



Hood River Valley Christian Church Newsletter

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www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.com

and on Face book

July 12, 2023

Sunday Worship Time

10:30am Worship

Minister

Rev. Alicia Speidel 541 601-1949
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Church Administrative Assistant

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Doug Wirt and Cathy Myers Wirt Closing of their Oregon/SW Idaho Regional Ministry

July 15, 2023

hosted by Portland First Christian at 1:00 p.m.

A service of worship to mark the closure of our 22 year chapter
of the regional church ministry in partnership with
Doug Wirt and Cathy Myers Wirt as our Regional Ministers

Our Regional Global Mission Partners Blanca Puma and Luis Jara will be with us from FEDICE
Ecuador for this event. Rev. Susan Gonzales Dewey to bring the message

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

9:30am Adult Sunday school classes, nursery available

10:30am Sunday Worship with Children Worship & Wonder

EVENING PRAYER ON FACEBOOK

No Evening Prayer this week as Pastor Alicia is on vacation.

Links:

Sunday July 2 <https://www.facebook.com/100064940580441/videos/1478747016218815>

Thursday July 6 <https://www.facebook.com/100064940580441/videos/299788392472536>

Sunday July 9 <https://www.facebook.com/100064940580441/videos/610164510937193>

About Church Giving

Online Giving To donate online to Hood River Valley Christian Church, go to
<http://www.hoodrivervalleychristianchurch.com/donate/> and make a donation

Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement App

on your Smartphone or tablet. A onetime gift can be made or you can set up online giving on a
regular basis. **USPS Mail** You can also give to Hood River Valley Christian Church by mailing a
check to: HRVCC 975 Indian Creek Road, Hood River, OR 97031

In the Sanctuary For offerings and tithes, there is a deposit box at the entrance of the sanctuary,
inside the double doors. Offerings may be dropped off at any time.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Layla & Ryder Gaffney
Bev Thomas
Bonnie McCollister

Sharon & Gordon Cook
David Nash

Lauree Winfield
Katy White

Vicki White
Stacey Jubitz

David Nash fell and broke his arm. He spent some time in the hospital until the pain improved. Glenna McCargar was in the hospital in The Dalles for a short time.



Baked Goodies Needed We can use some extra baked goods to have on hand in the freezer for coffee hours. Cookies, brownies, quickbreads are all good options. Thank you.

Special Summer Worship...

July 30 Outdoor Worship at Lloyd and Barbara Frasier's

7130 Dee Highway, Parkdale

Directions to Frasier's house:

If coming via Dee Hwy, follow directions to Parkdale.

If coming via hwy 35, turn right at Woodworth Rd. At junction with Dee Hwy, turn left and follow Dee directions.

It's the first set of mailboxes after you pass the milepost 16 marker, and pass under the Bonneville power lines. Turn right, ours is the first one.

If passengers use a wheelchair or a walker, continue down the driveway and park in front of the garage. There is a wheelchair ramp.

My granddaughter will be by the mailbox to help direct by 10am.

Otherwise, turn Immediate left into the circular driveway. After parking, just walk into back yard.

Overflow parking available in the field.

The Frasier's will provide coffee, water, and lemonade.

Christmas in July! We are collecting gifts for the church and for FISH, our local emergency food pantry. A collection table is in the lobby.

For the church:

Kleenex (lots)
Reams of 8.5 X 11" white copy paper
Envelopes self sealing #10 legal size

Dawn dish detergent
Windex refills

Coffee grounds
Powdered creamer
Paper dessert plates (small 6")
Napkins

For FISH Food Bank:

Cooking oil
Jelly or jam
Sugar, Salt
Oatmeal (quick, old fashioned or instant)
Cereal
Rice
Chili (canned)
Gluten free items
Snacks for kids like granola or breakfast bars, chips

Clients also really appreciate personal care items (soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc.) and dry pet food

Women's Ministries Activities Mark Your Calendars!

***Outing to Trout Lake Abbey Wednesday, July 26,** Glenna McCargar or Frances Henne can tell you more about the outing.

***Women, wine and the word is Wednesday, August 2 @ 4pm @ Stave and Stone.**

***Coffee Klatches**

Thursday July 27, 10:00am at Bev & Linda Thomas's home in White Salmon.

Thursday August 10, 10:00am at Shar Wilkins home.

Call Thelma 541 645-3748 for carpools and other information.

***Lunch Date and Party Saturday September 23** "Getting to know you" event for all ladies of the church. Details are still being worked out. Mark your calendars!

Pastor Alicia's sermon from July 2, 2023 Scripture: Psalm 13

Today is week two of our sermon series focused on songs. Songs that are not found in any hymnal. Songs that maybe you have heard before and songs that may be new to you. Songs that may inspire you to clap your hands, shake your hips and nod your head or to never listen to again. Songs that we will listen to, connect with scripture and connect to our lives.

