

## S11 E02 Transcript

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**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Hi friends, and welcome to season 11 of the Abiding Together Podcast. Abiding Together is a place where you can find connection, rest and encouragement in your journey with Jesus Christ. Every week, I'm joined by two of my very dearest friends, Heather Khym and Michelle Benzinger and we talk about all things Christ, about life, about beauty, about sorrow. We laugh, we cry you'll fit right in. So grab a cup of coffee, settle in and welcome home.

Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Abiding Together Podcast. Welcome to season 11, episode two, and we are going to talk about which I think you're going to, like, you've got a little foretaste of it last week when Michelle was talking about proclaiming a year of Jubilee, and we're going to talk about a year of favor.

So. It's kind of a continuation of our discussion last week from our word of the year and then what the Lord is doing. But the year of favor, especially, uh, through Isaiah 61 and what the Lord says there and, and the, really the mission statement of Christ of what he's proclaiming to all of our lives. So I think it's going to be really beautiful and we'll see what the Lord continues to unfold. Uh, Heather, I, your little tummy was growling too. I was like, I'm so hungry right now.

**Heather Khym:** We got headphones in. So you're like, is it as loud as I think it is? I'm like, I think it was through our entire last recording. Like I definitely needed some egg bites or something. So yeah, I ran stairs. It's super dark, but I know I ran downstairs. It was like super dark when we started recording, but I ran downstairs and now it's light outside, but it's snowing again. Like I've had the craziest winter up here. I know people think Canada's just like, snow zone all the time, but it's not normally where I live because we live close to the coast. But this year, it's been unprecedented, just to throw that word out there again. Like there's snow everywhere. Yeah. It's so funny. Anyway, as you guys sit in the heat of your places.

**Michelle Benzinger:** It's actually cold here. Yeah. And so well, yeah, it's relative

**Heather Khym:** what?

**Michelle Benzinger:** It's 40 in Florida, this morning. And so like, it is relatively cold. Like I have a jacket on Heather, a little sweatshirt, come on girl.

**Heather Khym:** I know, isn't that fun when you can break out the other half of your wardrobe, which is so rare.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Yeah. I wore a winter coat last night. I'd be like, wow. I told Chris, my husband, I was like, wow, this is like the third time I've worn it this year. And the twice was in Chicago. And so. I may be able to wear it one or two more times before I put it back up for, um, time. So it is all good. So start, how are you this morning?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Um, I'm doing well. It was very funny because we were just at a priest retreat in Tallahassee and we had a lot of priests that came from the Midwest and like the upper Midwest where it's like two, so they can, none of Florida. And it was like, like cold. Right. And they were outside and like, you know, short sleeves sometimes they're like, this is amazing. Like everybody in Florida is dying right now. It's just so wonderful. That truly is that. It's a relative term as well

**Heather Khym:** Jake, my husband was with you as well. And he was like, the weather is perfect here. Like he was just like loving it. Well, when he throws a burden, I know when he threw his Birkenstocks in his bag, like our entire family was like, oh my gosh, like, we can't believe it. Well anyway, but I'm feeling this morning I'm like, I think we need lots of coffee today. It's so snowy outside. I'm like lots of coffee and maybe a puzzle. And I'm going to savor these last, well, really the last week with my daughter, Maria, before she goes back to school and you too, Michelle, Noah's going back on our college students.

**Michelle Benzinger:** And so it's been really nice to have it. I love when having everyone at home. So there's just something good about that, you know?

So as we dive in to this year favor, You know, Sister, why don't you break us up for the quote of this episode and her guiding star?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** So our quote for the episode is from Saint Elizabeth of the Trinity who became our friend, uh, last year. So during lent, and she says this "in this new year, that God is giving us to sanctify use and unite us more closely to himself. Let us make him grow in our souls. Let us keep alone and set apart. May he truly be king." And from the book of the prophet, Isaiah chapter 61, which is the prophet says this and Christ will say to himself, uh, in the new Testament, he says "the spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness, for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God. To comfort all who mourn and provide for those who grieve in Zion to be still on them. A crown of beauty, instead of ashes, the oil of joy, instead of mourning and a garment of praise, instead of a spirit of despair, they will be called Oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the full display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins. And restore the places long devastated. They will renew ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. Strangers will shepherd your flocks. Foreigners will work your fields and vineyards, and you will be called priest of the Lord. You'll be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations and in their riches, you will boast. Instead of your shame, you will receive a double portion. And instead of disgrace, you will rejoice in your inheritance. And so you will inherit a double portion in your land. And everlasting joy will be yours." And that is verse one to seven and we could go on, but that's, that's gorgeous. Like there's so much, um, already in. So a Michelle for you as this came to your heart, very deeply, what's on your heart. As we dive into this and talk about Isaiah 61 in light of all the things

