

WATCH NIGHT

Tuesday, December 31, 2013

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The unit you are viewing, Watch Night, is a compact unit. This means that it is not a complete commentary of the Scripture(s) selected for this day on the calendar, nor does it have a full, supporting cultural resource unit and worship unit. Instead, to enliven the imagination of preachers and teachers, we have provided a sermonic outline, songs, suggested books, and suggested articles, links, and videos. For additional information, see Watch Night in the archives of the Lectionary for 2009-2012.

Lection – Jeremiah 31:31–33; Hebrews 12:18–25 (New Revised Standard Version)

I. Description of the Liturgical Moment

New Year's Eve is a cultural celebration for Americans. Each year, on the last day on the calendar, people of every class, creed, and color celebrate the ending of one year and the beginning of another. Americans gather in homes, apartments, churches, crowded bars, or in city streets officially celebrating the turning of a personal or communal page.

Watch Night, for many African Americans, is a source of celebration of God's faithfulness in the past year and a primer for the future manifestation of God's divine benevolence. As much as Watch Night has turned into a time of celebration, it must also be a time of taking stock of our commitment to our covenant with God wrought through Jesus Christ.

For African Americans, Watch Night is centered in the timeless theme of freedom. On December 31, 1862, also known as Freedom's Eve, many slaves huddled in drafty, dimly lit, churches for prayer meetings awaiting the official news of their legal emancipation from slavery. This time of prayerful expectancy is commemorated every year in many churches by a year-end worship service that usually greets the New Year with prayer. Prayer is vital to Watch Night's history. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, is believed to have borrowed the Moravian Christians' practice of praying in the New Year; Methodists were among the earliest denomination to hold formal Watch Night services.

Freedom's Eve for the enslaved and for free Blacks was a time for prayerful reflection on the promises of God and a humble but powerful expectation for God to free them from all forms of oppression. James M. Washington states in an eloquent prayer, "We find it to inconvenient to wait on Thee. Grant us the desire to celebrate the sacrament of waiting."¹ Watch Night is centered in freedom and rooted in the fertile soil of waiting on God to move while also examining if we are ready to move with God.

II. Watch Night: Sermonic Outline

A. Sermonic Text(s): Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 12:18-25

Jeremiah 31:31-33

(v. 31) The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. (v. 32) It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. (v. 33) But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Hebrews 12:18-25

(v. 18) You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, (v. 19) and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (v. 20) For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death." (v. 21) Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." (v. 22) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, (v. 23) and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to

the spirits of the righteous made perfect, (v. 24) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

(v. 25) See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven!

B. Possible Titles

- i. It's Time to Take Stock
- ii. It's Time for a Check Up
- iii. Check Your Covenant

C. Point(s) of Exegetical Inquiry

Whenever one is to preach from two texts, it is essential that during exegetical work, primary thought be given to creating one seamless message and or sermon. This is best achieved by selecting **one over-arching theme** upon which to focus. Possible themes present in these texts: covenants, personal assessment, and enhancing relationships.

Covenants are an essential part of the Old Testament, its rituals, laws, and the relationship between the people of Israel and their God. In our first text, Jeremiah addresses the covenant between Israel and God. Jeremiah tells the people, God will ultimately write His will on their hearts. What circumstances made this necessary?

In Hebrews 12, the writer speaks of Mt. Zion and earlier speaks of Mt. Sinai. Teachers and preachers will need to exegete what it means for believers to have come before Mt. Sinai in the Old Testament and before Mt. Zion, which is representative of the new Divine-human relationship brought forth by Christ. Preachers may also want to address the portion of the Hebrew text that speaks of the blood of Christ speaking a **better** word than the blood of Abel. Why is this? How is it related to our covenant with Christ?

III. Introduction

As much as anything else, Watch Night is a time for believers to take year-end stock of their covenant with God, a covenant that must be heart deep as well as head deep. God is faithful to us. Throughout the year, God has been speaking to us regarding us, and others. Throughout the year, God has attempted to direct our path, cleanse our hearts, and lead us into all righteousness until we become like Christ, the son of the Living God, our Savior and our mediator of the New Covenant. We enter this covenant through acceptance of the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. We keep this covenant (and thereby show our faithfulness to God) through prayer, obedience to the Holy Scriptures, and love of our neighbor.

