

**“A COVENANT OF HOPE”**  
**WENDY HAMILTON, GUEST PREACHER**  
**OPEN DOOR MCC**

**Gleanings from the Liturgy**

February 25, 2018

**Opening Words:** (Carole King)

When you're down and troubled and you need some love and care  
and nothing is going right, close your eyes and think of Me  
I will be there to brighten even your darkest night.

**You just call out my name and you know I will be there.**

**Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall,**

**All you have to do is call.**

If the sky above you grows dark and full of clouds, and  
that old north wind begins to blow, keep your head  
together and call My name out loud.

**You just call out my name and you know I will be there.**

**Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall,**

**All you have to do is call.**

**Welcome**

Bless each one who is here safely, and blessings on all who are away this week. Thank you for coming to Open Door MCC on the the second Sunday of Lent and the fourth and final Sunday of Black History Month

MCC and Open Door have a special outreach to vulnerable communities and those in solidarity: Love is our greatest moral value and resisting exclusion is a primary focus of our ministry. We are and want to be community where everyone is the family of God, and where all parts of our being are welcomed at God's table. This morning I'm grateful for each one of you.

**Opening Prayer**

Abandon the illusion you're a self-contained individual  
Be a part of this wounded world, and find yourself with Christ.  
Set aside your own desires, give yourself fully for others;  
Be the hands and heart of Jesus.  
Renounce self-protection, accept your brokenness,  
and reach out for love.  
Let go of your own plans. Join in the healing of the world.  
You will not be alone.

**Amen**

**Passing the Peace**

*Weave, weave, weave us together.*  
*Weave us together in unity and love.*  
*Weave, weave, weave us together.*  
*Weave us together, together in love.*

**First Reading:** Genesis 17:1-7,15-16 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to Abram, and said to him, “I am God

Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

This is the word of God. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 22:23-31 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

You who fear God, praise God! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify God;  
stand in awe of God, all you offspring of Israel!

**For God did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;**

**God did not hide God’s face from me, but heard when I cried to God.**

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

My vows I will pay before those who fear God.

**The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek God shall praise God**

**May your hearts live forever!**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to God;

and all the families of the nations shall worship before God.

**For dominion belongs to God, and God rules over the nations.**

**To God, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;**

**before God shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for God.**

Posterity will serve God; future generations will be told about God,

and proclaim God’s deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that God has done it.

**Second Reading:** Romans 4:13-25 (NRSV, NCCC trans., inclusified)

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what God had promised. Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

This is the word of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Meister Eckard said, if the only prayer you ever say is “thank you”, it is enough.  
Thank you!

God is with you!

**And also with you!**

Let us open our hearts!

**We open them to God.**

Let us give God thanks and praise!

**It is a good and joyful thing to do!**

**Closing Blessing (Ricky Martin)**

Repentance is not feeling guilty or saying you're sorry.

Repentance is changing what you do.

Love isn't something you do,

Love is something you become.

Go in peace

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS ([click here](#))

**Please join us online!**

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/welcome.opendoormcc>

Prayer Chain: [ODMCCprayerchain@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ODMCCprayerchain@yahoogroups.com) (subject: JOIN PRAYER)

Newsletter Listserve: <mailto:rev-3-8@opendoormcc.org?subject=JOIN NEWS>

Sermons' text and audio, prayers, and readings are available [here](#) on our Website each week.

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Montgomery County SURJ is learning, teaching, and witnessing against racial injustice. Join them on FaceBook at <https://www.facebook.com/surjmocomd/>.

Open Door is now able to accept company matching funds. Please look into whether you work for a company that offers matching funds and let us know how to help you double your offering to the church! You can also donate to Open Door through the United Way. Ask us how!

If you are so moved, you might donate additional monies to the “Do Unto Others” fund, which allows Open Door to help folks who need emergencies monies for necessities. Just mark your gift DUO or “Do Unto Others” in the memo line. Bless you! If you need emergency assistance, please speak to Rev. Miller or any Board Member.

Open Door needs you! There are lots of ways to get involved. Where does your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet?

Frederick's LGBTQ Community Center is scheduling community and small-group get-togethers and activities. Find out more on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/TheFrederickCenter?>