**Michelle Benzinger:** Well, when I was really praying about different, we said last week we were talking about our word of the year. So even one of the things, when we pick our word of the year, where we actually that the Holy Spirit picks for us, you know, one of the things is I always love to have a couple of scriptures that are like guiding scriptures that go along. And so for Jubilee, one of the guiding scriptures is Isaiah 61, which actually Heather and I both have a wood display in our house sign that has a. And the other one is Isaiah 58 for Jubilee and then Leviticus 25. And there's a couple of more of where the Lord highlighted it for me, but there was something about Isaiah 61 that like, this is like Jesus's mission statement because we see it again in Luke 4, where he reads it in the temple. Like, this is what I have come to do. And I realized when I was praying through this one and it really

encompasses each of our words of the year, Oaks of righteousness, you know, that he will restore that he will reclaim that he will increase all of our words, but like the, this is the Lord's beautiful exchange. Let me give you this instead of this, I will give you a garment of praise. I will do this, that these are the promises that the Lord has invited us into, that the Lord has an inheritance for each and every one of us on this side of heaven. You know, maybe we will not see the fullness of the inheritance until heaven, but in this side of heaven that he wants to restore that he wants to give us this instead of this, this, instead of this and that we have a beautiful exchange, God. but there's something powerful And this is how we started last year. We did our word of the year and then a year in the word in the new year, the word, and I love what Father Mike Schmitz has been doing with the Gospel in a year, I just think there's something so powerful, but that we have to become a people that we say it tells us in scriptures in Hebrews, the Word is living and active. It is sharper than a two edge sword and that's Hebrews four 12, but that the Word has to become living and active in our daily life. It can not be something that we just hear at <ass on Sundays, but that we have to learn to personally apply the word of God to our lives. And I think for us, for each of our listeners that this scripture, Isaiah 61 really can be one of the scriptures that really roots you in the Word this year and see what the Lord has for you in this. Where does he want to bestow a beautiful exchange in our lives, but in your life personally, where does He want to come and power? Where does He wants to be living and active and all of our lives, but in your life, dear listener, this year. And so just really to break that wide open and your own personal lives.

Heather? What are your thoughts.

**Heather Khym:** Well, I, this scripture is like a life scripture for me. It, first time I encountered it, I was 20. I don't know, not 24 yet. I was, it was a bit before that. And I remember sitting in this chapel at the, I was a part of this ministry called reach youth ministries at the time.

And I was sitting in the chapel and I was praying, it was a few years before the Jubilee year. And this scripture came to me so strongly that it was like, You know, one of those earth shattering moments, like it was like pay attention, like everything. All, all of my senses were just heightened. I was like, what are you saying, Lord?

You know? And I felt this declaration, like God was making this declaration over me. It was like part of my calling, like Heather, like you're called to be like me. This is what I'm my calling is. For your life like that, you were obviously we're supposed to live, like Jesus lived to do what Jesus did, but it just felt so personal.

And then shortly after that, I remember, uh, Pope John Paul II announced the Jubilee year and that this was going to be the scripture for the Jubilee year. And I

was like, what? Like, that was like a crazy confirmation, you know, of sorts. But, but it was like, God has really big, like he's doing something really, really big and significant.

And I thought that I understood. To some degree, my little self back then. And it wasn't until all of these years later that I'm seeing how this has been unfolding over now, you know, a couple of decades, really like what the Lord has been doing. That I'm like, wow, Lord. I had no clue what you were about. I had no clue what you had in store.

