

WEEKDAY WORDS

Thursday, October 6, 2022

SING A REST

Like so many other things, music has its own language, which is actually quite precise. Musical notes are wholes and halves and quarters and eighths (think about cutting a pie into pieces). Each note value requires a certain amount of sound and when all those sounds are combined...voila! Music! But here's the thing...for every whole or half or quarter note of sound, there is also a symbol for no sound. These are called rests. Within the language of music, there is an understanding that silence is as necessary as is sound.

When confronted by people who talk too much, I have a friend who will lean in to laughingly suggest, "Sing a rest!" Get it? To "sing" a rest means silence...interruption...a full stop with the talking.

According to the ancient Hebrews, God sang creation into being and then sang a rest on the 7th day. According to the psalmist, the Lord, who is our shepherd, brings the sheep to a place where they can safely lie down and drink from still waters, experiencing rest-filled quiet. According to the gospel writers, Jesus consistently sang a rest in gardens or wilderness, where he was wrapped in Holy Silence for renewal.

During the last weeks I have visited with some of our family of faith and have been alarmed by the fatigue, the stress, the grief, the anxiety or the sadness in your eyes. Some of you are carrying burdens too deep to describe. Some of you are weighed down by work responsibilities or conflicts. In an effort to expose the kids to an array of opportunities, the weekly schedule produces a cacophony of events too tight to sing a rest. We live in a society filled with so much sound that our souls long for the silence of a rest note. And thus, I lean in, to gently whisper "Sing a rest." I mean no criticism; only a recognition of the burdens you carry and our need for even a moment of relief.

Within music, the symbol for a rest gives musicians a chance to take a sip of water. It allows lips and fingers to relax from playing. The singer's voice takes a breather. It replaces sound with silence. Please do not read this as permission to stay away from church. My hope is that our ministry brings renewal to our souls more than draining them. I simply suggest that, when life-burdens begin to feel overwhelming, we can look to the stories within our holy writing to remind us that rest is renewing and necessary and helpful. It might be as short as an eighth note and still be renewing...still provide an interruption long enough to take a deep breath and remember that God is with us. May God give us ears to hear the music of our lives and from time to time, the wisdom to sing a rest.

You may have noticed that our sign has gone dark. The Trustees will be working to figure out why the display was fragmented. In the meantime, feel free to invite your friends and neighbors to join us on Sunday mornings or for any of our ministry activities.

WHEN YOU PRAY...

...pray for the ones who are overwhelmed by life circumstances or grief or stress.

...pray for the ones who have too much time to rest and are longing for community.

...give thanks for the Holy Presence that never leaves us for a single moment.

LAST SUNDAY WRAP-UP

World Communion Sunday was a helpful reminder that we are part of a Global family of faith. During Faith Formation, our youth enjoyed cookies baked by Stef Fellows as they discussed their ancestral heritage. Our class comes from Africa, England, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Scotland, Wales, and some parts unknown. At the end of the class, we reminded ourselves of God's message by quoting Deuteronomy 10:18-19:

God enacts justice for orphans and widows, and God loves immigrants, giving them food and clothing. That means (I) must also love immigrants because (my ancestors) were immigrants in (and we named the countries of our origins).

Jack Carr, Joe Ford, and Carrie Scheibner kicked off our worship experience singing a song from Ghana called "Nanuma". Eventually, the entire congregation was singing along. Recognizing differences around the world, Pastor Vicki shared wisdom from Wally Armbruster, DeWitt Jones, Anne Lamott and Jesus – reminding us that *there is more than one right answer*. When a knotted chain is nudged, allowing a sliver of light between the links, there is hope. It is an apt remedy to the hatred we hold, and the work needed to follow Jesus' command to love our enemies. We gathered at Table, just as our siblings in faith gathered on this World Communion. Envelopes for the UCC special offering called *Neighbors in Need* were available.

THIS SUNDAY

Faith Formation begins at 9:30 AM. Along with the classes for our children (nursery – 7th grade), this Sunday we launch our class for adults called ***Starting Point***. Carrie Scheibner will show a short video called *Two Strangers Who Meet Five Times*, which will be the starting point for discussion. We look forward to this launch of Faith Formation for adults.

At 10:30, Pastor Vicki will focus on another portion of scripture taken from the book of Jeremiah. Read the beginning of the 29th chapter (4-7) to see the promise that Jeremiah offers to God's people despite their exile in Babylon. Lori Schmidt will offer the Children's Time. Bring your *Neighbors in Need* offering. Nursery care is available. Find the live-stream link at www.homercc.org

NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

Monday Our office is closed for the holiday.

Tuesday **Senior Fellowship** AT Lime Hollow!
If you wish to carpool, come to the church at 1:30.
Others are welcome to join us at 2:00 at the Visitors Center, off McLean Road
The building is handicap accessible.
Ilya Shmulenson, director, will speak for about 30 minutes.

Deacons meet at 6:30

Thursday **Stewardship Committee** meets at 4:30.

CROP WALK – OCTOBER 23

Our CROP Walk coordinator has set up the HCC team webpage for this year's CROP Walk:
<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2022/team/homer-congregational-church>
It's never too early to support our efforts to fight hunger in the world.