

Bold Moves

August 16, 2026

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Green

Genesis 45:1-15

I recently heard a saying that if you hold tightly to grudges your hands are not free to catch the blessings.

Joseph, the dreamer in the Bible, had every right to hold a grudge. He was betrayed by his brothers and sold to a group of Ishmaelites who then brought him to Egypt.

The young boy could have allowed his circumstances to sour his spirit. But he didn't. Instead, Joseph grew up, rising to the position of prime minister to the Pharaoh. He was second-in-command of all of Egypt.

So, when a seven-year famine, in which Joseph had seen in one of his dreams, devastated his family's land of Caanan, he was now able to help his brothers who came seeking relief. At first, though, they didn't recognize Joseph as the brother they had sold. But as the story unfolds, the tears of realization and redemption flow freely among the broken siblings.

Joseph's story is not an easy one for us to embrace, especially when we prefer the heaviness of grudges to the lightness of forgiveness. But it is a story that reminds us that wrongs can be righted on the God path. In those times of feeling lost and wondering where in heaven's name is God, we must not let despair or even anger take hold.

I know this is easier said than done. Even as I write, I hesitate with each click of the keyboard because while my heart knows how gracious God is, my head is reciting a monologue of doubt. If my hands weren't typing, I am sure they would be found curled into a tight ball of frustration, hurt and anger.

It is not easy to believe that good can come out of something painful. But it can. Because God is our God of bold moves, and the boldest of moves was showing us that new life does emerge from the tomb.

Hope never dies. But holding on to that grudge is slowly doing its best to suffocate it. So put down this bulletin right now, unclench your hands, and catch that blessing.

Redemptive God, help us to let go of the grudges that we have been holding on to for far too long. May we realize they are serving no purpose in our lives. They are, in fact, robbing us of the life You want for us. With Your help, pry our clenched fists open now. We surrender all the hurt to you and wait patiently for the blessings. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's *Sunday Bulletin*.)