Watch Night is a look back and a look forward. As we find ourselves in this dual posture, we must maintain a singular focus. We cannot live in the past but we must use it to learn what is further required of us to live in covenant with our God as we look to the future. Our focus must remain on our covenant (our relationship) with our Savior at all times. We cannot allow world circumstances, no matter how bleak, or personal circumstances, no matter how bleak or blessed, to complicate or become a hindrance to our relationship with our Savior. This must remain our focus; it is controlling of everything else.

IV. Moves/Points

Move/Point One – Out with the old covenants.

a. This is a brief explanation of the old covenant.

The Prophet Jeremiah made plain that what had been, “the covenant made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke,”—would be no more. This covenant “was the one made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. The mention of the house of Judah is significant, because it distinguished the "old covenant" from the covenant of the priesthood, which was made with the house of Levi. The old covenant was also the one that had the Decalogue in it as a basic component.”² In other words, The Old Testament enumerates multiple covenants God made with God’s people. Both the Northern and Southern areas were included in the New Covenant.

b. The new covenant supersedes all past covenants.

The New Covenant supersedes all of the former covenants, meaning the entire religious system of the Children of Israel. This supersession is significant because just as the Children of Israel and their ancestors could not keep the covenants they made with God, neither could we. All have fallen short. During each Watch Night, the songs, sermons, and even the sacraments, remind us of all of the instances where we fell short. We probably did not lose the weight we wanted to lose. We probably did not do most of the things on our bucket list. We probably did not improve our relationships with someone from whom we were estranged. We probably did not even study our Bible and pray more although we knew we needed to do so. Even with the new covenant in place, we still fall short.

Just imagine what shape we would be in if we were still under the Old Covenant and all of its **ifs**. Deuteronomy 28 alone provides one “if” after another, and the repercussions for failure: Deut. 28:1 “*If you will only obey the LORD your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.*” Deut. 28:15 says, “*But if you will not obey the LORD your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.*”

Then, there is Deut. 28:58-59, “*If you do not diligently observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, fearing this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, then the LORD will overwhelm both you and your offspring with severe and lasting afflictions and grievous and lasting maladies. Thank God, there is a New Covenant, undergirded by grace and mercy, written on hearts, not tablets, and parchment.*”

Move/Point Two – In with the new, but what is the new way?

a. Is the way of the CROSS the new way?

The law written on tablets and parchment would never be kept and could never be kept. God, in His infinite wisdom and unfailing love, knew what had to happen. A phrase I learned in seminary comes to mind here—Jesus became the *propitiation* for the sins of the world. My grandmother would never use the word propitiation to describe what Christ did at Calvary. She would say, “At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light and the burdens of my heart rolled away. It was their by faith, I received my sight, and now I am happy all the day. At the cross, at the cross, at the cross.”³

For other Black women, especially womanist, it was not at the cross where they were able to “see the light.” Rather, the cross is but one example of the world’s vicious attempt to end the vision Christ had to save the world.⁴

b. Liberation is the old and the NEW way.

JoAnn Terrell, in Power in the Blood? The Cross in African American Experience, proposes that we view Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross and his bloodshed and the bloodshed of all martyrs, as sacramental signs that testify to the value God places on human life. She suggests that the tragic, although foreseeable, result of his confrontation with evil was bloodshed. For Terrell, the suffering of Christ at Calvary “points toward liberation.”⁵ In other words, the sacramental significance of the blood of Christ overcomes the evil intentions of his murderers. Accordingly, for Terrell and many womanist, the cross is not the goal of Jesus’ life but a moment in his entire life. This theological view, Terrell and others assert, is a way to redeem oppressive powers.

The life and death of Christ were intended to point us towards liberation—salvific liberation, social liberation, and our personal liberation. This is all gained through the New Covenant. This is the NEW that we are to embrace in the coming year and every year.

c. Mt. Zion is reflective of our new experience.

Through the New Covenant, all of humanity, not just the Children of Israel, is brought into view. All people of every nation are blessed through it and it affords special privileges to no one.

In Hebrews 12, the writer begins by discussing Mt. Sinai, and then in our text mentions Mt. Zion. The two are juxtaposed in Hebrews 12. When Israel came to Mt. Sinai, they faced a mountain that was fenced off. God spoke to Israel from Mt. Sinai, but warned them to stay away from it. Mt. Sinai was a place marked by fear. But, those who have come to Mt. Zion have found a place that is loving, and forgiving. At Mount Sinai, only Moses was allowed to get near God. At Mt. Zion, there is a great cloud of witnesses—“the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven” and there is “plenty good room,” for everyone else. Mt. Sinai brings with it the Old Covenant and the blood sacrifice of animals. Mt. Zion brings with it a New Covenant and the life sacrifice of God’s son. This sacrifice speaks even louder than the blood sacrifice made by man to God in Bible. The first blood sacrifice was made by Able.

