

Old School: Party Time!

Worship Brainstorming

July 26, 2020

LHUMC Lounge 2:00 pm

2020 theme: 20/20 Vision – Seeking God’s Vision for Ourselves, Our Church, Our Community, and Our World

20/20 Vision theme connection: God’s vision for the church isn’t a “doom and gloom” scenario, but God also calls for the community of faith to celebrate together as a way to give thanks, build community, and grow closer to God as the Giver of every good gift.

We know there were important celebrations for the Israelite community and in Jesus’ time, and many of those celebrations are connected to the Christian calendar we keep today. This series will help us to look back at our faith ancestors so that we might look back to learn more about ourselves and look forward seeking God’s wisdom and vision for our lives and our world.

How do you disciple people to live more human lives like Jesus? You have to teach and disciple people in how to throw a good party. Are you surprised? Somewhere along the way, the church lost the art of inviting people to celebrate, which is too bad. We’ve forgotten that worship itself is a celebration of sorts. From the beginning of time and throughout Scripture, God’s people patterned their lives around celebrations, feasts, and social gatherings of many sorts.

During the past few months, we have become keenly aware of our need to stay connected to God and other people through celebrations. Sometimes that’s meant drive-by birthday parties, Facebook video greetings, and even Zoom weddings! In the waning days of summer, we will look at the seven feasts given to the Jewish people by God through Moses and two celebrations from the New Testament. And you and your friends, neighbors, coworkers, and relatives are invited to join us!

- <https://www.vergenetwork.org/2016/08/02/the-sacrament-of-party/>
- <https://www.smallgroups.com/articles/2017/sacrament-of-party.html>
- <https://spiritualregurgitations.com/2016/08/08/the-sacrament-of-the-party-hmmm/>
- <http://www.cpcdanville.org/ministries/worship-arts/media/the-ministry-of-reconciliation-the-sacrament-of-party/>
- <https://loving-community.net/a-season-of-good-news-the-sacrament-of-party-10-celebrations-in-10-days/>

Ideas for the series:

- Party decorations – balloons, noisemakers, etc.
- Invitation to Rabbi Alan Alpert to share about Old Testament festivals

- Lift up celebrations that have happened during the last few months: birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, retirements, graduations, end of the school year, other milestones, etc.
- Focus on hospitality in Biblical times as a mandate, not a choice
- **Weekly reflections on how times of celebration, sharing a meal, meeting new people, etc. has changed how we see one another and our world**

August 23, 2020: “Party Time is Holy Time” 12th Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM

Scripture: Leviticus 23: 1-44 (selected verses) project v. 1-4 (New Living Translation)

¹The LORD said to Moses,

²“Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. These are the LORD’s appointed festivals, which you are to proclaim as official days for holy assembly.

³“You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of complete rest, an official day for holy assembly. It is the LORD’s Sabbath day, and it must be observed wherever you live.

⁴“In addition to the Sabbath, these are the LORD’s appointed festivals, the official days for holy assembly that are to be celebrated at their proper times each year.

Then **use slides:**

- The Passover and Unleavened Bread (v. 4-8) – Christ is Passover Lamb, Holy Communion
- Firstfruits (v. 9-14) - Easter
- Feast of Weeks (v. 15-22) – Pentecost – Acts 2 - Harvest
- Feast of Trumpets (v. 23-25) – New Year – Rosh Hashanah
- Day of Atonement (v. 26-32) – connection to Lent
- Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (v. 33-44) – Sukkot – John 7 – connection to Transfiguration

Synopsis: Jesus was raised in a Jewish household, which included celebrating feast days/holy days. Holidays (holy days) offer structure to our lives and remind us of the call to celebrate God’s goodness in good times and in hard times.

Felt need: To better understand Biblical feasts and celebrations and that celebration is sacramental (reminding us of God’s grace and love in our lives)

Visuals: Projection of comparison of Feast Days and Christian holidays (holy days)

Media:

- Pictures of parties and celebrations?
- “Restore Celebrations.” Length: 1:42. Cost: Free with our subscription. As children we all knew how to celebrate, but sadly as we grow older we lose sight of its benefit. It’s easier than ever to sit out of the celebration and put your energy to other things.

<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/31571/restore-celebration>

Related info:

Activity:

Music: Great Is Thy Faithfulness (UMH 140)

August 30, 2020: “Keep It Flowing” 13th Sunday after Pentecost - LIVESTREAM

Scripture: John 2: 1-11 (New Living Translation) “Jesus Changes Water into Wine”

¹The next day there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, ²and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. ³The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no more wine.”

⁴“Dear woman, that’s not our problem,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.”

⁵But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

⁶Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” When the jars had been filled, ⁸he said, “Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies.” So the servants followed his instructions.

⁹When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. ¹⁰“A host always serves the best wine first,” he said. “Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!”

¹¹This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Scripture references: Luke 14: 7-14 (King’s banquet) and Luke 14: 15-24 (wedding feast)

Synopsis: Jesus’ first miracle happens in the context of a wedding – an important celebration for family and community. His attention to hospitality and keeping the celebration going is a challenge and reminder to us that God’s grace is shown in the context of celebration.

