



## Reflections on Today's Readings Psalm 92

We're wrapping up our summer series in which we're wrestling with the three words we've used to describe our church mission and ethos. It's *both* who we are *and* who we aspire to become. Today we're sitting with what word(s) you would use to capture and express just that in a time of public testimony.

The word testimony comes from the ancient Greek word of μάρτυς or martyr. The word "martyr" comes originally from the ancient Greek legal term for "witness", for someone who gives testimony or evidence in a court of law. It's come to represent those who are killed for the witness that they gave to the faith and beliefs that motivated and shaped them. Psalm 92 is a song of witness (what has been seen and heard) to be sung on the sabbath.

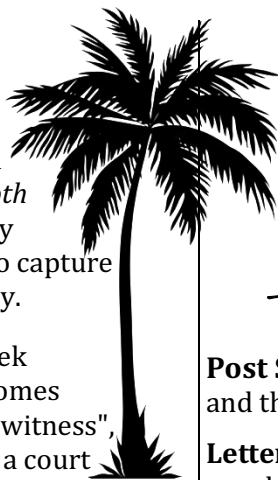
It begins with praise for God because of God's "steadfast love" and "faithfulness." Steadfast Love is the common translation of the single Hebrew word *khesed*. The Hebrew meaning is difficult to convey with any single English expression, and thus we see different English Bibles using a variety of translations in different contexts: steadfast love, lovingkindness, love, kindness, mercy, loyalty, favor, devotion, goodness, and still others. The range of translations gives a sense of the broad meaning of the word. God's *khesed* and faithfulness (Hebrew *emunah*) are the two primary attributes of God's covenant relationship with Israel. They're what the psalmist has seen and heard.

The second part of today's reading begins with an assertion that the righteous flourish (v. 12) like a mighty palm or cedar tree. But our own experience and our knowledge of history teach us that the righteous indeed do not always flourish, that in fact it is precisely the righteous who frequently suffer more than others. This is, of course, a common problem both in scripture and for theology more broadly. In this case, however, a solution is suggested by the psalm itself.

The depicted flourishing of the trees includes their location: "*They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.*" This combination of thriving flora and temple imagery is actually quite common. We see it in the garden (Genesis 1-3) and in the Temple (Revelation 21-22). The flourishing of the righteous is thus rooted in the presence of God. If the flourishing of the righteous happens in the house of God, then we are not there yet. In the Mishnah, (Tamid 7:4) the psalm is described as "a song for the world that is to come, for the day which is wholly Sabbath rest for eternity. Proclaiming this psalm, then, is an act of faith.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged, enraged, or surprised you in these texts?
- 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? What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – or to us – through this word of scripture?



## August Birthdays

12 Sharon Nelson  
22 Patrice Trowbridge

12 David Kittams  
25 Margaret Smith

## August Anniversaries

10 Thom and Tina Faulkner 2002  
30 Monte and Kristy Parsons McClain 1997

## 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.

## This Week at & around CAPC Oakland

**TODAY ~** Sign the welcome card for our new neighbors of the JCC East Bay.

**Quilters Club** (a new small group!) Mondays 10a-12p, in the library. No experience required.

**Community Bible Study** – Tuesday 7:00-8:00PM on Zoom. We're wrestling together with the book of 1 Samuel. This week we're reading 1 Samuel 9:1-11:15 Resources & info online at [www.capcoakland.org/wrestling-with-scripture](http://www.capcoakland.org/wrestling-with-scripture)



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

Sign up online to help with set-up, serving, and clean-up – this -or any Friday! This coming Friday our partners of Montclair Presbyterian are cooking!

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

**Thinking Theologically** – Process Theology is one of the newer ways of thinking about Christian faith. Meeting this Wednesday, 8/16 @ 7pm at the church. (*More info & the reading are on our Thinking Theologically web page with this QR Code.*)



**Staff Vacation News** Pete Feltman will be on vacation Sundays, August 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Mahri Holt is on vacation this weekend.