Move/Point Three – Accept the new for the new year and beyond.

a. The Children of Israel were repeatedly warned about their behavior towards God.

From the early leaders of Israel such as (Moses, Joshua, and The Judges) to the later prophets such as (Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and of course, Jeremiah) God kept sending messages to warn Israel that their stiff-necked, disobedient behavior would cost them. They would not escape suffering simply because they were God’s chosen. They would wander in the wilderness for forty years. Their temples would be overrun by conquering nations. Thousands would die in familiar and unfamiliar lands, all because of their failure to heed the warnings of God’s spokespersons.

b. We have been warned.

As each New Year rolls in, it not only comes with resolutions and remembrances, of the past year, but also with divine mandates that will not be altered by the changing of a calendar. In fact, each movement of the calendar should serve as another reminder to heed the words and wishes of the Divine for our lives. We have been warned, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”⁶ We have been warned, “Cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless, or the widow.”⁷ We have been warned, “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”⁸ We have been warned, “...Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”⁹ We have been warned, “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”¹⁰ We have been warned....

c. Heed the warnings of the one who warns from heaven.

Just as those to whom Jeremiah wrote to warn them that they would suffer if they did not heed the words sent through God’s prophets, neither will we. We are to take seriously the warnings of our doctors, our bosses, and respected and trusted friends and colleagues. They are important. But more important are the warnings of the “one who warns from heaven.” Heeding these warnings will determine our destiny on earth and our eternal

destiny. Heeding these warnings will affect our family, friends, community, and even the world. The “one who warns from heaven,” unlike other warnings that we believe we can ignore at little or no peril to ourselves, are always to be heeded.

V. Celebration

Praise the one who warns from heaven and has given us a New Covenant. Our great God loves us enough to protect us from others and ourselves. This great measure of love and mercy merits our praise. As a new year rolls in, that will be our posture, praise for the One who loves us enough to warn us so that we do not forfeit so great a reward as awaits those who Love the Lord and diligently seek him! All praise to our God.

VI. Descriptive Details in These Passages

Jeremiah 31:31-33

Sights: Covenants; ancestors; God walking with people and holding their hands; the land of Egypt; people breaking covenants; God as a husband; the House of Israel; God writing laws on the hearts of people; Israel and God in harmony;

Sounds: The sounds occurring as covenants were broken; people walking out of Egypt; and

Colors: Beige parchment; pink hearts; and the reddish-brown water of the Red Sea.

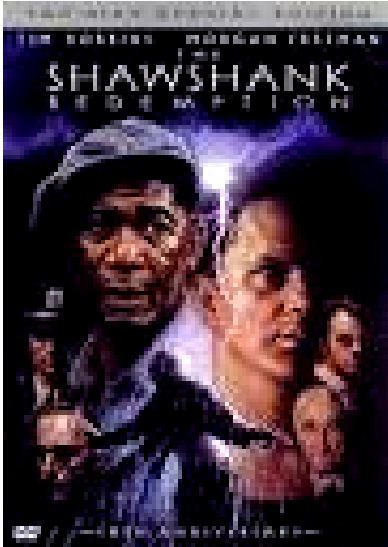
Hebrews 12:18-25

Sights: A blazing fire; darkness; gloom; persons begging; animals; Mt. Sinai; stoned animals; Moses trembling; Mt. Zion (the city of the living God); angels in festal attire; the assembly of the firstborn; sprinkled blood;

Sounds: A tempest; a trumpet being blown; a voice whose words made hearers beg; animals being stoned; sounds of a joyous gathering; and

Colors: Black mountains; a silver trumpet; angels dressed in gold; the assembly of the first-born dressed in multiple colors (red, gold, purple, white); and red blood.

VII. Illustration



One of my favorite movies is The Shawshank Redemption. Andy is a straight-laced bank manager who is falsely convicted of murdering his wife. He is sentenced to Shawshank Prison and befriends a gentleman named Red. Because of Andy's monetary skills, the warden forces Andy to keep a set of books of all the side deals of the warden. Red was Andy's constant friend, through good and bad times. Andy always had his eye on breaking out. Andy makes his move and climbs through five hundred yards of human waste with a plastic bag of clothes and necessities. He is finally free and has escaped with the warden's ill-gotten money as recompense for his mis-treatment as an innocent man. He sends Red a post card. When Red is paroled, he follows a map to the place where Andy had put aside money for him to meet him where he is. He finally reaches Andy on a Mexican beach.

