

Generation to Generation

Worshiping God through the Ages

The Sending of the Seventy

Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell
May 21, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

Reflecting back on Pastor Charlene's message, *The Sending of the Twelve*, where might God be calling you to be on the move? A new ministry, a new perspective, new or renewed relationships? What do you need to let go of in order to be on the move? How can Jesus accompany you? How can your community pray for you?

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Luke 10:1-24

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, "Even the dust of your town

that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near." I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.

'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But at the judgement it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades. 'Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.'

The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!' He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you.'

Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'

At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.'

Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.'

1. Since the pandemic, churches, as well as other service organizations, face the challenge of finding people willing to serve. It seems hard for people to step into serving. Why do you think this may be so?
2. (Read Luke 10.1-16) In chapter 9, the mission of the 12 represents the mission to the covenant people Israel. This is the mission of the 70, or as in some manuscripts the 72. Here the mission, the number of 70/72, represents the Gentile peoples. Luke is drawing attention to the fact that Jesus' ministry was not nationalistic but burdened with a concern for all peoples. Make a list of his instructions. What do you find interesting and odd here? How would you describe the wisdom Jesus is providing?
3. (Read Luke 10.17-23) Upon returning everyone is rejoicing. What does Jesus say they should truly be rejoicing in? In activities, service projects, and missions for God where there is a great response, where should our rejoicing be truly rooted? Has your joy over an outcome of serving overshadowed the joy of being a child of God? When? Where?
4. In these verses what does Jesus take joy in?
5. What brings you joy in serving God?

Respond

What are some tangible ways you can put these learnings into practice? What hindrances (internally and/or externally) could you anticipate? What are the potential blessings?

Pray

Allow ample time to not only hear from one another how we can hold each other in our prayers during the coming week but also to pray together for God's grace to flow over each concern.

Generation to Generation

Worshiping God through the Ages

The Sending of the Twelve

Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell
May 14, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

Where were you seen this week? Describe what that meant to you. Who did you see? How did you express that connection? Describe what that meant to you? To the other person? Sharing your experience with your group members will be a source of encouragement and hope!

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Luke 9:1-6, 28-36

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ²and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. ³He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. ⁴Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him.

They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

1. When were you given something to do, sent on some mission or given a task that you did not feel ready for? What happened?
2. Given such a demanding mission (this does involve public speaking, demons and curing diseases) why do you think Jesus does not permit the twelve to take things you would usually need for a safe journey?
3. When we are asked to serve in what is unknown territory we can be painfully aware of not being received or accepted. What is the wisdom that addresses this uncomfortable situation in v.4?
4. If you are struggling with trust in doing God's will and God asks you to go further with less assurance, how do you respond? To whom do you turn? What do you pray?
5. What are some tangible ways you can put these learnings into practice? What hindrances (internally and/or externally) could you anticipate? What are the potential blessings?

Respond

What commitment or action did the message inspire you to make or take?

Pray

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Generation to Generation

Worshiping God through the Ages

To See and Be Seen

Rev. Dr. Mark Labberton
May 7, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

As you continued to ponder Tom's message, what did you uncover in your "suitcase" that you hadn't noticed before? How has your perspective on the contents changed with this increased awareness? What next steps are you considering as you unpack? Sharing your experience with your group members will be a source of encouragement and hope!

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Luke 8:40-56

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. ⁴¹ Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus's feet and began pleading with him to come to his house, ⁴² for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying.

As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. ⁴³ Now there was a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all she had on physicians,[a] no one could cure her. ⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, and immediately her flow of blood stopped. ⁴⁵ Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When they all denied it, Peter[b] said, "Master, the crowds are hemming you in and pressing against you." ⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I noticed that power had gone out from me." ⁴⁷ When the woman realized that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.

⁴⁸ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

⁴⁹ While he was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer." ⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, he replied, "Do not be afraid. Only believe, and she will be saved." ⁵¹ When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James and the child's father and mother. ⁵² Everyone was weeping and grieving for her, but he said, "Do not cry, for she is not dead but sleeping." ⁵³ And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But taking her by the hand, he called out, "Child, get up!" ⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she stood up at once, and he directed them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were astounded, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

1. What about this text surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged or comforted you?
2. What new insights or deeper understanding about these encounter with Jesus did you receive from the message?
3. What are some tangible ways you can put these learnings into practice? What hindrances (internally and/or externally) could you anticipate? What are the potential blessings?

Respond

What commitment or action did the message inspire you to make or take?

Pray

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Generation to Generation

Worshiping God through the Ages

Endings as Beginnings

Rev. Dr. Tom Elson
April 30, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

Reflecting on your unfolding life story from this past week, where were you able to embrace child-like wonder, in a particular situation, in a relationship, with God? How did that shift in perspective impact your experience or even an outcome? Sharing your experience with your group members will be a source of encouragement and hope!

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Ephesians 3:14-21

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶ I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit ¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸ I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

1. What's in your suitcase?
2. Which of the four gospel responses do you most resonate with, and why?
3. How does Christ's work enable us to travel without luggage?

Respond

What commitment or action did the message inspire you to make or take?

Pray

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Generation to Generation

Worshiping God through the Ages

Tiny Theologians
Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell
April 23, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

Reflecting on your unfolding life story from this past week, where did you recognize the risen Jesus in your midst? Were there places or circumstances in your life where you had given up and Jesus “showed up”? Sharing your experience with your group members will be a source of encouragement and hope!

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

1. What about this text surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged or comforted you?
2. What new insights or deeper understanding did you receive in dwelling with the disciples’ interaction with Jesus in this text? Why was Jesus “indignant”? What new way(s) of being is Jesus inviting the disciples to embrace?
3. Where in your unfolding story is God inviting you to embrace a child-like wonder? What hindrances (internally and/or externally) could you anticipate? What are the potential blessings?

Respond

What commitment or action did the message inspire you to make or take?

Pray

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Stay for the Bread

Tori Bommarito
Candidate Under Care

April 16, 2023

Open in Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit into your gathering, giving God praise for your community and this journey of discovery and connection.

Gather

As you reflect upon our Lenten journey through wilderness confronting our fears of the unknown, being invisible, powerless, silence, pain or not having enough...

Which of these fears challenge you right now? Are there other fears creating a wilderness for you?

What encouragement did you receive during the Lenten season?

How have you been changed over the course of the journey (inward or outward)?

Listen, Converse, Imagine

Read together Luke 24:13-35

¹³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹ He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." ²⁵ Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.

²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³ That same hour they

got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.

³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

1. What about this text surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged or comforted you?
2. What new insights or deeper understanding about the disciples encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus did you receive from Tori's message?
3. What are some tangible ways you can put these learnings into practice? What hindrances (internally and/or externally) could you anticipate? What are the potential blessings?

Respond

What commitment or action did the message inspire you to make or take?

Pray

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