Why are we focusing on songs in this way? Because I want to. That's the honest truth. And because I often listen to songs and think, that has a really touching message or a challenging emphasis or is just plain memorable. I see how songs connect to us in more ways than we sometimes realize, so calling attention to just a few songs during worship when we generally might not hear them or talk about them was important to me.

Now as I explained last Sunday and I will explain every Sunday of this sermon series, I invite you to be open to the songs you will hear. Listen to the music and focus on the words. Grasp the story that is being told. Imagine how it connects to the scripture passage that was read. See if it intertwines with your own life. Simply be aware during this time of how the Spirit is moving in and through you. Because while you may not especially like some of the songs I have selected, I would venture to bet that every single one of them will have something to say to you. So be open and receptive because music is a powerful thing.

To prepare us for today's song, let's look at today's psalm first. Psalm 13. This psalm is a lament. A lament is a prayer to God of sorrow, pain and grief. It is expressing all of those hurt feelings that are deep inside to God in a very real way. Putting it into words to make it clear to God what is going on, the displeasure and unease, sometimes extreme unease compounded with devastation.

These words are offered as a prayer because it was still about connecting with God, having that relationship even when there may not have appeared to have been a relationship with God at all. Or at least from the one expressing the lament or psalm.

In scripture laments were voiced either as individual laments, where it was one person crying out to God, or communal laments, where an entire community was expressing their frustration with and to God. These laments are found all throughout the psalms. And are generally easy to identify once you understand their focus of crying out and questioning where God was.

Psalm 13, our psalm, is an individual lament from David to God. It was David being mystified as to where God was, why God wasn't answering his prayers and when God was going to appear.

“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me for ever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”

There is no denying David’s intensity in these verses. He didn’t just mention it once or twice, he put it out there four different times. Four times of saying “How long.” Four times of declaring God absent from his life. Four times of increasing how bad it was with each time he said how long. David was direct and honest with God. He was heartbroken, needing God and yet feeling abandoned by God. He was at a complete loss.

Whether we have been at a complete loss or not and whether we have expressed it in this way or not, we are able to relate to David’s lament. We are able to say we have turned to God at some point throughout our lives and cried, “Where are you God? Why aren’t you answering me? Why aren’t you listening? What have I done to feel this distance between us?”

We have expressed our frustration and laid out our demands. We have been abundantly clear when all or some of our lives have not gone according to plan or have left us feeling completely lost and alone. We have done as David did. “Consider and answer me, O Lord my God!” And so a lament puts it out there just like David put it out there and just like we sometimes put it out there.

We have to cry out. We have to release these emotions. We have to voice what we hold deep inside to move to the second part of the psalm, the part where David’s focus shifted and a remembrance of past interactions with God rose to the surface. “But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.”

David now remembers when God was present, when God was leading, when God was responding to his cries of pain and sorrow. David lifted up those connections, returning to the goodness that comes from God and had been there throughout his life. David moved back into relationship with God. This transition is an example for us of how to move from lament to trust, from despair to possibility, from separation to connection. Because that movement is within reach, no matter how deep our lament is, it is there waiting to be grasped, waiting to be envisioned and waiting to be hoped for. We simply have to open our eyes and heart to what might be.

Which leads us to today’s song. Listen to the words and follow the story, noticing the lament and the possibility. Because both are present.

[Listen to Tracy Chapman’s song “Fast Car.”]

Tracy Chapman’s song “Fast Car” has recently been covered by Luke Combs, a country singer, bringing this powerful song back again. The message is of a young woman faced with the alcoholism of her father and then her partner as she imagines escaping each time in a fast car. Lament and possibility.

From an article in 2011 by Aurelie M, “Soon after [Chapman] performed Fast Car at the Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute concert on June 11, 1988, Chapman’s song began its rise on the US charts; it became a Number 6 pop hit on the Billboard Hot 100 for the week ending August 27, 1988. Fast Car won the “Best Pop Vocal Performance Female” 1989 Grammy Awards (and was nominated that same year for the Song of the Year).”

“Tracy Chapman talked about Fast Car on the BBC radio in 2010[, explaining her thoughts behind the song]: ‘In United States, “Fast Car” was the song that was played on the radio, more than “Talkin’ Bout A Revolution” so it was something that turned out to take a significant role in shaping my first record and probably the public perception of me as a singer songwriter who is writing about stories, songs which tells stories about people lives and very generally represents the world that I saw it when I was growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, coming from a working class background. I’ve raised by

single mom, I was just watching people, being in a community of people who were struggling. So everyone was really just 1. Working hard 2. hoping that things would get better.”

