrians and Babylonians who threaten their world order.

Luke is one of the four writers who recount the life, teachings and experience of Jesus of Nazareth. Luke situates Jesus in relationship from the beginning – with God, with Mary and Joseph, and also with John the Baptizer, his cousin, who would prepare his way with a ministry of prophetic and apocalyptic preaching, calling the people to repentance, changed lives and to recreate a society rooted in just & holy.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- Today's scriptures all address how we often choose denial or despair when we're faced with the catastrophe of our world falling apart – whether from outside forces or from the natural consequences of our actions in our interconnected world. Is there a situation or relationship in which you're currently choosing denial and/or despair because of your fear?
- How might God be inviting you to bear fruit, to change the way you love, live and relate (repent) in regards to your denial or despair?

December Birthdays

2	Annette Laverty	8	Taylor Beatty	2008
8	Cristina Ramirez-Fonua	9	Laura LaMotte	
10	Carol Zappin	13	Lane Stahl	
14	Fredora Darmstadt	15	Janet Majors	
31	Gianelle Beatty	2011		

Weekly Calendar

Christmas Carol Sing Along Event – Today 1:30pm Come sing some of your favorite Christmas carols – secular and sacred – with our today at 1:30pm. Bring a mask and a sweater or jacket. We'll have the windows open to provide for fresh air and ask all to wear face masks.

Race Matters Group Mondays - 6pm on Zoom
This week we're wrestling with the in part 2 of a discussion around how we are personally intersectional in our own identities.

Friday Night Meal – Friday, December 17th 6:00pm. This next Friday our partners at Monclair Presbyterian Church are cooking dinner. Sign up online w/ the QR Code to help with set-up and serving, and clean-up.

Letters of Love send a greeting card to someone who could use a good word or to one of our governmental representatives (back wall). Grab a Christmas Card to send to Ross Laverty – this morning in the entryway!

Godly Play for Children Sundays 9:30-10am on Zoom

Wrestling with Scripture Thursday 6 pm

Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk – Tuesday, December 21st at sunset in the garden. *This is the longest night of the year, when the light begins to grow again in terms of daylight. This astronomical fact is why we celebrate Christmas in December.*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Hybrid Service – December 24th at 7pm in person & on zoom.

Thank you to Today's Worship Leadership:
Coffee Hour: Marji Wilkens
Godly Play: David Kittams
Music: Pete Feltman, Dave Eagle, Ben Kramarz, Gabe Szilardi-Tierney, Roger Kim
Prayer Liturgist: Myrna Shadley
Preaching: Monte McClain
Video Tech: Albert Hussian, Dann Wilkens

LYRICS & RESPONSES FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION

We seek to use gender inclusive language, as we affirm that God is neither male or 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.

“Prepare The Way O Zion”

Adapter: Charles P. Price (1980, alt.)

Translator: Augustus Nelson (1958)

Author: Frans Mikael Franzen (1812, rev. 1819)

Glory to God #106

1 Prepare the way, O Zion,
your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley
a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.

Refrain

O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.

2 He brings God's rule, O Zion;
he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding,
for grace and joy abounding.

3 Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing,
their adoration voicing.

“Raise A Song of Gladness”

Latin Title: Jubilate Deo | Taizé Community (1978)

Glory to God #155

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!

Latin:

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

Call to Worship & Advent Wreath Litany

*Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed |
A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*

One: A voice calls out in the wilderness.

People: It sings of a home for all.

One: It speaks of justice and peace.

People: We could choose to ignore it.

One: We could drown out that song.

People: We could choose not to listen.

One: Instead, we come into this space.

**People: We let the world grow quiet.
We listen.**

One: A voice calls out in the wilderness.

People: Do you hear it?

One: It speaks of the joy of feeling the truth
about ourselves and our world

**People: The joy of the home for all
that God is creating with and for us...**

One: : Joy is seeing people you love
after months apart.

**People: Joy is hearing, “Come on over,
it has been too long!”**

One: : Joy is the stretches and giggles
of a newborn child.

**People: Joy is making it home
when the journey is long.**

One: : Joy is your dog sliding to meet you
at the door.

People: Joy is the energy of a new season.

One: : Joy is feeling found
when you thought you were lost.

**People: So today we light the candle of joy,
because the welcome God has for us is nothing
short of joyful.**

One: : Rest in that good news.

Let it wash over you.

**People: Family of faith, we are close to home.
Amen.**

“Lo How A Rose E'er Blooming”

*Translator: Theodore Baker | German, 15th cent.
The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #48
Glory to God Hymnal #129*

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, whose 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.

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

*Joseph Simpson Cook (1919, rev. 1930)
Glory to God #146*

1 Gentle Mary laid her child
lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled,
to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
who have found his favor.

2 Angels sang about his birth;
wise men sought and found him;
heaven's star shone brightly forth,
glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
heard the angels singing;
all the plains were lit that night;
all the hills were ringing.

Continued in the next column...

3 Gentle Mary laid her child
lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled,
but no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth,
beautiful the story;
praise his name in all the earth;
hail the King of glory!

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

*African-American spiritual
Glory to God #136
The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #29*

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.

