



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

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July 31, 2022 – 9:30 am

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost



Todd Petit, "Conversation"

People can tame and already have tamed every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and fish.
No one can tame the tongue, though. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.
James 3:7-8 (CEB)

BRUNCH CHURCH

COMING TOGETHER FOR WORSHIP

Welcome to Brunch Church! Brunch Church is a new take on a very old way of doing worship, based on the Agape Meals of the earliest church. The inspiration for this service is taken from the service developed by Grace Commons, a former Missional Faith Community of Chicago Presbytery, written by Rev. Nanette Sawyer and Rob Clearfield, which in turn is based on the Dinner Church practice developed by St. Lydia's in Brooklyn.

PREPARING THE MEAL AND THE TABLE

We prepare the meal and the tables together. When you are ready, please have a seat.

GATHERING AROUND THE LIGHT

Welcome – we gather together to share a sacred meal just as the first followers of Jesus did. We will stand at our tables and face the candle and sing:

SONG #306: *"Fairest Lord Jesus"*

Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God to earth come down,
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.

Fair are the meadows,
Fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring:
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heaven can boast.

BLESSING THE MEAL

We bless our meal singing:

HYMN #513: *Let Us Break Bread Together (verse 3, sung twice)*

Let us praise God together on our knees; (on our knees;)
Let us praise God together on our knees. (on our knees.)
When I fall on my knees,
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me.)

BREAKING THE BREAD

While Jesus was eating bread with his disciples, he took a loaf of bread, and after giving thanks to God for it, he broke it, gave it to them, and said:
"Take, this is my body. Do this in remembrance of me."

HYMN #513: *Let Us Break Bread Together (verse 1, sung twice)*

Let us break bread together on our knees; (on our knees;)
Let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees.)
When I fall on my knees,
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me.)

Holy food for Holy people. Share in the meal.

We will now share the bread. You are welcome to lift your peace of bread and say to one another "This is Christ's body" before eating.

BRUNCH AND COMMUNITY

Now, we eat together. We'll spend the first part of our meal in conversation, then move into the scripture reading and a time of Holy Conversation where we will discuss the text.

THE READING

JAMES 3:1-12

Taming the tongue

3:1 My brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers, because we know that we teachers will be judged more strictly. 2 We all make mistakes often, but those who don't make mistakes with their words have

reached full maturity. Like a bridled horse, they can control themselves entirely. ³ When we bridle horses and put bits in their mouths to lead them wherever we want, we can control their whole bodies.

⁴ Consider ships: They are so large that strong winds are needed to drive them. But pilots direct their ships wherever they want with a little rudder. ⁵ In the same way, even though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts wildly.

Think about this: A small flame can set a whole forest on fire. ⁶ The tongue is a small flame of fire, a world of evil at work in us. It contaminates our entire lives. Because of it, the circle of life is set on fire. The tongue itself is set on fire by the flames of hell.

⁷ People can tame and already have tamed every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and fish. ⁸ No one can tame the tongue, though. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we both bless the Lord and Father and curse human beings made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Blessing and cursing come from the same mouth. My brothers and sisters, it just shouldn't be this way!

¹¹ Both fresh water and salt water don't come from the same spring, do they? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree produce olives? Can a grapevine produce figs? Of course not, and fresh water doesn't flow from a saltwater spring either.

HOLY CONVERSATION

Our time of Holy Conversation is a time to discuss the text of the evening around the table while we continue eating. If it is helpful, feel free to discuss the following questions about the text with your neighbors:

- Why is James' warning about language important?
- Why is it important for teachers, and anyone in authority or with a public platform, to pay close attention to their words?
- James likes to use metaphors, as we see in the story. And he reminds us that not all speech is evil – we bless God with our voices too.
- What are some things we can do to make sure our voices are a blessing, in the conversations we have in person and online as well?
- How might our world be a different place if Christians took this seriously?

CENTERING MUSIC

Chris will gather us back together with music after our conversation.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For our time of prayer, we will begin and end with singing:

HYMN 471 "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (Glory to God):

O Lord, hear my prayer.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.

... Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN 471 "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (Glory to God):

O Lord, hear my prayer.

O Lord, hear my prayer.
When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.

BLESSING THE CUP

We bless the cup at the end of our meal, just as Jesus did when he was at table with the disciples. Please make sure you have your cup for Communion ready.

After supper, Jesus took the cup, and said, "This is the cup of the renewed covenant, sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink of it, do this remembering me.

*We lift our cups and sing **HYMN #513: Let Us Break Bread Together** (verse 2, sung twice)
Then everyone drinks from their cup.*

Let us drink wine together on our knees; (on our knees);
Let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees.)
When I fall on my knees,
With my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me.)

CLOSING SONG #276: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness

THOMAS O. CHISHOLM

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. (Refrain)

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! (Refrain)

DEPART IN PEACE

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love learn serve



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