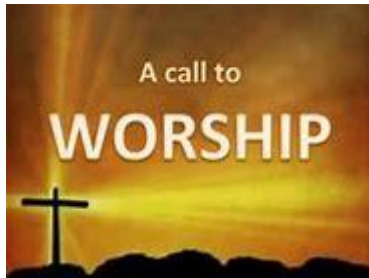


**Sunday Morning
All Age Worship
Earlsdon Methodist Church
24th January 2021**

Theme: Do Something Different



As we enter God's holy presence this morning, are you ready to hear again about God's kingdom? Come, open your hearts and minds to see the kingdom around us and within us. Come, and worship the living God. **Amen.**



Hymn 61 StF: Our God is a Great Big God



Adoration, Confession and Thanksgiving

Response after each line: we pour out our hearts in praise.

God of our salvation:

God of glory:

God our rock:

God our refuge:

God of mercy:

God of loving kindness:

God of power:

God who calls us to 'follow':

Fear of losing people we love.

Fear of losing friendships.

Fear of hard life changes.

Fear of becoming different.

We are sorry, Lord, for giving in to our fears. We are sorry for allowing social or family pressures to influence our decisions. Help us to respond to your call without hesitation.

Help us to lean on you. Help us to trust in you. Help us to learn from you. Help us to follow you. Help us to spread the good news. We ask in your powerful name.

lead us where you would have us go. Amen.

Lord, just like Jonah, fear can prevent us from spreading your 'good news', or from responding to your call to do something different.

Fear of being unpopular.

Fear of being inadequate.

Fear of having to give up possessions.

Assurance: Amen

We thank you, Lord, for all these blessings caught in your net of good news. Thank you for the changes you have brought about in our lives, and the difference you continue to make as we follow and learn from you. Thank you that you never ask us to go beyond our capabilities. Thank you for the many blessings we receive when we follow through on what you ask of us. May we be a blessing to others in your name, by spreading the good news. **Amen.**



Jonah 3:1-5, 10 and Gospel Mark1: 14-20

Reflection: The conversion of Nineveh (Jonah 3: 1-5, 10)



The book of Jonah was written when the nation of Israel was trying to come to terms with what they had been through during their period in exile. Their understanding was developing and shifting, letting go of ancient structures that had been ripped away and identifying God's call to new patterns of worship – different ways of declaring identity and it represents a commitment to engage with facing change.

Question: How do we respond when someone presents an idea that we might find threatening? These remain big question in the church and in any other organisation that attaches great respect to tradition. This sort of mentality may prevent us from seeing or accepting that despite man's ingenuity for orderliness, yet God's ways are different from our ways and His time is different from our time.

Message: Let us we pray for the grace to be able and willing to change our minds, to alter our stance for the good of humanity. We can hold on fast/hard that we cannot begin to understand or tolerate new ideas, changes or 'fresh blood'. Like Jonah's anger showed how his fixed ideas were profoundly challenged by the people's turn around. This is a message God's time for a change will come upon us. It may be a change of heart, our ways of living, or relationships, letting go of hurt/betrayal, the world during and after a pandemic.

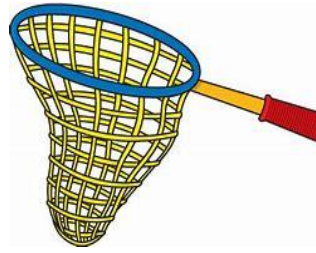
God changes His mind about the fate of Nineveh. **Question? Does this affect our notion of God's constancy?**

The epiphany I got from this is that indeed the promises of God are sure for every one of us but often the issue lies with us. *(EXODUS 3: 14-15: The Lord is faithful to his covenant promises and delivers his people through his powerful right hand).*

To date, the Jews rely on this message from Jonah's encounter with God and it is meditated on and studied during Yom Kippur – festival of cleansing which is especially important in Jewish faith – a time of cleansing of the soul, repenting and starting afresh.

I pray that when the tide of change comes our way, we do not become stubborn or sulk like Jonah or waste precious time – so that we may have sufficient time to experience the promises and love of God in all that we do knowing that no matter what may come our way – our lives are in His hands.

