

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Women's Ministry

Dear Ladies,

Which do you find yourself doing most often: holding your breath or exhaling? Circumstances and situations often lead me to “hold my breath”. The ongoing list that is never completed, the tension with a loved one, the reality that I am disappointing others, relationships that are out of whack—the list goes on, and I hold my breath. The restrictions and the uncertainty that Covid has placed on life over the past fifteen months have caused me to hold my breath. Waiting for others to respond causes me to hold my breath.

For four summers in college, I worked as a lifeguard at a camp with a swim lake, not a swimming pool. In case a camper went missing, we were trained to cover the bottom of that lake in less than three minutes. There were places where that lake was fifteen feet deep. It was muddy and it was dark. We had to not simply hold our breath, but to exhale throughout the process. Exhaling under water is what allowed us to press on.

How do you exhale when you are in the midst of a trial? When you are waiting on the results of a medical test? When your job is uncertain? When you have a fight with your spouse? When your prodigal child is moving farther and farther away? When your toddler has been up several nights in a row with an illness? When you know there are things in your life that need to change but you are stuck? When life doesn't look like you thought it would or wanted it to?

When I think of exhaling I think about being able to release breath but also tension. I think about getting rid of what is weighing me down and relaxing. How can I best do that? By remembering who God is! I have been sitting in parts of Isaiah recently and the following passages have allowed me to exhale, to breathe, to remember, and to relax. As you read through these, consider who God is, rest in His everlasting love, stop holding your breath, and exhale.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Isaiah 40:28,29

“You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off”; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:9b, 10

For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I am the one who helps you." Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I am the one who helps you, declares the Lord; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 41:13, 14

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Isaiah 43:1-3b

I hope that you will use these and other scripture passages to exhale. May you rest in our heavenly Father, may you abide in Him. We cannot do his work apart from Him. And there is a lot of work to be done, especially now that Covenant is opening back up.

This summer we are having Summer Salad Suppers at Covenant. [Click here](#) to see the schedule and additional information. We are asking that you RSVP this year. This will help us plan accordingly. However, if you do not RSVP and you find that you can join us, do not hesitate to come!

This summer we are having in-person Book Studies. Several start later in the summer so it is not too late to sign up. [Click here](#) to sign up.

This summer we are worshipping in person, and we are meeting for Sunday School. Members, please be on the lookout for new and unfamiliar faces. You are our welcoming committee. You are the front-line greeters. You are the hostesses on Sunday morning; please move towards those you do not know. Please introduce yourself, greet them, offer to help them find a Sunday School class, the nursery, the youth room, or even the restroom! A friendly smile (we can see them now!) goes a long way. If you are not sure how to find what they are looking for, find a staff member—we want to help.

This summer we are having VBS. We would love to have you volunteer. There are many different ways to help and not all of them involve being in a classroom with children. [Click here](#) to volunteer.

This summer we are having Created for a Purpose. We are going to need some help cutting fabric, making bagged lunches, and several other things that you can do for one day for two hours or five days for lots of hours! [Click here](#) to sign up. No experience necessary! Grab a friend who wants to get involved and meet people. This is easy!

I count myself so blessed to partner with each of you in studying God's word and doing God's work. May we exhale this summer together as we trust in Christ alone.

Blessings,
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