

Presbyterian Church
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August 22, 2021

**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're figuring out how to do our Godly Play program with our new normal. We'll restart that program after July 11th.

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 cards and share it with the liturgist or to share you requests in the chat on ZOOM labeling it with 'prayer.'

CCL #1137062.

PRELUDE:

"Change Is Gonna Come "

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

GATHERING SONG

"Bless The Lord"

- CAPC Ensemble

CALL TO WORSHIP

SONG OF PRAISE

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

HEARING GOD'S WORD

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:21-28

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

"Lectio Divina"

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

You are invited to respond to scripture through the salt and stone ritual using the baptismal basin during our song of response. Take some salt, releasing it in the water as a symbol of confession or of letting go of something, then taking a stone – not readily visible – as a sign of God's forgiveness or the grace that God always brings out even of pain, hurt, and loss.

SONG OF RESPONSE

"Be Still My Soul"

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 - "We Lift Our Voices"

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING SONG

"Just A Closer Walk With Thee"

SENDING CALL AND RESPONSE

Leader: God is good!

People: All the time!

Leader: And all the time!

People: God is good!

EXHORTATION & BENEDICTION

PASSING THE PEACE OF GOD

"The Peace of Christ"

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

"College Ave Jig"

Reflections on Today's Readings Matthew 15:21-28

Today's scripture is challenging. Much like the situation in which we find ourselves today in our diverse contexts. Jesus has left a tense conflictual encounter with the religious leaders (Pharisees) who oppose his ministry, disagree with his vision, and even object to his personal authority. Jesus heads for the country: the borderlands. Maybe he's trying to get away for a retreat, or to escape the growing stress of constantly butting heads with the Pharisees every time he opens his mouth.

He goes to the borderlands of their religious power. And it's also the border of the "boundary between old and new, male and female between Jew and Gentile, between friend and enemy, and even between holy and demonic." On this margin an anonymous woman, defined by her race and desperation comes to him. She cries out begging for Jesus to heal her daughter. It's a scream, a shriek, a word used elsewhere to describe the cries of a woman in the pain of labor (Revelation 12:2). As she cried out at the birth of her daughter, her too she cries out seeking for a new birth for her dying child. In doing so she demonstrates her great faith. She's not just a Gentile. She's a Canaanite – the historic enemy people of the Israelites. Yet she recognizes Jesus as the royal and messianic Son of David: the Savior. (What the religious leaders rejected in the preceding story (Matthew 15:1-20).



Weirdly, Jesus doesn't respond to her. His annoyed disciples try to get rid of her. Then Jesus says he's come to work first with the Israelites, before other peoples. But these three obstacles do not dissuade the woman. She kneels before Jesus, in a position of worship and prayer. It's the same position as the Magi before the Christ child (Matt 2:11); a leper seeking healing (Matt 8:2); a synagogue leader (Matt 9:19) and even the disciples (14:33). Her worship seems to break down the silence of Jesus. He affirms his baptismal vocation as the Beloved Child of God. He is the promised Son of David and also the savior of all the nations.

Does she change Jesus' mind? Does her worship move him past inherent racism (he seems to call her a dog - a common derogatory name for Gentiles by the Jews in that age)? What lesson does her example of faith hold for us in our age of religious-rooted fights over authority and vision?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- Why does Jesus decline to help the woman and then change his mind?
- How is the Spirit of God inviting you – or us as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this scripture?

August Birthdays

22 Patrice Trowbridge 25 Margaret Smith

Thank you today to Sharon Nelson, Patt Schroeder, Myrna Shadley and Gary Yee for helping with our worship leadership. Monte will be back for worship next week.

Weekly Calendar

Deacons Meeting Today after worship

Daily Zoom Calls – every day at 12pm.

Race Matters Group Starting up again in September. Go to capcoakland.org/racematters to vote for what you'd like us to do going forward.

Friday Night Meal - Friday, August 27th 6:00pm. Sign up online at <http://www.capcoakland.org/friday-night-meal> or contact Monte to help with set-up and serving, and clean-up. Bright and Remya David are cooking.

Women's Group – Saturdays at 9:30am on Zoom. Contact Anne Marie Adams for info about joining - amadams44@gmail.com

Letters of Love send a greeting card to someone who could use a good word or to one of our governmental representatives (back wall).