Andy, like Christ, endured false imprisonment and shame in order to connect with us, who are like Red. When Andy broke out of Shawshank Prison, it was akin to Jesus breaking the chains of death and ascending to heaven. Andy sending a postcard is Christ sending us messages wherever we are. Distance didn't cancel the relationship/covenant they had. Red finally is able to connect with Andy because Red never broke his relationship with Andy. No matter what happens, we must always resolve to go into the New Year keeping our connection to Christ just as Red stayed connected to Andy and Andy to him.

VIII. Songs to Accompany This Sermon

A. Well-known Song(s)

- Give Me a Clean Heart. By Margaret Pleasant Douroux
- Faithful Is Our God. By Jules Bartholomew
- I know Who Holds Tomorrow. By Ira F. Stamphill

B. Modern Song(s) (Written between 2000-2012)

- How Great Is Our God. By Jesse Reeves and Chris Tomlin
- Never Would Have Made It. By Marvin Sapp and Matthew Brownie
- With My Whole Heart. By Nolan Williams Jr.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENsyJQ5_e48
- We Bless Your Name. By Nolan Williams Jr.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1h7QUvvo3A>

C. Spirituals and Hymns

- I Will Trust In the Lord. Traditional Spiritual
- God's Tomorrow. By Alfred Ackley
- I Shall Not Be Moved. Traditional Spiritual
- Higher Ground. By Johnson Oatman
- Hymns that Brought Me Through. By James Cleveland

D. Liturgical Dance Music

- Brighter Day. By Kirk Franklin
- Kumbaya. Adapted lyrics and music by Kurt Carr

E. Songs for the Period of Prayer

- Yesterday, Today, Forever. By Albert B. Simpson and J.H. Burke
- Power of a Dream. By Wintley Phipps
- It's Time to Make a Change. By Jay Terrell and Maurice Watson

F. Sermonic Selection

- Day By Day. By Caroline Sandell-Berg. Tune, (BLOTT EN DAG)
- I'll Hold On. By Jerome Armstrong, King Logan, Michael Bethany, Michael White, Reggie Miller, and Terrence Battle

- My Help Cometh from the Lord. By Mattie Moss Clark

G. Invitational Song or Instrumental

- Never Would Have Made It. By Marvin Sapp and Matthew Brownie
- Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand. Arr. by James Hall

H. Benediction Song or Instrumental

- Let the Lord Minister to Ya. By Donald Lawrence
- God Be with You ‘Til We Meet Again. By Jeremiah E. Rankin and William Tomer
- Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand. By Jennie Wilson, refrain by F.I. Eiland

Other Recommendations for Worship

At some point during your service use the Lectionary Year One Watch Night worship video, which is downloadable. This will remind your congregation that we have faced hardships before and overcome. Go the Lectionary archive and type in the words Watch Night.

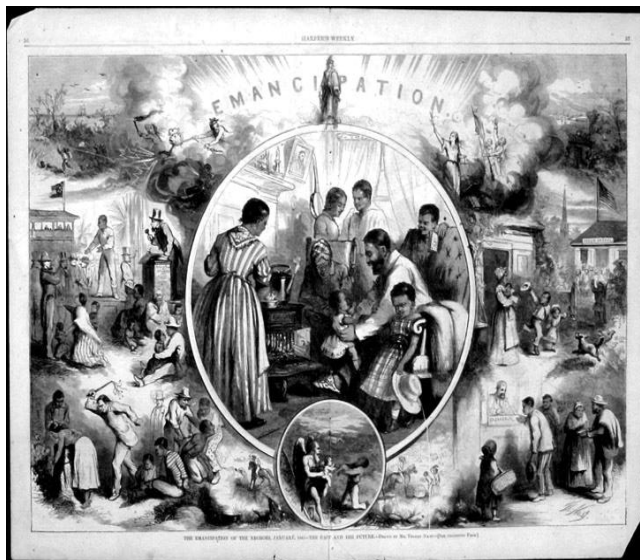
IX. Cultural Response to Significant Aspects of the Texts

Celebration is a central human action. Celebration seems to be the most meaningful when it comes from connections and experiences that are grounded in issues of personal interest or broader value. Unfortunately, it seems that our society is addicted to superficial celebration. We seem to revel in celebrating the lowest parts of our nature and the accumulation of earthly trinkets. I am concerned that Watch Night’s pleasurable and euphoric connection to a more commercial mindset can rob Christians of the opportunity to engage in an authentic Watch Night celebration by taking serious inventory of our covenant with God.

