

# Covenant Congregational Church

## Second Sunday after Christmas

Worship Gathering January 7, 2018 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE *Breath on Me, Breath of God* arr. by Walz

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Karen Bassett

\*SONG *Gather Us In* Hymn #511

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (*inspired by Psalm 8*)

Gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, inspired by the Holy Spirit,  
and blessed by God,

**we come to worship one, holy God.**

O God, our own God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.

**Your majesty is the music of the starry skies.**

**yet even children of dust can sing your praises.**

In the name of the Healer, the Provider and the Enabler  
let your gratitude and joy be made known.

**O God, our own God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!**

\*SONG *Mighty to Save* Insert

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory *There Is Power in the Blood* Bluegrass Group

\*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

(Today, there is no Children's Church for K-5<sup>th</sup> Graders. Nursery care is still available)

THE WORD OF GOD Lita Kuipers

Old Testament Reading Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12 (NRSV) O.T. Page #436

<sup>73b</sup> When the seventh month came—the people of Israel being settled in their towns— **8** <sup>1</sup> all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup> He read from it facing the square

before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. <sup>4</sup> The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose; and beside him stood [leaders] on this right hand and...on his left hand. <sup>5</sup> And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup> Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Also..., the Levites, helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. <sup>8</sup> So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

<sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

<sup>11</sup> So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." <sup>12</sup> And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

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

SERMON *Spiritual Renewal* Pastor Jason

CHOIR ANTHEM *A Covenant Prayer* arr. Pote

\*COVENANT RENEWAL LITANY (*written by Rev. Christine Sobania Johnson*)

Every day we journey on this earth is a day in which we make choices:  
left or right, up or down, in or out, yes or no?

Some choices are simple, and some are very complex,  
but one choice informs all the others: Who will be our God?  
Who will we trust to see us through this journey?

**Who has been with us from before the beginning, bringing us into existence?**

**Who has loved us and blessed us and sent us on our way?**

**Who has pointed us toward the path and posted signs we need to find our way?**

**Who has been at our side when the road has been smooth and gently curving?**

**Who has kept with us through hairpin turns, construction zones, and detours?  
Who will celebrate with us when we complete our course  
and seek the comfort of eternity?**

Only One. The One and Only. **Holy One. The One and Holy.**

Will you choose this day to stay faithful to the One who is faithful to us?

**Count us in.**

Will you choose this day to place your whole trust in the One who is trustworthy?

**Count us in.**

Will you choose this day to commit your talents and your resources  
to the One who first gave them? **Count us in.**

Will you choose this day to love the One who loved us first? **Count us in.**

Praying together, **We devote ourselves to You by renewing the covenant—  
the promise you made to humanity so long ago.**

**Because You are our God, we will be Your people.**

**Enlarge our faithfulness, our trust, our commitment and our love  
so that we may graciously uphold our side of the deal.**

**Help us always to recognize Your presence and Your blessings  
throughout our journey. Keep us in your care. Amen.**

#### THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Call to Communion

*All who follow Jesus are invited to come forward to receive communion.*

*Before you partake, you may also touch the waters of baptism  
as a sign of your Covenant Renewal.*

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 +*

Song *You Are My All in All* Bluegrass Group

Prayer of Sending

\*SINGING BENEDICTION *The Lord Bless You and Keep You*

***The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you***

***And be gracious, gracious, gracious to you,***

***The Lord lift up His countenance upon you***

***And give you, give you, give you peace (repeat all)***

\*POSTLUDE *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* arr. Wetzler

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



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