The Gospel Mark1: 14-20 (Jesus Calling Hs Disciples to Follow Him: "I will make you fishers of men")



Timing is everything! We must be alert and responsive to the Lord's calling. After the imprisonment of John the Baptist, Jesus went to Galilee preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. He saw Simon and Andrew casting their nets and He called them "come after me and I will make you fishers of men". And straightaway they forsook their nets and followed Jesus. And the same for James and John who also immediately left their father's fishing business and followed Jesus. Here began the ministry of Jesus. His message of urgency – repent for the kingdom of God is at hand and the urgency which His first disciples responded to their calling.

Question:

- **What do you feel about the idea that you are chosen by Jesus?**
- **What is it about Jesus that would make you want to say, 'yes'?**
- **What might make you hesitate in your response to Jesus?**

The disciples were in their daily routine when Jesus came and called to them. With so much to do, and pressure from others to complete work and make money, it would have been easy for them to have ignored him.

Message:

Let us together reflect on where in our daily routine is Jesus speaking to us. Perhaps we are missing his voice as we struggle to complete all that is expected of us by family, colleagues and friends?

Jesus Christ is talking to us now through the scriptures, hymns and prayers but more so, through each of us. If we were to hear him, what would we expect him to say?

Would we be willing to change what we are doing if he asks us to? Jesus Christ is calling us to be 'fishers of men'. We cannot use fishing nets to catch people, but we can capture their hearts by being true disciples through evangelising the 'Good

News', our support for those less privilege, being a voice for those on the margins of society.

The pandemic has forced us to be exactly just that – we are taking the Church with us as we go along. We are witnessing the number of services people can 'attend' on-line and via Zoom; others are able to be part of a fellowship group in another country, etc.

Finally, God always has a plan whether the change is through pain and suffering or through Joy, God's will always bring liberation, restoration and renewed hope. I pray when the tide of change comes our way, we do not become stubborn or sulk like Jonah or waste precious time – so that we may have sufficient time to experience the promises and love of God in all that we do knowing that no matter what may come our way – our lives are in His hands. **Amen.**



Hymn 663 StF: I, The Lord of Sea and Sky



We pray, Lord Jesus, for those who need to make decisions today: give them courage. We pray for those who long to do something different: give them hope. We pray for those who are doing their best to follow you: give them reassurance.

Amen.

God of the past and of the future, we bring to you in prayer those people and places on our hearts today: We

Lord Jesus, you called fisherman as they worked, so we pray for fishermen today as they struggle to make a living.

We pray for all those who work to bring food to our table as they struggle with the complexities of legislation and the challenges of extreme weather. And may those who exploit, or abuse leave behind cruelty and follow your call to compassion.

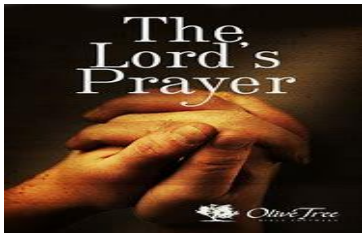
Amen.

We pray for all young people caught up in and trapped by gang violence, for their families, for all those who

remember the parts of the world where people are being killed, oppressed and displaced. We pray especially for the people of Ethiopia and Sudan. May those in power leave behind violence and follow your call to peace. **Amen.**

carry weapons. Help them to leave behind despair and to follow your call to hope. **Amen.**

We pray for one another, for our church families, our communities, and our loved ones, for those who feel overwhelmed by the challenges of each day, for those adapting to new ways of living, for those who are ill, for those close to death, for those who are grieving. Help us all to leave behind all that separates us from you and from one another and to follow your call to trust and to love – in Jesus' name. **Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer (for children/AAW)

Our Father in heaven, blessed is your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Do not let us be tempted and save us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours today and for ever. **Amen.**



Your Heart.

Hymn StF: 477: Teach Me to Dance to the Beat of



Loving Lord, thank you that you meet us where we are, in the middle and muddle of our daily lives. Help us to hear your call, to recognise your voice, and to respond to your invitation to follow you whatever we might be doing. **Amen.**

Rootsontheweb.com