“And then [o]n March 25, 1996 Tracy Chapman was telling to CIDR : ‘I believe that I wrote the song “Fast Car” in 1986. At the time that I wrote the song, I actually didn’t really know who I was writing about. Looking back at it, and this happens with other songs as well, that I feel like I understand it only later... I think that it was a song about my parents... And about how when they met each other they were very young and they wanted to start a new life together and my mother was anxious to leave home. My parents got married and went out into the world to try to make a place for themselves and it was very difficult going. My mother didn’t have a high school diploma and my father was a few years older. It was hard for him to create the kind of life that he dreamed of... With the education that he had... With the opportunities that were available to him... In a sense I think they came together thinking that together they would have a better chance at making it.’”

And so the despair and loss with the hope and trust, a movement from separation to connection. Or a movement from separation to a longed for connection. Music and lyrics really do speak to us and voice what we hold inside. They mirror the message of the psalms. They connect with us on a deeper level. They move us in ways we cannot explain. And they keep us looking towards what’s next, what is possible, what will bring life, renewal, love and reassurance. And what will enhance our relationship with God.

Tracy Chapman provides that space in “Fast Car” and David provides it in Psalm 13. What angle of these stories will we grasp? What will be our focus? Where will we find the movement in our own lives? That’s the individual journey we each are to take because it is there, always waiting for us to embrace it and always waiting to see how we will respond.

Pastor Alicia’s sermon from July 9, 2023
Scripture: Song of Songs 2:8-13

To begin, I have a few questions for you. And I want you to be honest. If it applies to you, raise your hand and own it, cause we’re trusting everyone to be honest here. I mean it is a church, a faith community after all. Being honest, I would hope, would be a pillar of our beliefs and practicing those beliefs. So just a few simple questions.

How many have ever read a romance novel? And it could have just been one time, not every single one by Nora Roberts or Danielle Steel. Or how many have read a book with some risqué parts in it? Maybe one particular scene or a few chapters in a book?

Okay. Who has ever received a love letter? Who has written a love letter? Who still has those love letters they received? Do you ever secretly re-read them? You don’t have to answer that.

Okay. How many have read some portion of the Bible? How many have read Song of Songs, sometimes called Song of Solomon, in the Bible? Even if it was just a section of it. How many have not? How many have never heard of the book Song of Songs in the Bible?

Song of Songs is that racy, risqué love letter written back and forth between two lovers in the Bible. Yep, the Bible has a section on the Old Testament that if you were all about banning books, would probably be on your list. Which I find completely fascinating the idea of banning books anyway, but that’s a whole other conversation.

So Song of Songs. If we were to read all eight chapters right now, together, it would be something else. There might be some blushing, some red faces, some I can’t believe that’s in the Bible, I had no idea, responses. That is Song of Songs, right here in scripture, the holy book, what we base our lives

upon as Christians. And today, a passage from Song of Songs is part of the assigned lectionary. It actually made the cut.

Now even though that's the case, it probably won't make the cut in most churches today that do follow the lectionary. In fact I even read in a post on a clergy Facebook page how one person was told they couldn't read this passage, how some were avoiding it and how some were embracing it, of course with different parameters on what they were actually going to discuss. It's all pretty fascinating.

So what is this racy, risqué passage anyway? We'll get to that in a moment. First we need a little background about this book. Because I would venture to guess that even if some have read a passage or two or maybe even the entire eight chapters, most have probably not focused on this book, let alone studied it or even had a conversation about it. I mean when was the last time the Song of Songs was the topic at our church's women's Bible study or men's Bible study or the youth group, to be really out there? I'm thinking never.

Reading directly from "The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes," in the introduction to the Song of Songs, authored by Renita J. Weems, "The content of Song of Songs, sometimes referred to as the Song of Solomon, represents a remarkable departure from that of other books in the Bible. To open the pages of this brief volume of poetry is to leave the world of exceptional heroism, tribal conflict, political disputes, royal intrigue, religious reforms, and divine judgment and to enter the world of domestic relations, private sentiments, and interpersonal discourse. Filled with language of sensuality, longing, intimacy, playfulness, and human affection, Song of Songs introduces the reader to the non-public world of ancient Israel. The relationships are private (i.e., a man and a woman), the conversation is between intimates (i.e., "darling," "beloved," "friend"), and the language hints of kinship bonds (e.g., mother, sister, brother, daughter). At last, readers of Scripture have the opportunity to focus not so much on the external politics that organized and dominated the lives of Hebrew people (e.g., palace intrigue, temple politics, prophetic conflict, international doom, natural disasters) but on the internal systems and attitudes that also shaped the lives of the people of Israel."

"Song of Songs stands out in sharp contrast to the rest of the biblical books in two other ways. First, nowhere in its eight chapters is God mentioned. Second, Song of Songs is the only biblical book in which a female voice predominates. In fact, the protagonist's voice in Song of Songs is the only unmediated female voice in all of Scripture." Meaning it's not told through the voice of a man or couched in men's heroics.