The Celebration of Life of Linda Trowbridge Saturday, August 28th at 1:30 p.m. in the Reception Hall at Piedmont Community Church 400 Highland Ave, Piedmont, CA 94611

Godly Play for Children/Youth. We are going to restart this ministry, online via Zoom, in the coming weeks. More info TBA.

Thank you to Today's Worship Leadership:
Coffee Hour: Patt Schroeder & Janet Majors
Greeters: Fredora Darmstadt
Music: Pete Feltman, Ben Kramarz, Dave Eagle
Video Tech: Albert Hussian, Dann Wilkens, David Kittams

Our New Normal. We all are adjusting in diverse and different ways to life with COVID & variants. Learn more online about our approach with this QR Code.



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.

“Bless The Lord”

Jacques Berthier

© 1991 Les Presses de Taizé.

Glory to God #544

Bless the Lord, my soul,
and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul,
who leads me into life.

Call to Worship Litany –

<https://re-worship.blogspot.com>.

One: Come and worship,
all you who love and serve the Lord—

PEOPLE: outsiders and insiders,

One: old-timers and new-comers,

PEOPLE: the young, old and the in-between.

One: Come as you are,
for this is God's house
—a house of prayer for all people,

PEOPLE: and God welcomes each one who comes..

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Thomas O. Chisholm (1923)

The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #276

1 Great is thy faithfulness O god Creator
There is no shadow of turning with thee
Thou changest not thy compassions they fail not
As thou hast been and forever will be

chorus

Great is thy faithfulness Great is thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed thy hand has provided
Great is thy faithfulness lord unto me

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest

Sun moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To thy great faithfulness mercy and love

3. Pardon for sin and peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside

“Be Still My Soul”

Kathrina von Schlegel; Translator: Jane Borthwick
(1855)

Glory to God Hymnal #819

Be still, my soul. The Lord is on thy side
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Leave to thy God to order and provide.
In every change, He, faithful will remain
Be still my soul, thy best, thy heavenly friend.
Through thorny ways, leads to a joyful end.

Be still my soul, thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as he has the past
Thy hope thy confidence let nothing shake
All now mysterious shall be bright at last
Be still my soul the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below

“We Lift Our Voices”

Dwight Liles (1984)
© 1984 Word Music,
Glory to God Hymnal #710

We lift our voices
We lift our hands
We lift our lives up to You
We are an offering

Lord use our voices
Lord use our hands
Lord use our lives they are Yours
We are an offering

All that we have
All that we are
All that we hope to be
We give to You
We give to You

We lift our voices
We lift our hands
We lift our lives up to You
We are an offering
We are an offering

“Just A Closer Walk With Thee”

Glory to God Hymnal #835

1 I am weak but thou art strong
Jesus, keep me from all wrong
I'll be satisfied as long
As a I walk, let me walk close to Thee

Chorus

Just a closer a walk with Thee
Grant it Jesus is my plea
Daily walking close to Thee
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

2. Through this world of toil and snares
If I falter, Lord who cares?
Who with my my burden shares?
None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee
chorus

3. When my feeble life is over
Time for me will be no more
Guide me gently safely o'er
To Thy shore, dear Lord, to Thy shore

What is Lectio Divina?

Today we're using the ancient spiritual practice of Lectio Divina in worship.

Lectio Divina is a contemplative way of reading the Bible. In Latin the name means Sacred (or Holy) Reading. It dates back to the early centuries of the Christian Church and was established as a monastic practice by Benedict in the 6th century.

It is a way of praying the scriptures that leads us deeper into God's word. We slow down. We read a short passage more than once. We chew it over slowly and carefully. We savor it. Scripture begins to speak to us in a new way. It speaks to us personally, and aids that union we have with God through Christ who is himself the Living Word.

*You can learn more about Lectio Divina online
using this QR Code to download some helpful tips and resources.*



SCRIPTURE STUDY SHEET FOR AUGUST 22, 2021 @ CAPC OAKLAND

Matthew 15:21-28
NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to *the district of Tyre and Sidon*. ²² Just then a *Canaanite woman* from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps *shouting* after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and *kneelt before him*, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to *THE DOGS*." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even *THE DOGS* eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in these texts?
- Why does Jesus decline to help the woman and then change his mind?
- How is the Spirit of God inviting you – or us as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this scripture?