I had no clue what you had in store for me with this, how you wanted to do all of these things in me. And you still are doing these things in me, but also how your call on my life was going to be revealed like through our ministry of helping restore other people's hearts. I mean, I just had no clue what God was up to with all of this.

And this is just my personal story that I'm sharing. Like, I think this scripture too, like it's for everyone. This is everybody's life scripture. You know, it is who Jesus is. He, he declares this, but this declaration. I think is over all of us, for all of us, through all of us. Like, there's just so many facets to this.

So I'm really excited that we're going to press into this, um, in a very, very particular way. And, and I'm excited about our conversation about declaration for this episode. So Sister, what are your, what are your thoughts?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Oh, this is so good. I don't think you can hear this and not have at least one part of it stir your spirit.

Even if you can't in your life, see how it's particularly playing out in your life today. It touches the deepest areas of our hearts. Every single one of us wants to have, um, our we're a places where we're captive. We want an oil of joy instead of mourning. We want a garden garment of praise instead of despair. We want to be Oaks of righteousness.

We want a year of the Lord's favor. We want to have good news preached to the poor to bind up the broken heart. I just it's so lovely in every way. I mean, it goes on from there. It's just stunningly beautiful. There's this you could literally spend the whole year, just with that particular chapter, Isaiah 61.

But I think it's interesting as a, for intensive purposes today and kind of like what we talked about last week in the episode about being Michelle, remind me of exact term like the generational generation changer or the transformational character, character, transitional character. I I'm noticing just today.

As we sit here with a scripture passage that Jesus proclaims us in his hometown. And that is hard. You know, a prophet says the prophet is never accepted in his hometown. And so if you look at the gospel of Luke chapter four, Jesus has led by the spirit, out into the desert and he's tempted by the enemy. And he overcomes enemy where Adam failed the new Adam succeeds in obedience and humility and trust and dependence on his father.

And so the chapter of gospel, Luke chapter 4, verse 14, it says Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the spirit. And news about him spread throughout the whole countryside. He was preaching. He was teaching in their synagogues and everyone praised him. Then it says 16. He went to Nazareth where he had been brought up.

And on the Sabbath day, he went into the synagogue, which was his custom. And he stood up to read and the scroll of the prophet, Isaiah was handed to him and that's where he reads that. And then it says after he reads it, he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And then he began by saying to them, This scripture today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing and it's just like, that is just woo. I mean,

**Michelle Benzinger:** total Mike drop. Yes.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** And how many of us in our life have received an impartation of the Holy Spirit? We receive baptism. We receive confirmation. We've been transformed and the hardest missionary territory is many times in our own family. And not even like I'm going to convert my family, but being, even being a living witness of, of the transformation God has done for us are proclaiming his name. That can be the hardest thing. And what happens in Jesus is teaching us something because it says as soon as he says this, li says, you know, all spoke well of him and isn't this Joseph's son. They were amazed at the gracious words. And then he says, you know, surely it will say physician heal yourself. And he talks about how no prophet is accepted in their hometown. And they go from speaking well of him to a few verses later, all the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this and they got it to drive them out of town to take them to the brow of the hill where the town was built and to throw them off the cliff, it's like, what???

This is so our life in so many ways. And one of the priests I was listening to recently, I preached a homily at mass. He said, you know, all of us have this weird idea. He's like, I don't know where it came from, but all of us have this weird idea that once we're baptized and once we follow Christ, life should be easy.

Like somehow I said yes to Jesus, so my life should be easy. And he's like, we're so surprised when difficulties come. He's like, that is not the gospel message. The gospel message is a Christ with us and everything that he has gone before us, he transforms all things. Not that life would be easy. And so I just think, especially for us as we start a new year of where are those places, our own home towns that are just, they're hard, those are hard places to be.

The Lord is calling us to be and I'm preaching anyway. So, but yeah, I just it's like,

**Heather Khym:** well, it's funny that you say that because I got married in the Jubilee year during the jubilee year, Jake and I have. The little Jubilee dove on our rings, you know, and that scripture was a part of our wedding.

And of course we're thinking like we are joined together in this mission. You know, the spirit of the Lord is upon us, that's true. That's all true. Yeah. But little did we know that this was going to have to be played out in some really serious ways? I'm like, Yeah, our hometown is our marriage. Like we needed the spirit of the Lord to restore like all of the devastated places.

