

Refuge

Sometimes it just gets to be too much. Pressures at work, wall-to-wall people, demands on your time, personal attacks and betrayals all seem to crowd in on you at once. Then of course there are world events and the economy. Everything seems to come together into one vast conspiracy to make your life miserable. David's words take on a special appeal. "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; yes, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness; I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest" (Psalm 55:6-8).

Yes! Just to get away—permanently, forever—from all the evils of this world. Who of us wouldn't want that? But alas, that is not to be, as David himself knew all too well. The troubles of life don't disappear that easily.

But that doesn't mean there is no place of refuge. It just means that refuge is to be found in the midst of our pain, not away from it. No matter where you go in life, you cannot escape the pain stemming from where you've been.

So where is our refuge? "Cast your burden on the LORD," David says, "and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved" (Psalm 55:22). It was not away from his pain that David finally gained rest; it was in the thick of it. David found his rest in God, and God gave him to see what was ahead for his abusers. "But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction" (Psalm 55:23).

Relief isn't always immediate. We want it now and God says wait. Jesus endured betrayal, torture and death before deliverance. But his refuge was still the Father. If we are in Christ, we share in his sufferings, but also in his deliverance—the resurrection.

Where are you seeking refuge? God is the only ultimate comforter, for he is the God of all comfort—even in your current pain.

*I will say to the
LORD, "My refuge
and my fortress, my
God, in whom I
trust."*

Psalms 91:2

We extend a cordial welcome to each visitor! We would like to keep in touch with you. Please use the QR code to tell us about yourself.



Covenant Presbyterian Church
1623 University Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703
www.berkeleyopc.org

MORNING WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M.

THE LORD CALLS US TO HIMSELF

Salutation and Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise # 97 *“We Praise You, O God, Our Redeemer, Creator”*

*Invocation

*Hymn of Praise # 35 *“My God, How Wonderful Thou Art”*

CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE LORD'S ASSURANCE

The Law of God

Matthew 22:37-40

Confession of Sin (Congregation in Unison)

Lord God, Eternal and Almighty Father: We acknowledge before your holy majesty that we are poor sinners, conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of our own power to do good.

Because of our sin, we endlessly violate your holy commandments. But, O Lord, we repent and turn away from all our offenses. We condemn ourselves and our evil ways, asking you, through your grace, to relieve our distress. Remind us of your compassion, O Father of mercies. Remind us of all the benefits that are ours in Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. We also ask that you grant us daily increase of the grace of your Holy Spirit, and produce in us the fruits of holiness and of righteousness, which are pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Matthew 11:28-29 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

OFFERING OURSELVES IN THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Worship in Giving

Hymn of Thanksgiving # 88 *“With Grateful Heart My Thanks I Bring”*

Worship in Prayer

Interlude

*Congregation Standing

Wayne K. Forkner, Minister

510-928-8024

THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS WORD

*Hymn of Preparation # 45 *“Now unto Jehovah, Ye Sons of the Mighty”*

Sermon Text

Isaiah 43:14-21, pew Bible p. 604

Sermon

RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY

*Hymn of Response # 353

“I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”

THE LORD DISMISSES US WITH HIS BLESSING

*Gloria Patri (Praising our Gracious Lord)

734

*The Lord's Benediction

Announcements

Today, 12:30pm. A potluck luncheon will be held in the church. All are welcome.

Tuesday, 7:30pm. Weekly Bible Study at the church or via Zoom. We are studying the book of Deuteronomy. Our Bible study at the church begins with dinner at 7:00pm, followed by a time of study at 7:30pm. For information on attending the study via Zoom, please send an email to Pastor Wayne at wforkner86@mac.com.