

Presbyterian Church
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September 19, 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'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 your requests in the chat on ZOOM labeling it with 'prayer.'

CCL #1137062.

PRELUDE: "My Lord Says He's Going To Rain Fire"

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

GATHERING SONG "As the Wind Song (風之頌)"

CALL TO WORSHIP

SONG OF PRAISE "Have Mercy Lord On Me"

HEARING GOD'S WORD

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE Genesis 1:1—2:4a

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD "Graded on a Curve"

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SONG OF RESPONSE "What Wondrous Love Is This?"

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 -
 "God Whose Giving Knows No Ending". Verse 3

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING SONG "O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing"

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 "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 "How Can A Poor Man Stand Such Times And Live"

Reflections on Today's Readings Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14

Today's text is uncomfortable, opaque in its meaning, unclear in how it applies to us, not exactly how we imagine God.

After the creation story we heard last week, the story moves quickly along through the drama of the first sibling rivalry between Cain and Abel, to the earth's population booming and trying to come together to become like gods and build a tower to heaven, to the flood and Noah's family and the animals floating in the ark, to the reality that violence can never stop violence, and so God commits to another path and offers the rainbow as a sign of that promise. And then we meet Abram, whom God calls to leave his family and familiar surroundings and go out into a new-to-him land. Abram and Sarai pack up and go, trusting God to guide them and to provide what they most want: children. It's a long journey through foreign lands, different tribes and towns and difficulties and adventures, but through it all two things are constant: God promises to make their descendants more numerous than the stars, and also Abraham and Sarah have no children. Today we hear about that promise finally being fulfilled, when Sarah and Abraham were in their 90s!

This text is minimalist. There seems to be more left unsaid than said. It's easier to fathom when we know the end in advance. God tests Abraham. We think of that word as a measure of success: you either pass or fail. Yet maybe it's more of an assessment to determine areas in which the student needs more mentoring: a tool to help in the path of perfecting and growing? If you look at the story of Abraham he's on just such a path after lying when he told the Egyptians that Sarah was his sister (Genesis 12:10). He fathered a proxy progeny (Ishmael) with his slave girl Hagar (Gen 16). He laughed with Sarah in disbelief when God promised them a son in their old age (Gen 17:17 & 18:12).

We're not told why God chooses to do this – either testing Abraham, or choosing him, when he's not seemed less than morally perfect along the path. We don't hear anything of Sarai's comments or awareness of what's transpiring? How about Isaac, I don't imagine him mute and motionless as he's bound and placed on the altar and his father draws a knife. And the emotional scarring after? Of a son who saw his father try to kill him? Of Abraham who has to ponder how God would ask this irreversible act of him? How are we shaped by our past trials & tests?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- The story contains 3 sections of dialogue. The first and the third involve an original speaker, a response and then a statement from the original speaker. The second dialogue has the person who is spoken to responds a second time. It's unique, standing out in the text. What does it contain?
- God first tells Abraham to take his son and offer him in sacrifice. The story then ends with God saying don't touch your son, or harm him. What changes in between the opening and closing comments of God? How does God change? Abraham?

September Birthdays

23 Karl Shadley 28 Lisa Ko

Weekly Calendar

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, September 24th 6:00pm.

Sign up online w/ the QR Code to help with set-up and serving, and clean-up. Bright & Remya 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).

Care Givers Support Group – Today at 3:00pm on Zoom. Meeting ID: 8599 264 9741
Passcode: 2700

Godly Play for Children/Youth
Sundays 9:30-10am Starts today!
More info online via this QR Code.



Session Meeting – Thursday 9/23 at 7pm on Zoom. Monte will send out the agenda this week

FALL CLASSES AND WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY
Tuesdays 7pm on Zoom – **Sabbath as Resistance** – starts Sept 28th.

Wrestling with Scripture Thursdays at 7pm on Zoom. Reading the weekly text in community. – starts Sept 30th.

More info about the classes online via this QR Code.



Thank you to Today's Worship Leadership:
Greeters: Fredora Darmstadt
Music: Pete Feltman, Ben Kramarz, Dave Eagle
Video Tech: Albert Hussian,

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.

“As the Wind Song (風之頌)”

*Author: Shirley Erena Murray (2004)
Glory to God #292*

1 As the wind song through the trees,
as the stirring of the breeze,
so it is with the Spirit of God,
as the heart made strangely warm,
as the voice within the storm,
so it is with the Spirit of God.
Never seen, ever known
where this wind has blown
bringing life, bringing power to the world,
as the dancing tongues of fire,
as the soul's most deep desire,
so it is with the Spirit of God.

