

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
January 24, 2021 Third Sunday after the Epiphany
“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

To you our hearts sing for joy.

Happy are those who live and pray in your house.

Happy are those who find their strength in you.

There is none like you in heaven or on earth.

We will dwell in your courts forever, O God.

Opening Prayer Creator God of each new day, come to us in silence and word, we pray, as we worship you this morning. Speak to our hearts, that we may hear and respond. Soothe our souls, that we may rest and renew. Strengthen our spirits, that we may grow in faith and courage. With a grateful spirit, we worship you in Christ’s name. Amen.

Scripture Reading “Proclaim...the message that I tell you.”
Read Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Prayer of Confession God of grace and glory, you know our times of weakness – when we have not reflected your glory, when we have rejected your grace, when we have doubted your presence in our lives. Hear our cries of remorse. Shine upon us with the light of your mercy, that we may see your presence ever more clearly. Shine radiantly through us, that we may glorify you and reflect the glory of your love flowing through our lives. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

Time of Silent Confession *Our loving God invites us to share the confessions of our hearts.*

Words of Assurance Sing for joy with all the earth for God is with us in Jesus Christ. In Christ, we are shown grace upon grace; we are offered forgiveness and reconciliation, that we may once again be united with God. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading “...for in every way you have been enriched in him” Read 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *We come to worship with many concerns upon our hearts but also joys in our lives. You are invited to share them with God in this time of silence.*

Prayer Loving God, we worship you today, knowing that you are a God of steadfast love and grace. Carry us, we pray, out of our fears and doubts into the glorious message of your saving love and constant presence. Bless us with your truth and wisdom, that we might be a blessing to others, revealing your promises to others through our words and our actions. You shower our lives with your peace, peace which comes to us through our relationship with your own Son, Jesus Christ. Hear us now as we pray the prayer that he taught us...

The Lord’s Prayer

Scripture Reading “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” Read Mark 1:14-20

Meditation How frustrating it is to be ready to make a recipe and realize that a major ingredient - which can’t be substituted well – is not in your kitchen because you forgot to pick it up at the grocery store. Or if you are in the middle of a project around the house and realize that you don’t have the hardware that it needs because it didn’t make it onto your list when buying the supplies. In the midst of these experiences, we remember again how important planning really is at times. To my husband’s great

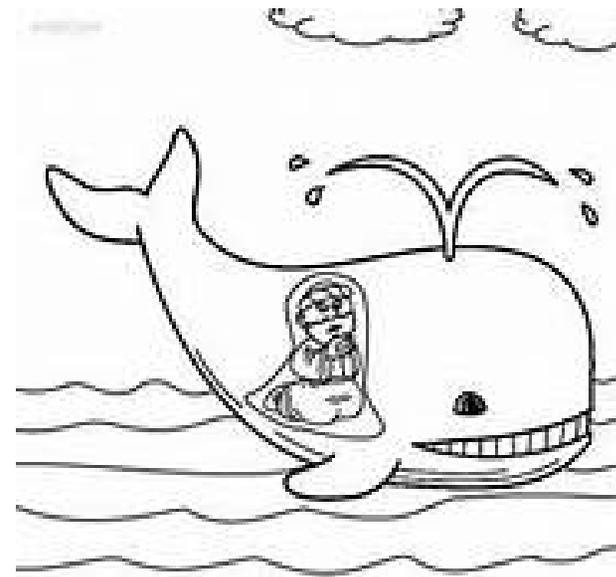
annoyance at times, I'm sure, I'm a planner. While I love spur of the moment experiences now and again, I'm not comfortable living my entire life that way. Perhaps God knew to call me into ministry while I was a junior in college so that I'd have plenty of time to prepare for seminary! So, given that, I cannot imagine the experience of Jonah to whom God said, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." And, just like that, Jonah went. Or those disciples who were at work in the midst of their daily routines when Jesus said, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." Mark tells us that "immediately" they left their nets and followed him.

Wow! Their faithfulness amazes me. Why didn't Jonah ask why God wanted him to go? Didn't the disciples want to know who was going to buy food for their family if they weren't at home to do so? It must have been that the importance of what they were being asked to do was instantly understood. And how their lives were changed as they watched Jesus meet people where they were and address their needs – for healing, for learning, and simply for love. For the disciples, there could have been no better role model and that's the way it is for us, too.

Each and every day God calls us to live as Jesus did and to respond to the opportunities that come our way – whether we are prepared to do so or not! Some days there is no way to plan for what God asks of us; those are days when we simply must depend on God's Spirit to guide us and encourage us to use the gifts that God bestows upon each of us.

Like Jonah, like those twelve disciples, God has work for us to do and, like them, do it we must. God's Kingdom is counting on us to share the love of Jesus. So, ready or not, God is calling you!

Words of Benediction May the grace of Christ keep you in harmony with one another. May the love of God keep you in peace. May the presence of the Holy Spirit surround you. For from the beginning of all things, to beyond the end of time, our God – Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit – is always with us. Amen.



Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.