

MUMC At-Home Worship:

September 27, 2020

We've scheduled another outdoor communion worship service for **Saturday, October 10 at 2pm!** As I shared last week, it was a joy being together for our first outdoor communion service and we're hoping that by moving the service to the weekend that it will be even more conducive for those who are interested to attend. At the service, we will continue to adhere to best practices to protect our health including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and using individually packaged communion elements. If you have any questions about the precautions we will be taking, I invite you to contact me at any time!

This week in worship, we're coming to the end of Jonah's story! Nineveh has been saved and Jonah isn't all that thrilled about it. God's grace extends broadly – and sometimes farther than we'd like it to. Let's jump into his story and let it transform us!
-Pastor Dillon

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

God, you are merciful and compassionate, you are patient and full of faithful love, and you prefer salvation to destruction. May our worship celebrate your abundant grace and empower us to embody the same. Amen.

Hymn: *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, United Methodist Hymnal #110 – [watch/listen here](#)

New Testament Reading: Jonah 4:1-11

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. Finally, here at the end of the book, Jonah finally reveals why he tried to get out of coming to Nineveh: he knew that God was slow to anger and likely to forgive the Ninevites. Can you sympathize with Jonah's frustration? Can you think of a time you were upset by the depths of God's grace?
2. Twice God asks Jonah if his anger, first over Nineveh's salvation and then the plant's destruction, is a good thing. While anger is not a universally bad emotion (consider, for example, righteous anger) but the clear implication here is that Jonah's anger is not good. How would you describe what Jonah is angry about? What might distinguish his anger from "good" anger?
3. The book of Jonah ends with God's final question, unanswered by Jonah. It has been suggested that lacking Jonah's response the question is left for us to answer. How might you respond to God's question about pitying Nineveh? Who might God be moving us to have more pity for today?

Hymn: *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*, United Methodist Hymnal #121 – [watch/listen here](#)

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

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *Freely, Freely*, United Methodist Hymnal #389 – [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer:

God of plants and of people, you cherish your creation and seek to sustain life wherever it grows. Empty us of our anger and fill us with compassion, that we might work to save lives as surely as you have saved ours. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen. (*Blow out the candle*)

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
United Methodist Hymnal #110

1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.
2. Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
were not the right man on our side,
the man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth, his name,
from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.
3. And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.
4. That word above all earthly powers,
no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours,
thru him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever.

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" words are by Martin Luther, ca. 1529, were translated by Frederick H. Hedge, 1853, are based on Psalm 46, and are in the public domain.

Jonah 4:1-11 (CEB)

But Jonah thought this was utterly wrong, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord, "Come on, Lord! Wasn't this precisely my point when I was back in my own land? This is why I fled to Tarshish earlier! I know that you are a merciful and compassionate God, very patient, full of faithful love, and willing not to destroy. At this point, Lord, you may as well take my life from me, because it would be better for me to die than to live."

The Lord responded, "Is your anger a good thing?" But Jonah went out from the city and sat down east of the city. There he made himself a hut and sat under it, in the shade, to see what would happen to the city.

Then the Lord God provided a shrub, and it grew up over Jonah, providing shade for his head and saving him from his misery. Jonah was very happy about the shrub. But God provided a worm the next day at dawn, and it attacked the shrub so that it died. Then as the sun rose God provided a dry east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint. He begged that he might die, saying, "It's better for me to die than to live."

God said to Jonah, "Is your anger about the shrub a good thing?"

Jonah said, "Yes, my anger is good—even to the point of death!"

But the Lord said, "You 'pitied' the shrub, for which you didn't work and which you didn't raise; it grew in a night and perished in a night. Yet for my part, can't I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than one hundred twenty thousand people who can't tell their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

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There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
United Methodist Hymnal #121

1. There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice,
which is more than liberty.
2. There is welcome for the sinner,
and more graces for the good!
There is mercy with the Savior;
there is healing in his blood.
3. For the love of God is broader
than the measure of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
4. If our love were but more simple,
we should rest upon God's word;
and our lives would be illumined
by the presence of our Lord.

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" words are by Frederick W. Faber, 1854, and are in the public domain.

Freely, Freely
United Methodist Hymnal #389

1. God forgave my sin in Jesus' name
I've been born again in Jesus' name
and in Jesus' name I come to you
to share his love as he told me to

Refrain:

He said: "Freely, freely, you have received
freely, freely give.

Go in my name, and because you believe
others will know that I live."

2. All power is given in Jesus' name
in earth and heaven in Jesus' name
and in Jesus' name I come to you
to share his power as he told me to
(*Refrain*)

"Freely, Freely" words are by Carol Owens, 1972

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