Like the places of shame. Like there's so many, every single aspect of this, like we're in our marriage. It's been it's, it's all come to the surface, the places where we're captive and, and prisoner and where we've dwelled in darkness, and God wants to bring his light there. And so we realized very quickly that this needed to be happening.

Within us in every area of our life, like before we could go out and, you know, spread the good news and lead other people into this, like what the Lord wanted to do within us and within our marriage. And that has been not just one time, not just one moment, but in the last, like every single year, but we've been married, it's still happening right now.

And so when I look at my ring and I see that Jubilee dove, like that's a promise to me of what the Lord is doing that in the hardest times and the darkest times that we've struggled in our marriage, that, that God is still about that for us, you know, like his promises. Or not just once one and done, you know,

**Michelle Benzinger:** it was so funny when I went through reading the scripture and I'm just meditating on it and ponder hand all those different things like in a year of favor.

And I realized the Lord in his graciousness. Uh, because we laughed so hard. Like I think, you know, he'll bestow you know, of crown of beauty and Garland instead of

ashes and all this kind of things. And I still in my mind think that the Lord's healing will be exterior for other people when they change, when they move, when the Lord moves their heart, when he positions them in another way, then I'll get this year a favor.

This is what, what restoration will look like. And I think we have our own expectations on the Lord And what restoration looks like. And the Lord is like, girl restoration looks like you showing up different. It looks like you becoming different. It looks like you becoming a new creature in the new, like not the other person, not a new situation.

the Lord tells us in scripture and as equal, I will give you a new heart. You know, he's showing me where my heart has been stoney and that he will give me a heart of flesh and compassion and to realize, and like we said, in this previous episode, usually it comes with deep repentance.

You know, one of my favorite quotes is from Ann Voskamp when she says repentance, always proceeds revival, you know, and that it's a deep repentance. And one of the things when I was going through even the different documents from John Paul II on the Jubilee, it says she, and he's talking about the church.

You know, it says "she cannot cross the threshold of the new millennium without encouraging her children to purify themselves through repentance for past errors and instances of infidelity and consistency and slowness to act." It's always just taking that like repentance for past errors and financial.

Inconsistency and slowness to act, you know, and I was really, we've had the conversation before we even started recording. One of the things the Lord has really highlighted for me is like, what idols do I still have in my life? Like, where are the idols of my life? And I was thinking, in some ways it was easier to detect those in the old Testament because they were golden calves and they were little statues for ours, their idols in our heart.

And so they're not actual physical objects per se, maybe yours are, but they are something like idols that are in our heart and, um, one of the quotes that I really love, the stop me dead in my tracks, I think is from Andy Crouch. He says, "idols, promise everything and deliver nothing. But ultimately like in the old Testament idols ask you to sacrifice your children are your fruitfulness."

Thatast line killed me. And so like what idols in my life is it, I need to be doing this, or I need to be doing that. Or I need to be doing that where it distracts you from the first thing. You know, and it takes away your fruitfulness. And really sometimes it



does take away your own physical children because you are not present to what has been entrusted to you to steward well, you know, not just manage but steward well. And so, but I love that idols promise everything and they deliver nothing. But they deliver captivity. Yeah. And so, yeah, so just really praying about that. Like Lord, where, and how can we partner with the Trinity to bring about this restoration? Where can we move with you and your power and your grace?

Where are you calling us? What is the next right step for us to take? And this restoration plan that you have for us this year?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Oh, that's, that's so good. And CS Lewis also comments that, you know, idols eventually break you. Like, that's what they do. If you don't break idols in the name of Jesus Christ. They eventually break us.

And it's so true. Like all of us, if you look at, I mean, we all have vitals and we've all, you know, different parts of our life. We could probably see also very, truly what they were. And you could look at the trajectory of them and seeing how they break us. They break our fertility, they break our fruitfulness, they break our families, they break our interior integration.

Like all those places. Where we want something other than God to save us well, that's myself, even like, I want to save myself cause I want to do it my way. And there's a, we've talked about this before, but there's a great documentary on Netflix called the Heart of Man, which is about, is it's just about the prodigal son and it's about the restoration of a man's heart and just different kinds of addictions and things like that.

But one of the best lines in that whole documentary, there's so many great lines. But one of the best lines in that whole documentary is where we're one of the, one of the guys that's being interviewed, says the most terrifying thing about liberation is that we have no control over when it comes and it's like, we don't have control over the resurrection.

All we can do is put ourselves in a position to be found and to repent, to turn away to certainly be contrite for the areas where we've, where we've gone wrong, where we've, we've looked for something else to save us where we've grasped at things to be our gods, even ourselves and, and to come into those places of Lord I'm, you know, and if we don't feel it and it's not, I mean, the contrition of it, but I'm like, Lord, help me, help me see what I don't see so that I can live a life fully for you so I can live a year of favor, so to speak.

I can live in the freedom of God. And so he sets all the parts of my heart free so I can see as he sees and, and, and love as he loves.

**Heather Khym:** Yeah. And I think that there's also, you know, there's so much power in, in these words. Like when we talk about Michelle, you were saying like scriptures sharper than any two-edged sword.

Like these aren't just words. These are God's words, you know? So they come with weight, they come with power and, and the power, even to change, like, as those words are declared like scripture. Declared it should be spoken out loud. And we've talked about this a number of times on the podcast, the power of declaration.

And I think, you know, we can talk about repentance for our own sins, but I think there's even like generationally, things that we can do to make a change. I don't know if we talked about this on the podcast or just in our own conversation, um, earlier today, but. But the importance of taking a stand to say, this will not continue in my family anymore.

You know, and I know Jake and I have done that at different points to just say, this sin that we've seen through the lineage of our family or, or this, you know, whatever, whatever it is, dysfunction whatever's going on there, that it's going to stop right here with us. And how do we do that? You know?

And through declaring like the truth of God, but also renouncing different things and just closing doors. And there's a lot of spiritual work that can be done. I think, to just seal off the work that the enemy has been doing and maybe running rampant through our family lines, through things that we didn't choose, but maybe people before us chose.

Um, it, I mean, if people are interested to look more into this, I mean, there's so many resources, but, uh, we all have used that book, the deliverance prayers for the laity. That has some good prayers in there that, that you could go for. But, but I think that there's something about this too, that for God to do what he desires to do, that we need to say there's going to be no more of this, like in my life, in my family and it's going to change. From here on out. And what, what comes from this? The fruitfulness that comes from this, uh, can be generational at positive stuff. That's coming, you know, good stuff and blessing that comes from this. Michelle, do you wanna speak to that a little bit?

**Michelle Benzinger:** I think there is the power of breaking it and the power of those words and renouncing it like Sister was saying.

And then on the flip side, there was the power of blessing. The thing, this is what will go. And I've mentioned before when, uh, a friend of mine here is they're very faithful Jewish family. And I just, like, I learned so much from them. Like I always glean something from my conversations with them. And one of the things we were talking about for them, for Hanukkah, she was telling me that her father, she's the only girl in a family of many brothers, the wife, but that her father writes a letter to each child every year on Hanukkah talking about what a blessing they are.

You know, and this one, they called her, um, what was it? Uh, Rachel, her name was Rachel Leah, and you know, and that's her name and they call her both because she wanted to, because she has both the fruitfulness, but yet the favor of both the wives of Jacob, and this is what it meant to her. And the letter that her father wrote, she was reading me.

So I was like, oh my gosh. And I was like, did it bring you to tears? And she looked at me and she said, But she said it did because it's so beautiful, but I, she said, I always receive his blessings because I've been receiving them weekly as, since I was a little girl, because in the Sabbath, you know, Shabbat for the Sabbath, for the Jewish people, the father prays a blessing over each child every Saturday, you know, may she be like, Rachel, this way.

May she be like Leah. And I was like, there's something in that, like the power of a father's blessing. So she had this capacity to receive it. Like it was like, Of course, like I trust my father. He's been blessing me for so long where I be like, oh my gosh, that one letter would undo me for years, you know?

And she was, she was so thankful for it, but, but she just trusts the blessing of a father. There's such power in those words. And there's some, it's something to learn. Like I even showing it with my own children, one of our sons for Christmas, he wrote us, my husband and I both a beautiful letter. And that was our gift.

That letter meant more to me than anything store bought, you know, when you're young, you know, I want something tangible here, but no, like those words and what he said to us, you know, it means so much to me, but that, that, that's almost a skill that has to be learned and cultivated the power of affirmation, the power of blessing, the power of calling forth, goodness in one another, you know, like even what we did this past episode of our word of the year, like even just affirming what we already saw, what the Lord was doing it in one another, like these are spiritual practices that we get to cultivate for one another. So the sisters that you journey with, or the brothers that you journey with, or the husbands that you have, the children, the friends, whatever thing, you know, position of life you are to call forth

God's goodness in that person call forth a blessing for those people. But, um, I really would like to encourage. Mothers. Absolutely like there's power of a mother's words, the power of a woman's words, but fathers, especially our priest friends that listen to this, the power of a father's blessing. It is a powerful force to bring forth the kingdom of God in each and every one of us.

Sister, what are your thoughts?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** No. Yeah, definitely. The, the, the power of the mother and the father blessing are so important. And I just think of, you know, priest always bless us, you know, and every time one of our priests in our community would always say like, whenever a priest gives a blessing, he too is blessed by the Father.

Like it's, it's, you can't outdo God in blessing. And just the offering of, of that. And I think. There is something in calling out the goodness and that allows our hearts to truly be seen. And I think, gosh, I think we don't do that enough. I don't, I don't think we, and we're not just talking about saying nice things, but what truly have of speaking a blessing over people and the goodness of who they are and what God is doing in their life and, and the places they've grown. And it just, all of us want a blessing. Like, I mean, it's very interesting. the priest that mentored me, um, he w we would go out to, you know, we'd all have lunch together, all these people and stuff, he would always like ask the waitress.

Can I bless. And all the years that we went out to lunch, nobody ever said, no, he'd be at Walmart. And he asked the cashier, can I just bless you? Like who, who really honestly, like very few people will say like, oh no, please don't bless me. They're like, yeah, father. And you can tell they're not Catholic, they are of no faith. And like, yeah, please bless me. Like all of us want a blessing. Like all of us want to be affirmed in our goodness and, and told that we're that we matter that our lives matter. And that that's the truth because that's what God does for us. He's always blessing. He's always blessing us.

We're never out of the, the favor of his blessing. Like he, his heart heartbreaks for the areas we send, but He's blessing, our identities blessing our goodness so that we can live into the truth of who we are. We're nobody we've said it before, but nobody's ever criticized or shamed into a company. You know, we're loved into one and that love is hard sometimes many times, but we are loved into a conversion.

We're blessed into one, not, not shamed into one. Um,

**Heather Khym:** ever since I was a child, my mom used to pray the Aaronic blessing over. You know, uh, from numbers, may the Lord bless you and keep you like, just like before I'd go to bed and whatever. And it's funny because Jake didn't know that, but he started praying that over our kids, which I don't never happen to him and his family, but he started praying that over our kids when they were little, um, before they would go to bed and we have this big sign, like.

You come in our doorway of our home that has that on it. And I just love that song, even. I know it's been like played and played and played and played, but I've, I've used that song out to sing out loud in intercession, over other people. And I love it because it is like, may the Lord bless you and keep you make his face shine upon you.

Be gracious to you, the Lord, turn his face to you and give you peace. But I love the part where she gets like Kari Jobe, when she just starts singing, like with all her heart. And she. Uh, whereas this, oh yeah. May his favor be upon you and a thousand generations in your family and your children and their children and their children.

You know, there's just so much power in the declaration of a blessing like that over people. So if you want to check that out, maybe you'll hear the song with, with new years, you know, to be able to sing that in intercession, over certain people, maybe it's other people in your life. Maybe it's your family.

Maybe it's just, just people in your life who are needing the Lord's blessing like that.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** That's great. Amen. Yeah. And I think as we kind of close up here, I think there's so many ways with this week, we could even spend time with Isaiah 61. Whether it's just spending time with say just a few verses just every morning, just letting that soak, or maybe there's a part of Isaiah 61 that speaks to you very deeply, but let's just soak in that this week.

Let's just soak and Isaiah 61. And to see in this beginning of this new year, what the Lord is saying to each one of us and, you know, where do we need that? Where do we need the oil of gladness? Where do we need, where do we need those things? Where's our heartbreaking, I mean, the Lord wants to hear these things.

And so it'd be very interesting for us just to kind of spend some time with that and just to see what the Lord reveal.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Amen.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Yeah. All right, ladies, shall we talk about our one things for the week, Michelle, would you like to offer your one thing for the.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Um, girl, you know me well. And so there are a couple of one things.

So one is a dear friend, actually, Heather and sister know her too. She did a life teen retreat with us, Lisa Keven. It was so interesting. She went back and got her spiritual direction director license, but she has created this book called "rhythm". And it is a book that helps you go along with the rhythms of the church, but teaches you how to pray.

The 40 day spiritual journey. And there's a book and there's time for prayer and deep reflection and all of that. But really, I just love any resource that I can provide that helps people give a framework to learn how to pray deeper. And so that is what Lisa has created. So I'm going to put the link for rhythm here.

And another one kind of goes along with our theme is a dear friend of mine here. Her name is Ashley created a ministry a non profit for widows, mostly military widows, that's called crown for ashes. And I can't even, so she does these beautiful weekends away for young widows, actually young women lost their husband and she has everything from a beautiful masseuse to gorgeous dinners, to a trauma therapist there and worship and scripture and everything.

Um, wow. Deep protestant friend of mine. And so she lost her husband, Chris, I think almost three years ago. And it was just walking her through that season. I mean, there were times where she will tell you she was literally on her closet floor. Like not knowing how she was going to get up for hours. Like just the deep grief of losing this just love.

So over the past, I can't even get through this, um, uh, a couple of months, long story short, she just got married this December.

The Lord brought a beautiful faithful man and to her life. And it was beautiful because it was right after she just did a crown for ashes, widows retreats. And just like that, this the Lord is restoring all of this and, you know, deeply, still misses her first husband. So deeply again. I mean, he's such an amazing man, but just to watch how the Lord writes these redemptive stories in her life and watch how this, her new husband loves her and how the Lord writes the best stories, you know, and his redemptive stories are some of the most beautiful things are the most beautiful things to bestow upon. So yeah, I will. People like being generous, generous, you know, um, I will put that on. It's called crown for ashes, Heather your one thing.

### Heather Khym:

I went, no, I didn't. I didn't. Um, so my one thing is a song from Damascus worship. So Damascus Mission, some good friends of ours there are just doing amazing work with young adults and they're doing amazing youth ministry. Um, but they have worship that is just so beautiful that is being born out of their community and out of their individual prayer lives and what the Lord is doing.

And, and I've listened to some of their songs and just wept in my kitchen while peeling potatoes, because I'm like, I am so grateful for what God is doing through their worship in the church. And I've been waiting for this for a long time, but there's a new song that came out called Hail O Queen. And it is gorgeous.

It's so gorgeous if you haven't listened to it, girls, I think I, I think I sent it to you, but I don't know if you've listened to it, but it's so good. Yeah. You'll love it. Hail O Queen by Damascus Worship

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Sister Miriam. One thing is also a song as well. I had the lovely experience of hosting the national Catholic youth conference early, late last year, So I think it was in November of 2021. And one of the musicians for that event was our beautiful friend, Sarah Kroger, who is just so deeply lovely and during one of the masses they sang the king of love my shepherd is, but there's a really beautiful kind of twist. They had to it. And I just and was struck by the beauty.

And I didn't realize like that was Sarah's own version of the king of love My shepherd is, so I just it's from one of a previous albums called hallelujah is our song, but I just want to offer it to our audiences, our audience, a new. Her voice is just so lovely. And her rendition of this is just, just brings your heart right into the heavens.

It's just so lovely. So the king of love, my shepherd is by Sarah Kroger,

**Michelle Benzinger: we love you Sarah Kroger.**

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** All right, dear friends. Well, we look forward to journey. Isaiah 61 with you also this week to see what the Lord will do, and thank you for coming along on the adventure with us. So until next week, we will be Abiding Together. God bless you. Have a wonderful week.

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