Celebration feels good but because authentic celebration costs much more in terms of endurance, faith, and character, we readily indulge in the celebration of superficial things. The addiction to superficial celebration has taken hold in churches across the country. We worship the blessings and not the blesser. In order to have a celebration that honors the history of Watch Night and the Christian imperative of covenant, we must look at ourselves and our connection to God. Brenda Aghahowa observes, “Thus, worship is the duality of God’s service to human beings and human beings service to God, as the work of the people (both in terms of ritual and social action) and as adoration and reverential fear of God.”¹¹

Authentic celebration through covenant provides the tension needed for celebration to be powerful. God provides promises to humanity because of our inability to access what is being promised on our own. God says, “ I promise” but that promise comes with responsibility. God is faithful to perform the promises and our role is to remain in covenant with the God of the promise. Our enslaved ancestors bent down on weakened knees and bowed their dignified heads to connect with the Creator of the cosmos so that they would be in proper spiritual alignment for God’s actions in the world. The lower they humbled themselves the higher they lifted their prayers to God. This provided the radical explosion of authentic celebration which foreshadowed the manifestation and realization of God’s promises. We need to dig deeper in our devotion to God so that we can be properly aligned to receive the news of freedom that is coming our way.

The covenant that we are asked to keep is not a ritualistic exercise, on the contrary, it is about assuring that our hearts and lives are dedicated to Christ and his liberative work. The bible says Jesus is the mediator of the New Covenant and God’s New Covenant would be written on the hearts of the people. We cannot find authentic celebration without authentic covenant. Having Christ in our hearts and doing the works of Christ with our hands places us in the place of tension that sparks authentic celebration.



It would not be true to the history and legacy of Watch Night if we are only watching God and not watching over ourselves, taking time to ensure we are in tune with God. We must ensure our hearts and minds are always watching, especially on Watch Night!

X. Audio Visual Aids

Below are audio and visual ideas that will help reinforce the understanding of allowing Watch Night to be a space for us to take inventory of our covenant with God.

- Have a group of senior saints read aloud prayers by slaves and seniors.
- Reenact the scenario of a group of saints praying on Freedom's Eve.
- Create a video collage of pictures that show the history of African Americans beginning with early images of Watch Night services. The painting titled "Emancipation", by Thomas Nast, which follows, is the type of image that can be used.

Emancipation, By Thomas Nast

XI. Making It a Memorable Learning Moment

- The African American Registry provides historical information about Watch Night and African American points of interests.
(http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/first-watch-night-service-occurs)
- On this website the United Methodists provide their definition of Watch Night and provide *another* historical perspective on the topic.

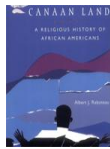
<http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?mid=258&GID=308&GMOD=VWD&GCA T=W>)

- The Los Angeles Times published a story on the 150 year anniversary of Watch Night (<http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jan/01/nation/la-na-watch-night-20130101>)
- The Huffington Post published an op-ed piece about Watch Night and provided pictures from Trinity United Church of Christ during a Watch Night service. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-joan-r-harrell/watch-night-service-in-the-black-church-in-america-150-years-_b_2389965.html#slide=1935262)

XII. Books for Further Study



Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan. More African American Special Days: 15 Additional Complete Worship Services. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005.



Albert J. Raboteau. Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans. New York: Oxford, 2001.

XIII. Notes for Select Songs

A. Well-known Song(s)

- Give Me a Clean Heart. By Margaret Pleasant Douroux
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001. #461
- Faithful Is Our God. By Jules Bartholomew
Location:
Walker, Hezekiah and the Love Fellowship Crusade. 20/85 Experiences. New York, NY: Verity, 2005.
- I know Who Holds Tomorrow. By Ira F. Stamphill
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #415

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 1987. #187

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. Nashville, TN: Triad Publications, 2005. #202

Church of God in Christ. Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Pub. Board in association with the Benson Co., 1982. #70

B. Modern Song(s) (Written between 2000-2012)

- How Great Is Our God. By Jesse Reeves and Chris Tomlin
Location:
Nelson, Jonathan & Purpose. Right Now Praise. New York, NY: Integrity, 2008.
- Never Would Have Made It. By Marvin Sapp and Matthew Brownie
Location:
Sapp, Marvin. Thirsty. New York, NY: Zomba Records, 2008.
- With My Whole Heart. By Nolan Williams Jr.
Location:
Williams, Jr. Nolan. inSpiration. Washington, DC: NeWorks Productions, 2008.
- We Bless Your Name. By Nolan Williams Jr.
Location:
Williams, Jr. Nolan. inSpiration. Washington, DC: NeWorks Productions, 2008.

