

College Avenue Presbyterian Church  
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**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.

December 26, 2021  
 at 10:30am

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

PRELUDE "That Boy Child Of Mary"

GATHERING SONG "What Child Is This"

CALL TO WORSHIP

SONG OF PRAISE "Gesu Bambino/Adeste Fidelis"

HEARING GOD'S WORD

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE John 1:1-18

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD "Being Found Underneath it All" - Monte McClain

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SONG OF RESPONSE "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear"

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  
 "Good Christian Friends Rejoice"

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING SONG "There's A Star In The East"

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 "La paz de Christo" (Spanish)

*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 "Christmastime Is Here"

## Reflections on Today's Readings John 1:1-18



We're diving into the Gospel of John as our guiding text for our Sunday gatherings from now through Easter. It's one of the four stories of the good news of Jesus (Gospel means good news) which tells his life, actions, words and mission. It's believed that John's account is the last one written as his retelling of the story reflects considerable theological reflection and uses metaphors and poetic language. One example is the play with light and darkness throughout the story. John's account also contains only seven miracles – or signs as they're called. A symbolic number in Jewish tradition that represents the divine.

Today we read the beginning of the gospel, which quotes and plays with the beginning of the Bible – what we call Genesis – which itself begins with “in the beginning....” Rather than telling the story of Jesus' birth (what we call the Christmas story today), John is situating Jesus at the beginning of time and creation. It's a story of God creating through speech, the sharing of a Word. Creation is rooted in from conversation, in a sense it springs forth as a response to God's initial word. In this line of thought, life is dialogue, we are invited to speak and be heard by the God of the universe – inviting us to a conversation with God and with each other in which we participate as mutual subjects, equal children and full participants.

John also takes into consideration the Greek (or Pagan) culture in which he writes the gospel as a testimony to who Jesus was and is and will become. The Roman Empire of this time was cemented in Greek thought, in particular Greek Philosophy (*think of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle – who continue to deeply shape our world and way of thinking about it*). The Greek philosopher Heraclitus appears to be the first to have used the word **logos** (Word) to refer to a rational divine intelligence, which today is sometimes referred to in scientific discourse as the “mind of God.” **Logos** is a universal divine reason, immanent in nature, yet transcending all oppositions and imperfections in the cosmos and humanity. It's an eternal and unchanging truth present from the time of creation, available to every individual who seeks it. A unifying and liberating revelatory force which reconciles the human with the divine. It connects creation to God, us to God and us to creation. It's spiritual but also rational, touching all aspects of life as a primary foundation – like a secret sauce.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- When and how have you experienced God, as experienced more personally in Jesus the Christ, as the force, word, reason, light that holds things together in your life and gives, comfort, direction and purpose? Or when and how have you felt “found” by God in your life?
- 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?

## December Birthdays

31. Gianelle Beatty 2011

## Weekly Calendar

**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!

**Friday Night Meal – Friday, December 31<sup>th</sup> 6:00-7:00PM.** This next Friday we have a small group helping us to prepare a simple-to-serve and clean-up meal as Friday is Christmas Eve. Sign up online w/ the QR Code to help with set-up and serving, and clean-up.

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

**Bill Beatty is preaching and leading our gathering next Sunday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**We're having Communion in worship next week.**

**Monte is on vacation this next week, December 27-January 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**COVID-19 and Omicrom.** The East Coast has experienced a surge in COVID-19 cases. It's believed that this variant, while milder, is much more contagious. We will be monitoring our public health directives to make informed decisions about our public gatherings in the coming weeks. Do know that we will continue to stream all our activities in real time on Zoom.

We have up-to-date information about vaccination sites and testing options (and much more) on our website – Scan this QR Code or search at [www.capcoakland.org/covid19-virus](http://www.capcoakland.org/covid19-virus).



### Thank you to Today's Worship Leadership:

Coffee Hour: Myrna Shaldey  
Music: Pete Feltman, Dave Eagle, Ben Kramarz, Gabe Szilardi-Tierney, Roger Kim  
Prayer Liturgist: Myrna Shadley  
Preaching: Monte McClain  
Video Tech: Thom Faulkner, 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.*

### “What Child Is This”

*Author: W. Chatterton Dix Tune: GREENSLEEVES  
Glory to God #145 | The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #53*

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through;  
the cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail, hail, the Word made flesh,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, one and all, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high.  
The virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

### Call to Worship & Advent Wreath Litany

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

One: Jesus said,

**MANY: “This is my Father's house.”**

One: So come into this space

**MANY: just as you are.**

One: Come into this space

**MANY: speaking your truth.**

One: Come into this space

**MANY: with your authentic self.**

One: This is God's home.

**MANY: This is our home.**

**Let us worship God.**

### “Gesu Bambino/Adeste Fidelis”

1. When blossoms flowered mid the snows  
Upon a winter night  
Was born the child the Christmas rose  
the king of love and light  
The angels sang the shepherds sang  
The grateful earth rejoiced  
And at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voice

Refrain:

O come let us adore him

O come let us adore him

O come let us adore him Christ the lord

2. Again the heart with rapture glows  
to greet the holy night  
That gave the world its Christmas rose  
the king of love and light  
Let every voice acclaim his name  
the grateful chorus swell  
From paradise to earth he came  
that we with him might dwell

### “It Came Upon The Midnight Clear”

*Edmund H. Sears (1849)  
Glory to God #123 | The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #38*

1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth,  
to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King”:  
the world in solemn stillness lay,  
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world:  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and we at war on earth hear not  
the tidings that they bring;  
O, hush the noise and cease the strife  
to hear the angels sing!

4 And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow,  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing:  
O, rest beside the weary road,  
and hear the angels sing.

5 For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.

### **Call to Confession & Prayer of Confession**

Research shows that on average, humans make about 35,000 choices in a day. In the prayer of confession, we acknowledge the moments when our choices do not reflect God's love and we ask for grace. So let us pray together, trusting that God is with us in each of those 35,000 moments, cheering us on, and guiding us home.

*Let us pray:*

**We could offer welcome,  
but we often choose judgment.  
We could choose action,  
but we often choose silence.  
We could choose advocacy,  
but we often choose comfort.  
We could choose truth,  
but we often choose ignorance.  
We could choose God,  
but we often choose ourselves.  
Forgive us, gracious God,  
for the moments when we chose poorly.  
Open our hearts to choose you,  
to choose community,  
to choose love.  
Gratefully we pray, amen.**

### **"Good Christian Friends Rejoice"**

*Translator: John Mason Neale*

*German/Latin, medieval; Latin Hymn, 14th cent.  
The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #28 | Glory to God #132*

1. Good Christian friends, rejoice  
With heart, and soul, and voice;  
Give ye heed to what we say:  
Jesus Christ is born today;  
Ox and ass before Him bow,  
And He is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today!  
Christ is born today!

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice,  
With heart, and soul and voice;  
Now ye hear of endless bliss:  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door,  
And we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born for this!

3 Good Christian friends, rejoice,  
With heart and soul and voice;  
Now ye need not fear the grave:  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all,  
To gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save!  
Christ was born to save!

### **"Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow"**

*African-American spiritual*

*The Presbyterian Hymnal #50 Glory to God #135*

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.