

## **A Children's Sermon for Denomination Sunday**

*PREPARATION: Have a picture of people celebrating, e.g. children or adults at a birthday party, fans cheering at an athletic event, people dancing at a wedding or New Year's Eve party, people clapping and singing at a church gathering, etc. You may also want to share a celebrative snack with the children or the entire congregation.*

**THIS IS A PICTURE** of people celebrating. (*You may want to be more specific about the nature of the picture.*)

There are times in all our lives when we are happy about something and we feel like celebrating. We want to sing or dance or do something special with our friends or family. We want to smile or laugh or maybe even jump up and down. Have you had a time when you were so happy about something that you wanted to celebrate? (*Allow time for responses*)

There are a great many things that happen that may make us want to celebrate: birthdays and holidays, learning how to do something special like riding a bicycle or writing our names, being with friends and family who love us, seeing a squirrel run up a tree or watching a bird soar through the sky. Even making up with your friend or your brother or sister after you've had a fight can sometimes make you feel like celebrating.

The Bible has many stories about people who were so happy that they wanted to celebrate. I am thinking of a woman named Miriam. When God saved her people, the people of Israel, from a terrible life lived in slavery to the Egyptians, she had a celebration. She began to dance and play a tambourine and sing about how thankful she was to God. And then the other women who were with her joined in the celebration. There are many stories like that.

You know, I think God likes celebrations. And that's a good thing because today we are celebrating a birthday: the birthday of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Back in the early 1800s, people were coming to the frontier and they gathered together when a minister came to town because they didn't have churches in the area then. Samuel McAdow was a Presbyterian minister on the frontier. On February 3, 1810, two other Presbyterian ministers—Finis Ewing and Samuel King—came to visit him to talk about the fact that they didn't feel like the Presbyterian Church was working hard enough and fast enough to get the ministers they needed. Samuel McAdow decided to pray all night about whether or not they needed to take actions that would later create the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Because of their faith in God and their prayers asking God to lead them, we are celebrating the birthday of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. So Happy Birthday to us all!

Let's help the whole church do a little celebrating right now by saying together a hymn of praise found in the Bible. It's Psalm 100. Maybe you know that hymns of praise and praising is a way we Christians have of celebrating. Say the words just like I say them. Are you ready? Repeat after me...

*(Read Psalm 100 in short phrases for children to repeat. Try to be as animated as possible using your voice to be descriptive. Your voice can be loud, soft, slow, fast, smooth, choppy, etc.)*

***Let us pray: Dear God, thank you for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and for being able to celebrate together. Help us to celebrate all of the things in our lives and to help give others reasons to celebrate. Amen.***

*Adapted from a children's sermon written by William Warren and the story as found in First They Prayed written by Marti Plemons.*