

MUMC At-Home Worship:

September 13, 2020

Happy Sunday! I'm excited to begin a new series in worship this week as we take a deep dive (pun intended!) into the book of Jonah. It's just a short book tucked into the latter half of the Old Testament but it's much more than a good story for illustrated children's bibles – it has an incredible message for us about the saving grace of God! I hope you'll enjoy exploring and reflecting with us.

And don't forget that at 7pm on the Wednesday of this week (September 16th), we're holding an outdoor communion service in the church parking lot. We'll wear masks and hold to social distancing to keep everyone safe while gathering together and we'd love to have you join us! Let me know if you have any questions about the precautions we're taking or any of the other details about this service. You are all in my prayers and I hope you have a wonderful week!

-Pastor Dillon

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

God, you have placed a calling on each of our lives. May our worship restore our spirits that we may continue on the path you have laid for us. Amen.

Hymn: *Amazing Grace*, United Methodist Hymnal #378 – [watch/listen here](#)

New Testament Reading: Jonah 1:1-17

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. Regardless of its historicity, the story of Jonah is presented as a sort of comedic tall tale, most apparent in Jonah's being swallowed by a big fish. Is there anything in this passage of scripture that made you laugh? How might it change the story's impact on us if we let it tickle our funny bone?
2. When the storm overtakes Jonah and his ship on the ocean, Jonah suggests that the sailors throw him overboard to calm the storm. Do you think this is a selfless act or an indication that Jonah would rather drown than follow God's call? What does it show about God's character that God would send a "great fish" to save Jonah from drowning even while Jonah was trying to escape God?
3. After the storm ends, the sailors who initially prayed to numerous gods now worship the God of Israel with a "profound reverence." What significance might it hold to recognize that the outsiders to the faith are so quick to worship God while God's own prophet is running from his calling?

Hymn: *O Jesus, I Have Promised*, United Methodist Hymnal #396 – [watch/listen here](#)

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *God of Love and God of Power*, United Methodist Hymnal #578 – [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer:

God of Jonah and the sailors, we trust your grace to save us from the storms of life, both unexpected and the ones we bring on ourselves. Grant us the courage to walk directly toward the places you have called us to go. Amen. (*Blow out the candle*)

Amazing Grace

United Methodist Hymnal #378

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
a life of joy and peace.
6. When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

"Amazing Grace" words are by John Newton, 1779; stanza 6 anonymous; and are in the public domain.

Jonah 1:1-17 (CEB)

The Lord's word came to Jonah, Amittai's son: "Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it, for their evil has come to my attention."

So Jonah got up—to flee to Tarshish from the Lord! He went down to Joppa and found a ship headed for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went aboard to go with them to Tarshish, away from the Lord. But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, so that there was a great storm on the sea; the ship looked like it might be broken to pieces. The sailors were terrified, and each one cried out to his god. They hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to make it lighter.

Now Jonah had gone down into the hold of the vessel to lie down and was deep in sleep. The ship's officer came and said to him, "How can you possibly be sleeping so deeply? Get up! Call on your god! Perhaps the god will give some thought to us so that we won't perish."

Meanwhile, the sailors said to each other, "Come on, let's cast lots so that we might learn who is to blame for this evil that's happening to us." They cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. So they said to him, "Tell us, since you're the cause of this evil happening to us: What do you do and where are you from? What's your country and of what people are you?"

He said to them, "I'm a Hebrew. I worship the Lord, the God of heaven—who made the sea and the dry land."

Then the men were terrified and said to him, "What have you done?" (The men knew that Jonah was fleeing from the Lord, because he had told them.)

They said to him, "What will we do about you so that the sea will become calm around us?" (The sea was continuing to rage.)

He said to them, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea! Then the sea will become calm around you. I know it's my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

The men rowed to reach dry land, but they couldn't manage it because the sea continued to rage against them. So they called on the Lord, saying, "Please, Lord, don't let us perish on account of this man's life, and don't blame us for innocent blood! You are the Lord: whatever you want, you can do." Then they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased its raging. The men worshipped the Lord with a profound reverence; they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made solemn promises.

Meanwhile, the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.

Scripture quotations noted CEB are taken from the Common English Bible, copyright 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

O Jesus, I have Promised
United Methodist Hymnal #396

1. O Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
be thou forever near me,
my Master and my friend.
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.
2. O let me feel thee near me!
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but Jesus, draw thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.
3. O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.
4. O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be.
And Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend.

“O Jesus, I Have Promised” words are by John E. Bode, ca. 1866, are based on Luke 9:57, and are in the public domain.

God of Love and God of Power
United Methodist Hymnal #578

1. God of love and God of power,
grant us in this burning hour
grace to ask these gifts of thee,
daring hearts and spirits free.
God of love and God of power,
thou hast called us for this hour.
2. We are not the first to be
banished by our fears from thee;
give us courage, let us hear
heaven's trumpets ringing clear.
God of love and God of power,
thou hast called us for this hour.
3. All our lives belong to thee,
thou our final loyalty;
slaves are we whene'er we share
that devotion anywhere.
God of love and God of power,
thou hast called us for this hour.
4. God of love and God of power,
make us worthy of this hour;
offering lives if it's thy will,
keeping free our spirits still.
God of love and God of power,
thou hast called us for this hour.

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