2 As the rainbow after rain,
as the hope that's born again,
so it is with the Spirit of God,
as the green in the spring,
as a kite on a string,
so it is with the Spirit of God,
making worlds that are new,
making peace come true,
bringing gifts, bringing love to the world,
as the rising of the yeast,
as the wine at the feast,
so it is with the Spirit of God.

Call to Worship Litany –

Adapted from Isaiah 55 - The Voice Translation

One: [To those who wrestle and strive with God the Eternal One, God says:] “If you are thirsty,
come here; come, there's water for all.
Whoever is poor and penniless can still
come and buy the food I sell.

There's no cost—here, have some food, hearty and delicious, and beverages, pure and good

**People: I don't understand why you spend your money for things that don't nourish
or work so hard for what leaves you empty.
Attend to Me and eat what is good;
enjoy the richest, most delectable of things.**

One: Listen closely, and come even closer.

My words will give life,

for I will make a covenant with you
that cannot be broken, a promise

Of My enduring presence and support
like I gave to David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander among the nations.

**People: Now you will issue a call to nations
from all over the world—
people whom you do not know
and who do not know you.**

**They will come running, because of Me,
your God because the Eternal,
the Holy One of Israel, has made you beautiful.**

One: So turn your attention and seek the Eternal One
while it is still possible;

call on God while the LORD is nearby

**People: Let those who are busy
plotting violence and doing wrong
stop right now, turn, and do right.**

**Let them turn back to the Eternal so they
can experience His compassion.**

God will excuse our past wrongs.

Our God's forgiveness is inexhaustible.

One: My intentions are not always yours,
and I do not go about things as you do.

My thoughts and My ways are above and
beyond you, just as heaven is far
from your reach here on earth.

**People: For as rain and snow
can't go back once they've fallen,
but soak into the ground**

**And nourish the plants that grow,
providing seed to the farmer
and bread for the hungry,**

One: So it is when I declare something.

My word will go out and not return to Me empty,
But it will do what I wanted;

it will accomplish what I determined.

**People: For you will go out in joy,
be led home in peace.**

**And as you go the land itself will break out in cheers;
The mountains and the hills will erupt in song,
and the trees of the field will clap their hands.**

**Prickly thorns and nasty briars will give way
to luxurious shade trees, sweet and good.**

**And they'll remind you of the Eternal One
and how God can be trusted absolutely and forever.**

“Have Mercy Lord On Me”

1. Have Mercy, Lord, On Me

Take pity Lord I pray thee thy mercy show to me
My sins and my wrong doings I now confess to Thee
From all of my transgressions Thou Lord has set me free
Thy blood so precious shedding upon the cruel tree
Have mercy Lord, A sinner cries to Thee
Have mercy Lord, Have mercy Lord on me

2. O holy Lord Almighty My need to Thee I bear
Although undone unworthy I pray Thee hear my prayer
O Lamb for sinners wounded humanity redeemed
Eternal life and pardon my soul Thee doth find
Have mercy Lord, A sinner cries to Thee
Have mercy Lord, Have mercy Lord on me

3. Lord, willingly Thou gavest Thyself for all to die,
And purchase full redemption For sinners such as I;
O blessed be Thy name, Lord, Through all eternity
For bearing shame and anguish Upon the cross for me.
Have mercy Lord, A sinner cries to Thee
Have mercy Lord, Have mercy Lord on me

“What wondrous love is this?”

Anonymous; The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #85

1. What wondrous love is this o my soul, o my soul
What wondrous love is this o my soul
What wondrous love is this that cause the lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul

2. When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down
When I was sinking down, sinking down
When I was sinking down,
beneath God’s righteous frown
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul

3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing.

4 And when from death I’m free I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on,
and when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on,
and when from death I’m free, I’ll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on,
and through eternity I’ll sing on.

“God Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

Robert L. Edwards (1961)

Glory to God #716

3. Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through powers your grace conferred:
ours to use for home and kindred,
and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing,
as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming,
serving you by loving all.

“O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing”

Charles Wesley (1739)

The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #466

1. O for a thousand tongues to sing
my dear redeemers praise
The glories of my God and king,
the triumphs of God’s grace
2. Jesus, the name that charms our fears
that bids our sorrows cease
Tis music in the sinners ears,
tis life and health and peace
3. Christ breaks the power
of reigning sin
and sets the prisoners free
Christ’s blood can make
the sinful clean,
Christ’s blood availed for me
4. My gracious master and my God
assist me to proclaim
To spread through
all the earth abroad
the honors of thy name