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December 6, 2020

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD VIA ZOOM

**Welcome to
 CAPC Oakland ONLINE!**

We are a reformed, multicultural, politically purple, community of followers of Jesus. Together we seek to live our faith vigorously in our words, actions, and relationships in the East Bay.

We usually gather in person, but cannot during this season of COVID-19. So instead we're worshipping together via ZOOM. While imperfect, and something that we'll get better at each time we gather remotely, it will allow us to gather together even in observing social distancing.

We can't do coffee hour but you can call or connect with someone else by phone to share a moment together after worship.

CHILDREN

We have Godly Play for kids via ZOOM at 9:45am on Sunday. Find info and links at

<http://www.capcoakland.org/zoom-worship-virtual-gatherings>

PRAYER CARDS

We can't do prayer cards but we can do live chat on ZOOM while we meet. Myrna Shadley is being our digital Deacon. She'll use the prayer requests you may share in the chat during our visual gathering to shape our Prayers of the People time. Look for the chat box in the lower right hand corner of your ZOOM screen.

CCL #1137062

- GATHERING SONG "Comfort, Comfort Now My People"
- LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD
- LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH
- SHARING THE STORY "Peace"
- SONG OF PRAISE "While we are Waiting Come"
- LISTENING TO SCRIPTURE Isaiah 40:1-11 & Luke 1:46-55 - Carol Dolezal
- SERMON "Discomforting Comfort" - Monte McClain
- RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD
- SONG RESPONSE OF RESPONSE "When Out of Poverty is Born"
- INVITATION TO THE COMMUNION TABLE - FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY OF FAITH
- PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER - Deacon Myrna Shadley
You can share your prayer requests for the good and the new using the Chat function on Zoom. Call and response liturgically prayed at the conclusion of sharing a prayer.
- Leader: God, in your mercy.
- People: Hear our prayer.**
- COMMUNION: FINDING GOD AROUND OUR DIGITAL TABLE
Today we'll celebrate this foundational meal by intinction wherever you are. Monte will begin with a prayer - during which you're invited to put your screen to "speaker view" - and then as we share the meal together please reset your screen to "gallery view."
- THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH
- COLLECTION OF OUR OFFERINGS AND GIFTS
- SENDING SONG "Who Would Think that What Was Needed"
- SENDING CALL AND RESPONSE
- Leader: God is good! Leader: And all the time!
- People: All the time! People: God is good!**
- EXHORTATION & BLESSING
- PASSING THE PEACE OF GOD
In the season of COVID-19 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.

Reading for the Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11 & Luke 1:46-55

Our theme for this Advent is “Do Not Be Afraid.” It’s more than appropriate in the dumpster fire of 2020 when we’re faced with a continuing pandemic, social reckoning, isolation, and economic uncertainty. Fears are not something that many of us have in short supply – especially as we now go back into official shelter-in-place protocol across our city and counties.

Today’s scriptures are well-known and artistic heavy-weights. The poetry of this chapter of Isaiah has greatly influenced classical music shaping the feel of Handel’s famous Messiah. The song of Mary in response to God’s action in her life, known often by its Latin name *The Magnificat*, also soars in terms of language and imagery. The flesh out the deeper meaning of peace (Shalom) which isn’t just the absence of trouble and war, but the life-transforming presence and wholeness of God.

The selection from Isaiah casts a vision of peace and comfort to the people. They will have to walk nearly 1,700 miles across the wilderness to return home to Jerusalem from the exile in Babylon. They have feared and suffered for years in their captivity following their defeat at the hands of the Assyrians. The prophet speaks to them of peace and purpose, God will bring you home. God comes in power and might, less like an ammo-loaded general than as a patient shepherd who takes the time to feed all the sheep and even carry the weak and tired.

Mary speaks of the future, what God will do – nearly an Angela Davis-like manifesto of deliverance and liberation. It’s a turning of the world right-side-up. A deliverance from oligarchs and adversaries, false truth and unequal relationships which is personal and pastoral, public and subversively endemic.

These poetic and prophetic songs speak of what has been, what God will do and what God is doing now.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMEN

1. **What image or word in the scriptures grabs you?**
2. **Isaiah sings that the glory of God shall be revealed. What does that mean in your life?**
3. **How do you picture God gathering the sheep in his arms? How does this speak to us in the dumpster fire of 2020?**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Barbara Epstein-Eagle	Megan Beatty
2 Annette Laverty	
8 Taylor Beatty 2008	Cristina Ramirez-Fonua
9 Laura LaMotte	10 Carol Zappin
13 Lane Stahl	15 Janet Majors
31 Gianelle Beatty 2011	

Coffee Hour Today - Call someone else up, catch-up, check in wherever you are.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Daily Zoom Calls – every day at 12pm.

Community Care Package Team Meeting Monday at 1:00pm on Zoom

Race Matters– Monday 12/7 @ 6pm Sharing rooted in our learnings & experiences.
www.capcoakland.org/race-matters.

Friday Night Meal Next Friday, December 11th.
We need help serving & setting-up. Contact Monte!

Women’s Group – *Saturday Mornings on Zoom.*
Contact Anne Marie Adams for info about joining - amadams44@gmail.com

Indian Meals to Go Order by Wednesday for pick up Friday & Saturday 5-7pm. (510) 717-9291 or brightsinghd@rediffmail.com

Tamales por Oakland – Order tamales from our Primera Iglesia partners to create work and you enjoy a great meal! www.capcoakland.org

Godly Play – Sundays 9:45-10:25 on Zoom. New address! Check the weekly newsletter for the link. Or look online on our website.

Christmas Eve 2020 | 12/24 @ 7:00pm. We’re re-interpreting our annual service for the reality of COVID-19. We’ll be meeting on Zoom (even with a pageant!) but on a different address. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

Thank you to Today’s Worship Leadership:

Advent Wreath: the Beatty family
Chat Master: Karl Shadley
Deacon Liturgist: Myrna Shadley
Godly Play: Beth Beatty
Music: Pete Feltman
Reader: Carol Dolezal

LYRICS & RESPONSES FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION

“Comfort Comfort Now My People ”

Author: Johannes Olearius (1671) in German

Translator: Catherine Winkworth (1863, alt.)

Glory to God Hymnal #87

1 “Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!” So says our God.

“Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow’s load.

To my people now proclaim
that my pardon waits for them!

Tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over.”

2 For the herald’s voice is crying
in the desert far and near,

calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.

O, that warning cry obey!

Now prepare for God a way.

Let the valleys rise in meeting
and the hills bow down in greeting.

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.

Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God’s holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord

now on earth is shed abroad,

and all flesh shall see the token

that God’s word is never broken.

Our Advent Wreath Prayers were written by Katherine Hawker and posted on Liturgy Outside.

www.liturgyoutside.net

God of the Way,

As we journey down this Advent road,
grant us the courage to make peace.

Peace in our hearts,

Peace in our homes,

Peace in our communities. Amen.

“While we are waiting come”

Author: Claire Cloninger

Language: English; Japanese

Copyright: © 1986 Word

Glory to God Hymnal #92

1. While we are waiting, come;
While we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
While we are waiting, come.

2. With power and glory, come;
With power and glory, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
While we are waiting, come.

3. Come, Savior, quickly, come;
Come, Savior, quickly, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
While we are waiting, come.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter’s season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world.

Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ’s coming. We light the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; remembering the promises of God.

You can place your Advent Wreath on a plate and place 5 candles around and in it (4 around, 1 inside). They represent the 4 Sundays of Advent and Christmas Day/Eve - when we celebrate the coming of the Light of God into the World as John describes it in his gospel. You have enough candles to light the wreath each Sunday in Advent and still have enough for Christmas Eve. Bring it with you to our weekly Zoom worship - we’ll be lighting our Advent Wreaths then as a visible sign of our connection and community even as we distance and shelter at home.

“When out of Poverty is Born”

words ©Kathryn Galloway (b. 1952)
music harm. © Church Hymnary

1 When out of poverty is born
a dream that will not die,
and landless, weary folk find strength
to stand with heads held high,
it's then we learn from those who wait
to greet the promised day,
‘The Lord is coming; don't lose heart.
Be blest: prepare the way!’