**Local Mission Action** – We're partnering with the Golden Squirrel to collect needed school supplies for our neighboring Claremont Middle School. Info in the entryway and online at [capcoakland.me](http://capcoakland.me)

### Thank You to Today's Leadership:

Godly Play: Beth Beatty

Liturgists: Sarah Evangelista,

Music: Karl Shadley & Kristy Parsons McClain, Ben Bencomo

Video Tech: Dann Wilkens, Thom Faulkner, 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*

### “Morning has Broken”

*Author: Eleanor Farjeon (1931)  
The Blue Presbyterian Hymnal #469*

1 Morning has broken  
like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken  
like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing!  
Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing  
fresh from the Word!

2 Sweet the rain's new fall  
sunlit from heaven,  
like the first dewfall  
on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness  
of the wet garden,  
sprung in completeness  
where God's feet pass.

3 Mine is the sunlight!  
Mine is the morning  
born of the one light  
Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation,  
praise every morning,  
God's recreation  
of the new day!

### Call to Worship Opening litany

*~ Psalm 34, 1-8 (The Message Translation)  
in The New Manual of Worship by Nancy E. Hall.  
The people read the bold text*

One: I bless God every chance I get;  
my lungs expand with praise of the Lord.

**ALL: I live and breathe God;  
if things aren't going well,  
hear this and be happy:**

One: Join me in spreading the news;  
together let's get the word out.

**ALL: God met me more than halfway,  
he freed me from my anxious fears.**

One: Look at the Holy One;  
offer your warmest smile.  
Never hide your feelings from God.

**ALL: When I was desperate, I called out,  
and God got me out of a tight spot.**

One: God's angel set up a circle  
of protection around us while we pray.

**ALL: Open your mouth and taste,  
open your eyes and see—  
how good the Eternal One is.**

### Crowded Table”

*Author: Thomas Andrew Dorsey (1938)  
Glory to God #834 | The Presbyterian Hymnal #404  
© 1938, ren. Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp.*

*[Verse 1]*

You can hold my hand  
When you need to let go  
I can be your mountain  
When you're feeling valley-low  
I can be your streetlight  
Showing you the way home  
You can hold my hand  
When you need to let go

*[Chorus]*

I want a house with a crowded table  
And a place by the fire for everyone  
Let us take on the world while we're young and able  
And bring us back together when the day is done

*[Verse 2]*

If we want a garden  
We're gonna have to sow the seed  
Plant a little happiness  
Let the roots run deep  
If it's love that we give  
Then it's love that we reap  
If we want a garden  
We're gonna have to sow the seed

*[Chorus]*

*[Bridge]*

The door is always open  
Your picture's on my wall  
Everyone's a little broken

And everyone belongs  
Yeah, everyone belongs

[Chorus]  
I want a house with a crowded table  
And a place by the fire for everyone  
Let us take on the world while we're young and able  
And bring us back together when the day is done  
And bring us back together when the day is done

### **"Beautiful Things"**

*Songwriters: Lisa Gungor / Michael Gungor*

*Verse 1*  
All this pain  
I wonder if I'll ever find my way  
I wonder if my life could really change  
At all

*Verse 2.*  
All this earth  
Could all that is lost ever be found  
Could a garden come up from this ground  
At all

*Chorus 1*  
You make beautiful things  
You make beautiful things out of the dust  
You make beautiful things  
You make beautiful things out of us

*Verse 3*  
All around  
Hope is springing up from this old ground  
Out of chaos life is being found  
In You

*Misc 1*

*(Bridge)*  
You make me new You are making me new  
You make me new You are making me new  
(REPEAT)

### **"Hakuna"**

*In Swahili*

Hakuna Mungu kama wewe  
Hakuna Mungu kama wee  
Hakuna Mungu kama wewe  
Hakuna Mungu kama wewe

*Translation*  
*There is no God like you.*  
*There is none.*

### **"The Summons"**

*Author: John L. Bell © 1987, Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc.  
Glory to God #726*

1. Will you come and follow me  
If I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don't know  
And never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown,  
Will you let my name be known,  
Will you let my life be grown  
In you and you in me?
2. Will you leave yourself behind  
If I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind  
And never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare  
Should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer  
In you and you in me?
3. Will you let the blinded see  
If I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free  
And never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean,  
And do such as this unseen,  
And admit to what I mean  
In you and you in me?
4. Will you love the 'you' you hide  
If I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside  
And never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found  
To reshape the world around,  
Through my sight and touch and sound  
In you and you in me?
5. Lord, your summons echoes true  
When you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you  
And never be the same.  
In your company I'll go  
Where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow  
In you and you in me.