Felt need: To hear God’s call to show hospitality – and to receive hospitality from others

Visuals:

Media:

- “Wedding at Cana.” Length: 9:29. Cost: \$15.00. Peter and Andrew attend a wedding with Jesus and the other disciples. As newly called disciples they aren’t completely sure why they are at this wedding or even why Jesus has called them. When the wine runs out they are ready to leave, but just then a miracle happens.
<https://www.tedandcompany.com/videos/wedding-at-cana/>
- “Water to Wine.” Length: 2:05. Cost: \$15.00. Visual liturgy by The Work of the People.
<https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/8030/water-to-wine>

Related info: RADICAL HOSPITALITY is one of the five practices of fruitful congregations (Schnase)

Activity: “Bible Stories for Kids: Changing Water into Wine” skit. Length: 3:00. Cost: \$11.99.

Actors: Jesus, Mary the Mother of Jesus, Disciple, Servant. A light-hearted kids’ version of John 2: 1-11. <https://skitguys.com/scripts/bible-stories-for-kids-changing-water-into-wine>

Music: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee (UMH 89), Our God (water you turned into wine)

September 6, 2020: “An Open Table”

14th Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM

Labor Day weekend

Lectionary: April 2, 2018; May 6, 2018

Scripture: Acts 10: 1-48 (New Living Translation) “Cornelius and Peter”

Cornelius Calls for Peter

¹In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment.

²He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. ³One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said.

⁴Cornelius stared at him in terror. "What is it, sir?" he asked the angel.

And the angel replied, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! ⁵Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. ⁶He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore."

⁷As soon as the angel was gone, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier, one of his personal attendants. ⁸He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa.

Peter Visits Cornelius

⁹The next day as Cornelius's messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon, ¹⁰and he was hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. ¹¹He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners. ¹²In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds. ¹³Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat them."

¹⁴"No, Lord," Peter declared. "I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean."

¹⁵But the voice spoke again: "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." ¹⁶The same vision was repeated three times. Then the sheet was suddenly pulled up to heaven.

¹⁷Peter was very perplexed. What could the vision mean? Just then the men sent by Cornelius found Simon's house. Standing outside the gate, ¹⁸they asked if a man named Simon Peter was staying there.

¹⁹Meanwhile, as Peter was puzzling over the vision, the Holy Spirit said to him, "Three men have come looking for you. ²⁰Get up, go downstairs, and go with them without hesitation. Don't worry, for I have sent them."

²¹So Peter went down and said, "I'm the man you are looking for. Why have you come?"

²²They said, "We were sent by Cornelius, a Roman officer. He is a devout and God-fearing man, well respected by all the Jews. A holy angel instructed him to summon you to his house so that he can hear your message." ²³So Peter invited the men to stay for the night. The next day he went with them, accompanied by some of the brothers from Joppa.

²⁴They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵As Peter entered his home, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter pulled him up and said, "Stand up! I'm a human being just like you!" ²⁷So they talked together and went inside, where many others were assembled.

²⁸Peter told them, "You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean. ²⁹So I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. Now tell me why you sent for me."

³⁰Cornelius replied, "Four days ago I was praying in my house about this same time, three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly, a man in dazzling clothes was standing in front of me. ³¹He told me, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your gifts to the poor have been noticed by God! ³²Now send messengers to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. He is staying in the home of Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore.' ³³So I sent for you at once, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here, waiting before God to hear the message the Lord has given you."

The Gentiles Hear the Good News

³⁴Then Peter replied, “I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. ³⁵In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. ³⁶This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee, after John began preaching his message of baptism. ³⁸And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

³⁹“And we apostles are witnesses of all he did throughout Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a cross, ⁴⁰but God raised him to life on the third day. Then God allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to the general public, but to us whom God had chosen in advance to be his witnesses. We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²And he ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead. ⁴³He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name.”

The Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

⁴⁴Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. ⁴⁵The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. ⁴⁶For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter asked, ⁴⁷“Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?” ⁴⁸So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

Synopsis: Parties can be transformative experiences – both for the inviter and invited. When we spend time around the table together, we get to know one another and understand one another better. This time can help us to overcome prejudices, tear down assumptions, and break down barriers to true community and Kingdom living.

Our social connections can allow for more spiritual connections and an opportunity to share our faith.

Felt need: To hear the challenge to open our tables (in our homes and our church) by inviting others in to share a meal

Visuals: Open Table logo, right.

Media:

- “How Radically Ordinary Hospitality Changed Rosaria Butterfield’s Life.” Length: 6:09. Cost: Free. What did God use to draw a radical, committed unbeliever to himself? Did God take her to an evangelistic rally? Or, since she had her doctorate in literature, did he use something in print? No, God used an invitation to dinner in a modest home, from a humble couple who lived out the gospel daily, simply, and authentically. <https://www.crossway.org/articles/how-radically-ordinary-hospitality-changed-rosaria-butterfields-life/> Note from Karen: We might be able to shorten this slightly.
- “Tea Party.” Length: 1:35. Cost: Not sure if we can get it without a subscription. What does authentic community look like? In this poetic illustration, women and girls gather around a



table for a night of food, fun, and fellowship.

<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/139876>

- “Peter and the Vision.” Length: 5:57. Cost: \$15.00. In this scene, Acts 10:1-23 is explored. Peter wrestles with being told by the angel to eat things that are considered unclean according to the Law, and to tell a man who is not a Jew about Jesus.
<https://www.tedandcompany.com/videos/peter-and-the-vision-video-download/>
- “Peter and Cornelius Vision.” Length: 2:01. Cost: Free. Prayer, fasting and vision reveal that the Gospel was meant for all people. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buxm2dnUK3k>

Related info: “Build a longer table, not a taller fence.”

Activity: Holy Communion

Music: