

College Avenue Presbyterian Church  
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January 23, 2022  
 at 10:30am 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 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.

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

PRELUDE "You Gotta Move"

GATHERING SONG "Come As You Are"

CALL TO WORSHIP

SONG OF PRAISE "Praise The One Who Breaks The Darkness"

HEARING GOD'S WORD

LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE John 3:1-21

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD "Gagarin Myopia" - Rev. Monte McClain

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SONG OF RESPONSE "You Must Be Born Again"

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

"Give Thanks For Life The Measure Of Our Days"

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SENDING SONG "This Little Light Of Mine"

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 "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 "On The Sunny Side Of The Street"

## Reflections on Today's Readings John 3:1-21

The gospel of John 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 and also recall the days of creation in the foundational story of Genesis.

Our text today is an encounter and late-night conversation between Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees, the leaders of the people at the time (what we might call an elite) and Jesus. The Pharisees were an order of Judaism in Jesus' day that envisioned the fundamentals of faith as the total obedience of God, following and obeying all of God's commandments (all 613 of them) every day in every way. Nicodemus comes to Jesus, who he recognizes as a great teacher and master of the Way of God. But he's confused, for Jesus doesn't seem to do faith how the Pharisees do. Jesus talks of faith not as an understanding or an acquisition of the knowledge of God and God's ways, but rather as an entering into God's work and ways in the world: the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus is talking about knowledge and understanding. Jesus is talking about participating and experiencing.

Nicodemus can't get past the importance of pragmatic belief. Seeing is believing. Understanding is key. So Jesus brings up some example in the created world of things we see and don't understand and in which we believe – like the presence and power of the wind. Remember that the word for wind (in Greek [*PNEUMA*] and Hebrew [*RUAH*]) also means Spirit and breath. Jesus seems to be explaining the mystery and also pointing to the way in which God's Spirit moves in creation from the very beginning of all things. ("When God began to create the heavens and the earth—<sup>2</sup> the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God's wind/Spirit/breath [*PNEUMA/RUAH*] swept over the waters—<sup>3</sup> God said, "Let there be light." And so light appeared." - Genesis 1:1-3)

It's almost as if Nicodemus seems to think you have to understand before believing; whereas Jesus is saying to jump into the waters of belief before faith comes. It's a mysterious truth about faith that Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813 – 1855) said as "faith is always a leap of faith." Salvation is the act of believing in or accepting something outside the boundaries of reason.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- What do you think comes first in the journey of faith – understanding or participating? How have you experienced it in your life?
- This time of pandemic is one of overwhelming fatigue. We can't understand so much...and why we're so stuck. Do you think we should be asking "Why is God permitting all this hot mess?" or "Where is God inviting me to be in all this?"
- 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?

## January Birthdays

25 Joy Barnes

29 Bill Beatty

## Weekly Calendar

**COVID-19 and Omicron.** We have paused in-person worship gatherings due to the Omicron surge of COVID-19 cases. This variant is much more contagious, although mild for most who have been vaccinated. We've paused meeting together as tests are scarce and the projection is that our hospitals will be stretched past their limit. We will evaluate at the end of January about re-starting in-person gatherings at that point.

**Nominating Team Meeting** Today 1:00pm on Zoom.

**Connection Calls** Mondays & Fridays 12-12:30pm a time for holy conversation (Mondays) and the practice of Lectio Divina (Fridays). On our regular Zoom channel.

**Race Matters Group Mondays - 6pm on Zoom** This week we're talking about what the article "The Power of Reclaiming My Asian Name" by Marian Chia-Ming Liu. Find it at [www.capcoakland.org/race-matters](http://www.capcoakland.org/race-matters)

**Friday Night Meal – Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 6:00-7:00PM.** Our High School partners of Piedmont Community Service Crew are cooking. Want to help? Sign up online with set-up and serving, and clean-up.

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

**Congregational Meeting** Next Sunday during worship to elect new deacons and elders and receive our budget.

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

**Thank you to Today's Leadership:**  
Godly Play: Monte McClain  
Music: Pete Feltman, Dave Eagle, Gabe Szilardi-Tierney, Roger Kim  
Prayer Liturgist:  
Preaching: Monte McClain  
Video Tech: Albert Hussian, Dann Wilkens

## LYRICS & RESPONSES FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION

*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 through using gender inclusive language.*

### “Come As You Are”

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Published by Spectrum Publications.

1. Come as you are, that's how I want you  
Come as you are, feel quite at home  
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven  
Come as you are, why stand alone?
2. No need to fear, love sets no limits  
No need to fear, love never ends  
Don't run away, shamed and disheartened  
Rest in my love, trust me again
3. I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn  
Each time you fail, to live by my promise  
Why do you think, I'd love you the less?
4. Come as you are, that's how I love you  
Come as you are, trust me again  
Nothing can change, the love that I bear you  
All will be well, just come as you are.

### Call to Worship

*Written by Monte, inspired from John 3:1-21*

One: We are tired. 25 months of this.  
It's just too much.

**ALL: God where are you in this hot mess?**

One: We are beyond the end of our rope. We  
don't even know where our rope ends anymore.

**ALL: God it's hard for us to see beyond  
this moment, that' so overwhelming  
and exhausting.**

One: We look and listen. We try to open ourselves  
to take in your presence..

**ALL: God we struggle to see. Close objects ap-  
pear closely, but far ones don't.**

One: We need you Lord - your grace, your love,  
your living Word

**ALL: To know how to walk, to have the strength  
to lean and leap into our faith.**

One: Break our binding darkness.

Free us from the prisons of our short-sightedness,

**ALL: That our thirst might be quenched  
in a dry land,  
and we find the resilience to live for you.**

### “Praise The One Who Breaks The Darkness”

*Rusty Edwards*

*Words © 1987 Hope Publishing Company,*

1. Praise the One who break the darkness  
with a liberating light.  
Praise the One who frees the prisoners  
turning blindness into sight.  
Praise the One who preached the Gospel  
healing every dread disease.  
Calming storms and feeding thousands  
with the very bread 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 every land.
3. Praise the one true love incarnate:  
Christ who suffered in our place.  
Jesus died and rose for many  
that we may know God by grace.  
Let us sing for joy and gladness  
seeing what our God has done.  
Praise the one redeeming glory,  
praise the One who makes us one

## **“ You Must Be Born Again”**

*Mahalia Jackson*

1. Old Nicodemus went calling, to see the Lord one night;  
"Master", something's wrong with me My heart's not feeling right  
You'll never dream the feeling my son My Master did explain  
You'll only know the answer when you've been born again.

Chorus:

There is no substitute Salvation is the only route  
If you wish to pass the day You must be born again.  
No ticket can you buy No place for your soul to hide  
You'll be lost if you wait outside You must be born again.

2. Oh the lord expects no person oh even when we die  
The rich man and the pauper will have to live side by side  
And the judgment shall reveal every deed that did conceal  
We'll find these words are real You must be born again

3. Oh the lord expects no person oh even when we die  
The rich man and the pauper will have to live side by side  
And the judgment shall reveal every deed that did conceal  
We'll find these words are real You must be born again

4. Oh the lord expects no person oh even when we die  
The rich man and the pauper will have to live side by side  
And the judgment shall reveal every deed that did conceal  
We'll find these words are real we must be born again

## **“Give Thanks For Life The Measure Of Our Days”**

*Shirley Murray | New words to old tunes.  
sung to the familiar tune SINE NOMINE.*

1. Give thanks for life, the measure of our days,  
Mortal, we pass through beauty that decays,  
Yet sing to God our hope, our love, our praise,  
Alleluia!

2. Give thanks for those who made their life a light  
Caught from the Christ-flame, bursting through the night,  
Who touched the earth, who burned for what is right,  
Alleluia!

3. And for our own, our living and our dead,  
Thanks for the love by which our life is fed,  
Love not changed by time or death or dread,  
Alleluia!

4. Give thanks for hope, that like the wheat, the grain  
Lying in darkness does its life retain,  
In resurrection to grow green again.  
Alleluia!

## **“This Little Light Of Mine”**

*Traditional Spiritual*

1. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

2. Hide it under a bushel NO I'm gonna let it shine  
Hide it under a bushel NO I'm gonna let it shine  
Hide it under a bushel NO I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

3. Won't let satan blow it out I'm gonna let it shine  
Won't let satan blow it out I'm gonna let it shine  
Won't let satan blow it out I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine let it shine let it shine

4. Every where I go I'm gonna let it shine  
Everywhere I go I'm gonna let it shine  
Everywhere I go I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine let it shine let it shine

5. Jesus gave it to me I'm gonna let it shine  
Jesus gave it to me I'm gonna let it shine  
Jesus gave it to me I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine let it shine let it shine

6. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine