

# Covenant Congregational Church

## Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Worship Gathering February 4, 2018 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* arr. Larson

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Karsten Mohn

INTROIT *Holy Is the Lord* Schubert

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Isaiah 40:28-31)

Have you not known?

**Our God is the everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth.**

Have you not heard?

**God does not faint or grow weary.**

Have you not known?

**God's understanding is unsearchable.**

Have you not heard?

**God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.**

Have you not known?

**Those who wait for God will renew their strength**

**they shall mount up with wings like eagles.**

We come to hear.

**We come to know. Thanks be to God.**

\*SONG *On Eagle's Wings* Hymn #81

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Choral Offertory *Peace I Leave with You* Mozart, arr. Moore  
Flute, Lou Ann Falls

\*Doxology 48

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise Him all creatures here below;**

**Praise Him above ye heav'nly host;**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

*(Children between the ages of Kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
are invited at this time to Children's Church.)*

THE WORD OF GOD Mike Basset

Old Testament Reading Nehemiah 4:1-23 (NRSV) O.T. Page #432

**4** Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he mocked the Jews. **2** He said in the presence of his associates

and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore things? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish—and burned ones at that?" **3** Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "That stone wall they are building—any fox going up on it would break it down!" **4** Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their taunt back on their own heads, and give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. **5** Do not cover their guilt, and do not let their sin be blotted out from your sight; for they have hurled insults in the face of the builders.

**6** So we rebuilt the wall, and all the wall was joined together to half its height; for the people had a mind to work.

**7** But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and the gaps were beginning to be closed, they were very angry, **8** and all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. **9** So we prayed to our God, and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

**10** But Judah said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, and there is too much rubbish so that we are unable to work on the wall." **11** And our enemies said, "They will not know or see anything before we come upon them and kill them and stop the work." **12** When the Jews who lived near them came, they said to us ten times, "From all the places where they live they will come up against us." **13** So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. **14** After I looked these things over, I stood up and said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your kin, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

**15** When our enemies heard that their plot was known to us, and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. **16** From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and body-armor; and the leaders posted themselves behind the whole house of Judah, **17** who were building the wall. The burden bearers carried their loads in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and with the other held a weapon. **18** And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. **19** And I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread out, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. **20** Rally to us wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet. Our God will fight for us."

**21** So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from break of dawn until the stars came out. **22** I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night inside Jerusalem, so that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." **23** So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me ever took off our clothes; each kept his weapon in his right hand.

Response: The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON *Fair Fighting with the Opposition* Pastor Jason

\*RESPONSE SONG *How Great Is Our God* Insert

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,  
for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Call to Communion  
Special Music *Come and Dine* Widmeyer/Bolton  
Bluegrass Group

A Prayer for the Elements  
Sharing of the Bread & the Cup  
+ *In the center of each bread tray is a small cup filled with gluten free bread* +  
Prayer of Sending

\*SENDING SONG *Sent Forth by God's Blessing* Hymn #664

\*BENEDICTION Pastor Jason

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Threefold Amen* Traditional

\*POSTLUDE *Living for Jesus* arr. Turner

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\*Please stand in praise to God, if able  
CCLI #982653

**Thank you for participating in our worship gathering!** We are glad that you are here this morning and pray that this might be a meaningful faith-building experience for you and/or your family. To go deeper in relationship with this church family, we invite join in on the fellowship and light refreshments after services today in the Fireside Room.



Welcome to Covenant Congregational Church  
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