

Sermon by Jacquie Gibson
on the occasion of her commitment to Community Membership

November 18, 2012

I want to first thank the Church of the Covenant for all they have done for me. It is truly an honor to become a community member. Now as I am looking out, I want to thank all my friends, family and other angels in my life for taking time out in your busy schedule to hear me speak today. I appreciate it. Today is not about me, but what happens when you let go and let God take over. All Glory to God!

Before I give my sermon, I want you all to know the very reason I am alive today. It is all because of my adorable, precious and angel of a niece, McKenzie Grace Duncan! We definitely all call her angel face for a reason. I love you sweet heart! Wow, I truly stop and thank God for guiding me through life with McKenzie's eyes or any child for that matter. Children see beauty in everything.

My sermon today is one filled with gratitude, humility, forgiveness, love, loyalty, patience and clarity. Matthew Bryan Beck sings a song called Clarity. Some of the lyrics of the song say, "If you hold on to nothing just hold on to me, if you never love someone love me, if your heart is broken don't let it break you, if your heart was stolen take it back. God has truly become my clarity amongst heart break, illness, and hate. God always has let me know to always hold on to HIM. I promise you God, am all yours and I am never going to let go! Everything I have experienced in life has been worth the perseverance.

I entered this world on November 19, 1979. I am the youngest daughter of Wayne and Jean Gibson, and the baby sister to Jennifer Duncan. My family has been my rock and foundation since birth. I want to thank my family for their unconditional love. They have never rejected me from all the labels I have received in my life, such as, learning disabled and having multiple sclerosis. I would like to applaud my mom, sister and dad in heaven now. Way to go! I could never be where I am today if it was not for you all.

I have decided to move mountains in my life and have the faith of a "mustard seed." Just like my idol Martin Luther King, Jr. Boy, oh boy, did MLK Move Mountains! I

want to give my friends and family insight real quick and let you know that Martin Luther King spoke at the Lodge of the Fisherman where my dear friend Larry Farmer heard him speak to help end segregation in Lynchburg, VA. So you can imagine the chills going through my body that I get to celebrate my birthday in the same building Martin Luther King spoke in.

I am so proud to be a part of this church because Bev Cosby founder of the Church of the Covenant. Brother PG and other family members fought for humanity when others simply displayed ignorance, intolerance, and inhumane behavior. PG is here today! (PG, can you wave so my family and friends can see you that don't know you. Thank you!) I will never forget the day David took me to have lunch with PG. It truly ranks as one of my favorite lunch dates of all time! I thank David for carrying on the Cosby legacy with such class and intelligence. David truly lets the light of peace and love shine bright as he experiences his inward and outward journey.

You may want to know how I found the church and got to the point that am now of becoming a community member. David's son Kent told me after the tragedy at VT and the death of my father how his dad could help me out. It was always in the back of my mind what Kent had told me. However, it took a serious hospital stay at the end of February for me to enter the doors, and meet the man Kent told me so much about AKA as his dad and otherwise known to me as REV. It was the best decision of my life to have come to this community.

I would let to tell you what drew me into the community and made me fall in love here. It was the individuals from the L'Arche home which would be Chris playing the bongos, Cassidy as she shouts out some AMENS, Kristen as she dances with her hands. I found joy in my soul as I looked at Chris playing the bongos and how he told me her made bird houses for a local retirement home.

I forgot to mention when I entered the doors I was greeted by Will and Dolly. They truly are some of the sweetest people I know. Will could not have been a better person to welcome me in. Then he sat me by his lovely wife that I truly aspire to be more like every day. Simply put, I found my home.

I want to give you one quick example of what this community is about. David talked about an overseas trip in his sermon not too long ago. He was ashamed at other

religious leaders with him on the trip because they disrespected the culture of the country they were in and thought their way was the only RIGHT way. However, David embraced the beauty in this country's culture. That is one reason why I love David and this church. I previously attended a very large contemporary church in town. My experience there was 100 percent real and genuine, but they were trying to change others to be just like them. I felt as if I couldn't be my authentic self and masking my true self about killed me literally and figuratively. Here at this church, I am my authentic self and safe. It is the best feeling in the world.

I am about to wrap up, but I can't leave out David's beautiful wife Kaye. She gave me a booklet entitled "Light a Candle for Children 2012." There is a quote in the book by Rev. Tracy Parker of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that I wanted to share. The quote is this: "God does not promise fairness. God's call to humanity is to be the hands and feet, eyes and ears, heart and voice to create a world of justice to all." I strive to do this in my own life every day and I want people to remember me for living life to the fullest. Beyonce sings a song called I WAS HERE. I am going to end my sermon by reading some of the song lyrics:

"I wanna leave my footprints on the sands of time
Know there was something that, and
something that I left behind
When I leave this world, I'll leave no regrets
Something to remember, so they won't forget

I was here I lived, I loved I was here I did, I've done, everything that I wanted
And it was more than I thought it would be
I will leave my mark so everyone will know I was here
I want to say I lived each day, until I die
And know that I meant something in,
somebody's life
The hearts I have touched, will be the proof that I leave
That I made a difference, and this world will see

I was here I lived, I loved I was here I did, I've done, everything that I wanted
And it was more than I thought it would be
I will leave my mark so everyone will know

I was here ..."