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

Matthew tells the story of Jesus as a cosmic epic. It doesn't begin with Jesus. God has been at work for a long time. Salvation, the main business of Jesus, is the coming together in formal form of themes and energies and movements that had been set in motion before the foundation of the world. Matthew provides the comprehensive context by which we see all God's creation and salvation completed in Jesus, and all parts of our lives – work, family, friends, memories, dreams – also completed (*or fulfilled*) in Jesus. (from *The Message*)

the district of Tyre and Sidon:: This is to the north of Israel, in present day Lebanon. So it's outside of the Jewish area, in a foreign or "gentile" region.

Canaanite woman:: While never given a name, this anonymous woman is identified by her race and gender. To the authors of the Bible, Canaan is the land which the tribes of Israel conquered after an Exodus from Egypt and the Canaanites are the people they disposed from this land.

shouting:: The word used here *krázō* means to "cry out loudly with an urgent scream or shriek", using "inarticulate shouts that express deep emotion." It's more than just being loud, it's visceral emotion. It's the same word used to describe the cries of pain in childbirth in Revelations 12:2.

kneelt before him:: The word used here, *proskuneō* means to "kiss the ground when prostrating before a superior"; to "worship", or to "do obeisance." It's the same word used for how the Magi kneel before the baby Jesus in the manger presenting their gifts in Matthew 2:11 Does her act of faith change Jesus' opinion? She assumes a position of supplication and respect, to beseech Jesus to change his priorities, to help her, a Gentile, although he's just said that his priority is to help Jews. Why?

THE DOGS:: Jews in Jesus' day sometimes referred to Gentiles as "dogs" (in Greek, this word is *KUON*) Non-Jews were considered so unspiritual that even being in their presence could make a person ceremonially unclean (John 18:28). Much of Jesus' ministry, however, involved turning expectations and prejudices on their heads (Matthew 11:19; John 4:9–10). But here Jesus uses the word *KUNARION*, meaning "small dog" or "pet dog." This is a completely different word from the term *KUON*, used to refer to unspiritual people or to an "unclean" animal. So, according to both the context and language involved, Jesus wasn't referring to the Canaanite woman as a "dog," either directly or indirectly. He wasn't using an epithet or racial slur but making a point about the priorities He'd been given by God.

1st Reading of Matthew 15:21-28

Questions/Comments after the First Reading:

(allow 2-3 minutes of contemplative silence after asking each question)

- Sometimes Jesus says things that are puzzling and even disturbing. We'd expect him to welcome the Canaanite woman, to heal her child, even if she's isn't an Israelite. Does he really mean to spurn her is this an example of a kind of robust banter that provokes a deeper response of faith? How do you imagine this scene unfolding?
- We highly value dogs as domestic animals in our culture, they're even sometimes considered part of our families. In Israelite culture of this day dogs were not valued, seen more as dangerous scavengers and dirty threats. What is the woman saying when she compares herself to a dog?
- We are changed by the people we meet. Might this be true too of Jesus? Perhaps he is changed by the faith of this woman. And what about yourself? What about you? How might you desire to be changed by your encounter with Jesus?

As you listen again to the reading, see if you can picture the look on Jesus's face as he speaks to the Canaanite women, and as he hears her response.

2nd Reading of Matthew 15:21-28

Questions/Comments after the Second Reading:

(allow 2-3 minutes of contemplative silence after asking the question)

- The Canaanite woman may be an outsider here because she is not a Jew, but she has faith in Jesus and that makes her ask for his help. However strong or weak you feel your faith is, what might you want to ask Jesus to help you change, or address in your life today?

Question for discussion with one or two people seated near you.

(allow 3-5 minutes of contemplative discussion among those in the room asking each question)

We've been talking about the Church – remembering the six great ends, the purpose, of the Church and what we're called to be and become together. We've talked about the legacy of this past year, what we've discovered, identified as things we want to hold on to and what we've realized we don't need or want to let go of. Another way of saying this is decolonizing the church.

What have you discovered over the past weeks and shelter-in-place-year – no matter how much you've been present in our Sunday discussions - that you think we as a community of faith should celebrate and hold on to? What should we renounce and let go of?