And as she further explains in the interpretation section, "Today more and more interpreters are willing to read the book as a collection or anthology of love lyrics that capture the joys and sufferings of intimate relationships and of sensual love. The book chronicles one woman's journey to find fulfilling love with a man who, for reasons unknown to us, comes across as both enamored of her and forever elusive to her. Audiences are first lured into contemplating the universal need by all to be loved, and then forced to confront their ambivalences about sexuality. The hope is that readers, whether male or female, will recognize themselves in this woman's very human need and desire simply to be loved."

How many are intrigued now with this book of the Bible? How many are considering going home and reading all eight chapters? Or how many know that is exactly what they are going to do?

The Bible truly has everything in it. There is no question about that. And that's only if we actually acknowledge it, read it, study it, discuss it and discover what it means for us today. Which is why I selected it for today. It connects with our focus on the psalms and on songs. It is within that same

genre. And now that we've talked about it long enough, we should probably read today's brief passage.

Song of Songs 2:8-13

While these verses give the essence of the love poetry from one lover to another, they are very tame when it comes to some of the other imagery throughout the rest of the book. That is where it gets a little racy and risque and it's in the Bible. Just go home and read it.

In these verses the woman is longing for her lover to return, hearing him call her name and seeing him at a distance. He speaks to her about the springtime, the blossoms and change in the landscape. He is desiring for her to come away with him. And she is smitten with his proposal. It is the back and forth between the two of them, enticing one another, expressing their love for one another and using images that were relevant to them, their surroundings and their culture. This really is love poetry.

And this is all to say that I personally think it's pretty cool that this book is included in the Bible. It affirms intimacy, love, affection, sensuality, sexuality, desire. It holds this as a valuable part of human life, relationships and interactions. It exhibits it in a positive and affirming way, where it is normal and welcome.

What a concept. What a way to be. And what a provocative topic that could go in so many different ways. It really is quite fascinating. And it is needed. This angle is needed. This premise is needed. The Song of Songs, the Song of Solomon, is needed. It is needed in scripture as a teaching tool, as a book to cherish, as a movement to behold. It definitely holds value.

And the list of potential songs to pair with this passage are innumerable and cover every genre out there. From the sublime to seriously racy. Which, as we enter our third week of pairing a song, not in the hymnal, with our scripture passage, I remind you to be open when it is played. Listen to the music, read the lyrics, let the song sink into your being, connecting with what we have just discussed about Song of Songs and the specific passage that was read. See what emerges for you. How does this song touch you? Does it touch you? What aspect speaks to you? What will you take away from this song? And again, not every song will be your cup of tea. The invitation is to receive it in such a way that something impacts you and moves you as you listen. Let us listen.

("Bring it on home to me" by Little Big Town)

The expression of love and affection between two individuals. The desire, the need, the wanting to be there. The making it clear and evident. Plus, it all being wrapped in a positive light.

This song and the Song of Songs are both like a romance novel or a love letter. They both contain passion. They both have lessons to teach. They both embody the gifts of interaction and relationship instilled in us by God. They both are meant to be read, heard and discussed.

And so we have. We have read them. We have heard them. We have discussed them. Will we embody their messages? Will we view these concepts differently? What will we walk away from here understanding and believing?

You tell me because as for me I love the Song of Songs and I love the song we just listened to.

Church Calendar

Wednesday July 12

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop

Thursday July 13

7:00am Men's Study

Saturday July 15

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop

Sunday July 16

9:30am Gospel of Matthew Study, vista room

10:30am Worship

3:30pm Hope and Life church worship

Tuesday July 18

10:00am Women's Bible study

3:00pm TOPS group meets

Wednesday July 19

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop

Thursday July 20

7:00am Men's Study

Saturday July 22

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop

Sunday July 23

9:30am Gospel of Matthew Study, vista room

10:30am Worship

3:30pm Hope and Life church worship

Tuesday July 25

10:00am Women's Bible study

Wednesday July 26

9:00am-Noon Quilters meet

9:00am-12:00pm Thriftshop

9:45am Women's trip to Troutlake Abbey

Scriptures for Sunday July 16, 2023

Genesis 25:19-34

Psalms 119:105-112

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

SERVING Sunday July 16, 2023

Elder this Week Chrystal Akin

Communion Preparer Joanie Logan

Coffee Hour Frances & friends

Deacons **Serving Team #3**

Betty Osborne, Linda Meyers

Tatum Wyatt, Jackson Speidel

Coming Up!

Mark your calendar

July 26 Women's Trip to Troutlake Abbey

July 27 Coffee at Bev Thomas's house

July 30 Outdoor worship @ Frasier's'

August 2 Wine, Women & the Word