



CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

01/21/24

11:00am

*"In my distress I called out to
God, and God answered me.
From deep, in the realm of the
dead I called for help, and you
listened to my cry."
-Jonah 2:2*



No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

January 21, 2024

Worship Leader: Dick Goins

WELCOME.....

HYMN #407 How Firm A Foundation

1 How firm a foundation for you has been laid,
by God in the Word, in the sacrifice paid!
What more can God say than to you has been said,
to you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
for I am your God, and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand
upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand."

3 "When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of woe shall not over you flow;
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
delivering you from your deepest distress."

OPENING REFLECTION.....

"I Need Thee Every House,"Based on NEED, arr. by Lloyd Larson
Dorenda Morse, piano

JOYS AND CONCERNS.....

PRAYER.....Rev. Sarah TevisTownes

SCRIPTURE.....Rev. Sarah TevisTownes

Selections from Jonah 1-4, The Message, adapted by Sarah TevisTownes

God's Word came to Jonah: "Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They're in a bad way and I can't ignore it any longer."

Jonah ignored God and hopped on a ship going in the other direction - he wanted to get as far away from God as possible!

When God sent a massive storm with towering waves, the other sailors wondered if God was sending them a message. But Jonah went below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe God will take notice of us and we will live.”

Even once Jonah admitted he was running from God, the sailors refused to abandon him. They tried to row back to shore without success. Jonah finally convinced them to toss him overboard and leave his fate to God.

As soon as Jonah left the boat, the sea was quiet.

Then God sent a giant fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the fish’s belly for three days and nights.

From the belly of the fish, Jonah prayed:

“You threw me into ocean’s depths,
into a watery grave,
My head was all tangled in seaweed
at the bottom of the sea where the mountains take root.
Yet you pulled me up from that grave alive,
When my life was slipping away,
I remembered God,
And my prayer got through to you,
I’m worshiping you, God,
calling out in thanksgiving!
I’ll do what I promised I’d do!

Then God spoke to the fish, and it vomited up Jonah on the seashore.

Next, God spoke to Jonah a second time: “Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They’re in a bad way and I can’t ignore it any longer.”

This time Jonah started off straight for Nineveh, obeying God’s orders to the letter.

Nineveh was a big city, very big—it took three days to walk across it. Jonah entered the city, went one day’s walk and preached, “In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed.”

The people of Nineveh listened, and trusted God. They proclaimed a citywide fast and dressed in burlap to show their repentance. Everyone did it—rich and poor, famous and obscure, leaders and followers.

When the message reached the king of Nineveh, he got up off his throne, threw down his royal robes, dressed in burlap, and sat down in the dirt. Then he issued a public proclamation throughout Nineveh, authorized by him and his leaders: “Not one drop of water, not one bite of food for man, woman, or animal, including your herds and flocks! Dress them all, both people and animals, in burlap, and send up a cry for help to God. Everyone must turn around, turn back from an evil life and the violent ways that stain their hands. Who knows? Maybe God will turn around and change God’s mind and let us live!”

God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their evil lives. God did change God’s mind about them. What God said God would do to them God didn’t do.

Jonah was furious. He lost his temper. He yelled at God, “God! I knew it—when I was back home, I knew this was going to happen! That’s why I sailed away! I knew you were sheer grace and mercy, not easily angered, rich in love, and ready at the drop of a hat to turn your plans of punishment into a program of forgiveness!”

“So, God, if you won’t kill them, kill me! I’m better off dead!”
God said, “What do you have to be angry about?”

But Jonah just left. He went out of the city to the east and sat down in a sulk. He put together a makeshift shelter of leafy branches and sat there in the shade to see what would happen to the city.

God arranged for a broad-leafed tree to spring up. It grew over Jonah to cool him off and get him out of his angry sulk. Jonah was pleased and enjoyed the shade. Life was looking up.

But then God sent a worm. By dawn of the next day, the worm had bored into the shade tree and it withered away. The sun came up and God sent a hot, blistering wind from the east. The sun beat down on Jonah’s head and he started to faint. He prayed to die: “I’m better off dead!”

Then God said to Jonah, “What right do you have to get angry about this shade tree?”

Jonah said, “Plenty of right. It’s made me angry enough to die!”

God said, “What’s this? How is it that you can change your feelings from pleasure to anger overnight about a mere shade tree that you did nothing to get? You neither planted nor watered it. It grew up one night and died the next night. So, why can’t I likewise change what I feel about Nineveh from anger to pleasure, this big city of more than 120,000 childlike people who don’t yet know right from wrong, to say nothing of all the innocent animals?”

A TIME FOR ALL AGES.....

HYMN #412 God Moves in a Mysterious Way

1 God moves in a mysterious way

great wonders to perform;

God plants firm footsteps in the sea

and rides upon the storm.

2 Deep in unfathomable mines

of never-failing skill

God floods the earth with bright designs,

guards with a sovereign will.

3 O fearful saints, fresh courage take,

the clouds you so much dread

Are big with mercy and shall break

in blessings on your head.

4 Judge not God's way through human sense,

but trust unfailing grace;

behind a frowning providence

there shines a smiling face.

SERMON.....Rev. Sarah TevisTownes

PASTORAL PRAYER.....

PRAYER OF JESUS

Our Father, Our Mother,
Who is in Heaven, Holy be Your name,
Your Kin(g)dom come, Your will be done,
On Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For yours is the Kin(g)dom and the
Power and the glory,
Now and forever, Amen.

SHARING OUR GIFTS.....

OFFERTORY.....

“All Creatures of Our God and King” Arr. Larry Sue

Joyful Noise Bell Choir

Nancy Roberts-Small, director

DOXOLOGY.....

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts.
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts.
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.....

CLOSING.....

HYMN #476 How Can I Keep from Singing 1,2,4

1 My life flows on in endless song,
above earth’s lamentation.
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymn
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing:
It finds an echo in my soul—
How can I keep from singing?

2 What though my joys and comforts die?
My Savior still is living
What though the shadows gather ‘round?
A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I’m clinging.
Since Love commands both heav’n and earth,
how can I keep from singing?

4 I lift my eyes, the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.

LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY.....

BENEDICTION.....

CLOSING CELEBRATION.....

"The Light of the World Is Jesus," by Philip P. Bliss, arr. by Mark Hayes
Dorenda Morse, piano

Thank you for joining us in worship today

Welcome!



We are delighted to have you worshipping with us today!

Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC is a dynamic congregation with a rich history and an exciting ministry in the community.

Our church is a part of a blend of four major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ.

We claim the early Pilgrim and Puritan settlers of this country as part of our heritage, and celebrate the words of Pastor John Robinson, who in his farewell remarks to the Pilgrims as they were leaving for the “new world,” said,

“There is still more light and truth to break forth from God’s holy word.”

We are a church that:

- Takes the Bible seriously, but not literally.
- Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
- Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
- Celebrates creativity and the arts.
- Seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
- Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
- Is committed to work for justice for all people and for the environment.
- Cares for one another, laughs easily, and rests in God’s love.
- Looks to Jesus as teacher, prophet and Child of God.

Vision Statement

Church of the Good Shepherd desires to be an inclusive community that shares Divine love as a path to peace and justice in the world.

Mission Statement

The mission of Church of the Good Shepherd is to build a just world through community one life at a time.

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

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