C. Spirituals and Hymns

- I Will Trust In the Lord. Traditional Spiritual
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #391
- God's Tomorrow. By Alfred Ackley
Location:
Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #7
- I Shall Not Be Moved. Traditional Spiritual
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #479

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #351
- Higher Ground. By Johnson Oatman
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #419

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #354
- Hymns That Brought Me Through. By James Cleveland
Location:

Pace, Lashun, Reborn. Newton, NJ: Shanachie Records, 2011.

D. Liturgical Dance Music

- Brighter Day. By Kirk Franklin
Location:
Franklin, Kirk. The Rebirth of Kirk Franklin. Inglewood, CA: Gospocentric, 2002.
- Kumbaya. Adapted lyrics and music by Kurt Carr
Carr, Kurt and the Kurt Carr Singers. No One Else. Inglewood, CA: Gospocentric, 1998.

E. Songs for the Period of Prayer

- Yesterday, Today, Forever. By Albert B. Simpson and J.H. Burke
Location:
Yes, Lord. Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #462
- Power of a Dream. By Wintley Phipps
Location:
Power of a Dream. Palm Bay, FL: Coral Records, 1995.
- It's Time to Make a Change. By Jay Terrell and Maurice Watson
Location:
Beulahland Bible Church
1010 Newberg Avenue
Macon, GA 31206
Phone: 478-784-1555

F. Sermonic Selection

- Day By Day. By Caroline Sandell-Berg. Tune, (BLOTT EN DAG)
Location:
Online location:
www.hymnary.org/text/day_by_day_and_with_each_passing_moment
- I'll Hold On. By Jerome Armstrong, King Logan, Michael Bethany, Michael White, Reggie Miller, and Terrence Battle
Location:
Mann, Tamela. Best Days. Fort Worth, TX: Tillymann Music, 2012.
- My Help Cometh from the Lord. By Mattie Moss Clark
Location:
Clark, Twinkie. With Humility. Detroit, MI: Larry Clark Gospel, LLC. 2011

G. Invitational Song or Instrumental

- Never Would Have Made It. By Marvin Sapp and Matthew Brownie
Location:
Sapp, Marvin. Thirsty. New York, NY: Zomba Records, 2008
- Hold to God's Unchanging Hand. Arr. by James Hall
Location:
Hall, James and Worship & Praise. Live from New York at Lincoln Center.
Detroit, MI: Platinum Records, 1998.

H. Benediction Song or Instrumental

- Faithful Is Our God. By Jules Bartholomew
Location:
Hezekiah Walker and the Love Fellowship Crusade. 20/85 Experiences. New
York, NY: Verity, 2005.
- How Great Is Our God. By Jesse Reeves and Chris Tomlin
Location:
Nelson, Jonathan & Purpose. Right Now Praise. New York, NY: Integrity, 2008.
- Hold to God's Unchanging Hand. By Jennie Wilson; refrain by F.I. Eiland

Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #404

Notes

1. Washington, James M., ed. Conversations with God: Two Centuries of Prayers by African Americans. New York: Harper Collins, 1994.
2. James Burton Coffman. Coffman New Testament Commentaries (Hebrews Vol. 10). Abilene Christian University Press, 1984. pp.162-166.
3. "At the Cross." African American Heritage Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001. #264
4. See the article by Mary C. Boys, "The Cross: Should a Symbol Betrayed Be Reclaimed?" in which she outlines and discusses the views of Deloris Williams regarding the cross. Online at <http://www.crosscurrents.org/boys-cross.htm>
5. Joann Terrell. Power in the Blood? The Cross in the African American Experience. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishing, 2005.
6. Matthew 22:37, NIV
7. Deut. 27:19, KJV
8. 2nd Tim. 2:22, NIV
9. Luke 14:23, KJV
10. Micah 6:8, NIV

11. Abington, James, ed. Readings in African American Church Music and Worship. Chicago: GIA Publishing, 2001.