2 When people wander far from God,
forget to share their bread,
they find their wealth an empty thing,
their spirits are not fed.
For only just and tender love
the hungry soul will stay.
And so God's prophets echo still
‘Be blest: prepare the way!’

3 When God took flesh and came to earth,
the world turned upside down,
and in the strength of woman's faith
the Word of Life was born.
She knew that God would raise the low,
it pleased her to obey.
Rejoice with Mary in the call,
‘Be blest: prepare the way!’



“Who Would Think that What Was Needed”

Tune: SCARLET RIBBONS

Authors: John L. Bell & Graham Maule (1987)

Glory to God #138

Hindsight is nearly always clearer than foresight, and with gentle good humor this Christmas hymn points out how great was the gap between human expectation and God's actual way of providing a means of salvation for us. God's ways continually exceed our claims to comprehend them.

1 Who would think that what was needed
To transform and save the earth
Might not be a plan or army,
Proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision,
That a child should lead the way?
*God surprised earth with heaven,
Coming here on Christmas Day.*

2. Shepherds watch and wise men wonder;
Monarchs scorn and angels sing;
Such a place as none would reckon
Hosts a holy helpless thing.
Stable beasts and bypassed strangers
Watch a baby laid in hay;
*God surprised earth with heaven,
Coming here on Christmas Day.*

3. Centuries of skill and science
span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether,
with such progress, we improve.
While the human lot we ponder,
Lest our hopes and humor fray.
*God surprised earth with heaven,
Coming here on Christmas Day.*

READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 40:1-11

New Revised Standard Version

¹ Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.
³ A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
⁵ Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."
⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
⁹ Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Luke 1: 46-55

New Revised Standard Version

⁴⁶ And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the low-
liness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call
me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for
me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts
of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from
their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our
ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

What are some tangible things that help bring you peace when you're worried, upset, or frightened?

What's a message, value, or dream you've inherited from your ancestors?

GOING DEEPER

How can you tell when people, communities, or countries are not at peace?

What are some ways you might bring peace to a loved one or a neighbor? How might you bring peace to a stranger or your community?

How might things in your community, your country, or the world need to change in the process of creating a just and lasting peace?

Comfort, Comfort Now My People 87

1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.

"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.

To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!
 O, that warm - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,

Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

TEXT: Johannes Olearius, 1671; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.
 MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551
 GENEVAN 42
 8.7.8.7.7.8.8

92 While We Are Waiting, Come

1 While we are wait - ing, come;
 2 With power and glo - ry, come;
 3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly

while we are wait - ing, come.
 with power and glo - ry, come.
 come, Sav - ior, quick - ly

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,

while we are wait - ing, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.

TEXT: Claire Cloninger, 1986
 MUSIC: Don Cason, 1986
 Text and Music © 1986 Word Music, LLC
 WAITING, COME
 SA

138 Who Would Think That What Was Needed

1 Who would think that what was need-ed; to trans-
 2 Shep-herds watch and wise men won-der; mon-archs
 3 Cen-tu-ries of skill and sci-ence span the

form and save the earth might not be a
 scorn and an-gels sing; such a place as
 past from which we move, yet ex-pe-rience

plan or ar-my, proud in pur-rose, proved in
 none would reck-on hosts a ho-ly help-less
 ques-tions wheth-er, with such prog-ress, we im-

worth? Who would think, de-spite de-ri-sion, that a
 thing, Sta-ble beasts and by-passed strang-ers watch a
 prove, While the hu-man lot we pon-der, lest our

Handlight is nearly always clearer than foresight, and with gentle good humor this Christmas hymn points out how great was the gap between human expectation and God's actual way of providing a means of salvation for us. God's ways continually exceed our claims to comprehend them.

TEXT: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1987
 MUSIC: John L. Bell, 2005
 Text and Music © 1987, 2005 WCLBC, Ina Community (admiris, CIA Publications, Inc.)
 WHITE ROSETTES
 # 7 B, D

child should lead the way?
 ba-by and hu-mor fray, God sur-pris-es earth with
 hopes and hu-mor fray,

heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.