

College Avenue Presbyterian Church
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seeking:
 Who sinned?



March 19, 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 this time of disruption and new normal we gather hybrid-ly (both in person and via Zoom).

This allows 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) have high health risks.

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.

HYBRID WORSHIP

We do our Sunday Gatherings hybrid style – both in person and online for those that prefer that option. We're seeking to do that, using Zoom, to affirm our value of participation and collaboration in our gatherings.

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.'

WIFI

Capc1 | PW 5106583666

CCL #1137062

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

- PRELUDE "St Patrick's Breastplate"
- GATHERING SONG "Be Thou My Vision" - *Blue Hymnal #339*
- CALL TO WORSHIP - *Marji Wilkens*
- SONG OF PRAISE "Christ Be Our Light" - *Insert*
- LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD
- HEARING SCRIPTURE John 9:1-41 - *Marji Wilkens*
- PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD - *Rev. Monte McClain*
- RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD
- SONG OF RESPONSE "When We Must Bear Persistent Pain" - *Glory to God #807*
- 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 OUR OFFERINGS AND GIFTS
- OFFERING SONG "Praise The One Who Breaks The Darkness" - *Insert*
- THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH
- SENDING SONG "Christ In The Stranger's Guise" - *Insert*
- 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 "Udo diri gi" (Udo, spoken in Nigeria)
- POSTLUDE "I Saw The Light"

Reflections on Today's Readings | John 9:1-41

In seven verses, the gospel writer tells us that a man born blind is given sight. But after that, the narrator devotes thirty-three verses to the details of disagreement that swell after the healing takes place. I used to find this second part of the story tedious and exhausting. In a world with constant conflict, I'm tired of listening to endless bickering.



However, this second half of the story makes me realize that this encounter is hardly about physical healing or literal blindness. It's about how harmful theology can prevent us from seeing people – truly seeing them. It's about how our narrow imagination can harden into accusation and blame. It's about how we can be threatened by new ideas or shifts in someone's identity. It's about how our doctrine can lead to exile. Ultimately, it's a story about our resistance to change.

In this image, hand expressing denial and exclusion press in on the man. IN the background, I wrote a barrage of questions I imagine emerging from the crowd: *Why did God heal you? What did you do to cause this? Who sinned?* Alongside these questions, I wove in contemporary statements I've heard spoke in situations when we think a tidy rationale will comfort us: *Everything happens for a reason. God only gives you as much as you can handle. Pray harder.*

I wonder what this story would look like had better questions been asked. What if his neighbors had instead asked the blind man, "How do you feel?" What if the man had asked the crowd, "What are you afraid of?" What if the Pharisees had asked one another, "What if it's time to change?"

Surrounded by remnants of narrow vision, the man has new insight. He looks beyond the words, beyond the crowd, beyond the accusations driving him out of town. Can we seek understanding without denigrating or objectifying humans in the process?*

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged, enraged, or surprised you in this text?
- When have you been asked, or asked the wrong questions because of narrow vision? How did you feel?
- 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?



*Artwork and devotional written by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity | © A Sanctified Art LLC

March Birthdays

8 Breeze Ramirez	11 Michael Evans
12 Kristy McClain	17 Louise Hirschman
22 Ellen Brylawski	24 Marda Stothers
28 Lucian Haynes 2010	

March Anniversaries

10 Richard and Marge Harvey 2011
28 Maya Patil's adoption date 2003

Today at & around CAPC Oakland

Post Service Garden 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.

Godly Play: we're beginning in person Godly Play during Sunday Worship on Palm Sunday – April 3rd. Come to an Info and Q&A session about Godly Play with Monte and the GP Leaders on Sunday, March 19th after worship (30 mins in the Godly Play Room)

This Week at & around CAPC Oakland

Community Bible Study (Wrestling with Scripture) – Tues 7pm on Zoom | We're wrestling with Ezekiel 37:1-14 & John 11:1-45.

Session Meeting: Thursday, March 23 - 7:00pm on Zoom.

Friday Night Meal – Fridays 6:00-7:00PM.

Sign up online to help with set-up, serving, and clean-up – this -or any Friday!
Capcoakland.org/ or use this QR Code

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

Spiritual Journey Groups during Lent – Look for information about these small groups in the entry.

Congregational Meeting next Sunday, March 26th – Save the date for our annual meeting to elect new elders and deacons, and receive the budget.

Celebrating the Life of Anne Marie Adams, Friday, March 31st at 2:00pm at the church

Palm Sunday is Sunday, April 2nd 31st – the beginning of Holy Week. Info in the entry or online at www.capcoakland.org/easter-holy-week

Thank You to Today's Leadership:

Music: Pete Feltman, Dave Eagle, Ben Kramarz, Roger Kim
Prayer Liturgist:
Reader-Liturgist: Marji Wilkens
Video Tech: Thom Faulkner, Dann Wilkens, Albert Hussian

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

Be Thou My Vision

Translator: Mary E. Byrne; Versifier: Eleanor H. Hull
Ancient Irish; Irish, ca. 700 | Blue Hymnal #339

1. Be thou my vision O lord of my heart
Nought be all else to me save that thou art
Thou my best thought by day or by night
Waking or sleeping thy presence my light
2. Be thou my wisdom and thou my true word
I ever with thee and thou with me lord
Thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower
Still be my vision O ruler of all
3. Riches I heed not nor vain empty praise
Thou mine inheritance now and always
Thou and thou only first in my heart
Great God of heaven my treasure thou art
4. High King of heaven my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart whatever befall
Still be my vision O ruler of all

Call to Worship ~ Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed
A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

One: Scripture is full of questions...

ALL: Where are you?

One: Am I my brother's keeper?

ALL: Whom shall I send?

One: Who do you say that I am?

ALL: Who sinned?

One: How many times shall I forgive?

ALL: If God is for us, who can be against us?

One: Scripture is full of questions,
so just like those in our scriptures,
may we bring our full curiosity
and wonder into this space.

**ALL: Let us ask and seek after
our merciful God.**

Christ Be Our Light

Author: Bernadette Farrell

© 1993, 2000, Bernadette Farrell, Published by OCP
Glory to God #314

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine
through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered
today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

When We Must Bear Persistent Pain

Author: Ruth Duck (2004) | Tune: PROSPECT (Graham)
© 2005 GIA Publications, Inc. | Glory to God #807

1. When we must bear persistent pain
And suffer with no cure in sight,
Come, Holy Presence, breathe your peace
With gifts of warmth and healing light.
2. Support us as we learn
new ways to care for Bodies newly frail.
Help us endure, and live and love.
Hear our complaint when patience fails.

Continued on the back of this page...

3. We thank you for the better days
When we may smile to greet the sun,
To do your work with clearing mind,
And bless your name when day is done.
4. In ease or pain, in life and death,
to you our fragile lives belong,
and so we trust you in all things.
You are our hope, our health, our song.

Praise The One Who Breaks The Darkness

*Author: Rusty Edwards | © 1987 Hope Publishing Company
The Celebration Hymnal #293*

1. Praise the one who breaks the darkness
with a liberating light;
praise the one who frees the pris'ners,
turning blindness into sight.
Praise the one who preached the gospel,
healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands
with the Father's word of peace.
2. Praise the one who blessed the children
with a strong yet gentle word;
praise the one who drove out demons
with a piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the one who brings cool water
to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water,
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.
3. Let us praise the Word incarnate,
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose victorious
that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
seeing what our God has done;
let us praise the true Redeemer,
praise the one who makes us one.

Christ In The Stranger's Guise

tune: The Leaving Of Liverpool| text: Iona community

1. From heaven to here and from here to heaven
Is a distance less than tissue thin
And it's trod by him who in the stranger's guise
Is made known when he is welcomed in

Chorus

So come Lord Christ in the stranger's guise
Known both through scriptures
and through broken bread
Your kingdom come
and on the earth your will be done
By the people you've loved and you've led

2. The folk who journey on the road with Christ
Are the ones who've left their selves behind
Their song is taught them by the deaf and dumb
Their horizon is shown by the blind
3. The love that's shared along the royal road
Is a love not found when standing still
It loves and grows wherever faith is known
As a movement grounded in God's will
4. From heaven to here and from here to heaven
Is a distance less than tissue thin
And it's trod by those who meet the risen Christ
As a stranger to be welcomed in