



DEVOTIONAL: 21-27 JANUARY 2024

Read: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12;

1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Holy Fountain of Forgiveness, the tale of Jonah reminds us of your never ending love for all creation. May we be like the people of

Nineveh, who were able to acknowledge their sin and open their eyes to your healing presence. Though you stand ready to forgive our sin, we find it easier to bite our tongues, clench our fists, and cling to our hurts and resentments rather than let you open our hearts. We trust you, Holy One; we pour out our hearts to you. Receive the pain that lurks in our humanity, as we offer up what we have hidden from ourselves and from the world—those words and deeds that keep us separated from your love.

In the book of Mark, we find Jesus calling Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him. This wasn't a casual invitation. It was a divine summons, a call to leave behind their old lives and embark on a new path with Him. They were ordinary fishermen, going about their daily tasks, when Jesus interrupted their routine with His extraordinary call.

This call was to a new identity. Jesus told Simon and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of humanity." They were no longer just fishermen; they were now fishers of humanity, called to draw people into the kingdom of God. In the same way, God calls each of us. God interrupts our ordinary lives with God's extraordinary call. God calls us to leave behind our old identities and embrace a new identity. God calls us to be more than just workers, students, parents, or whatever roles we might have.

Now, let's look at the story of Jonah. Jonah was a prophet of God, called to deliver a message of repentance to the city of Nineveh. But Jonah tried to run away from God's call. He boarded a ship going in the opposite direction, hoping to escape God's presence.

But God pursued Jonah. God sent a storm to stop the ship, and Jonah was thrown overboard. He was swallowed by a large fish, where he spent three days and three nights. In the belly of the fish, Jonah prayed to God, confessing his disobedience and promising to fulfill his call.

When the fish spat Jonah out, God gave him a second chance. God called Jonah again, and this time, Jonah obeyed. He went to Nineveh and delivered God's message, and the people repented.

Jonah's story teaches us that we cannot run away from God's call. God's call is persistent. God pursues us, even when we try to escape. God gives us second chances, even when we fail. God's call is powerful! It can change the course of our lives and the lives of others. Jonah's message led to the repentance of an entire city.

Finally, let's turn to Psalms. In Psalm 62, the psalmist expresses his trust in God. He says, "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from God. God only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken." The psalmist's words remind us that heeding God's call requires trust. Trust that God is our rock and our salvation. Trust that God will not let us be shaken.

Heeding God's call also requires waiting. Waiting for God's timing. Waiting for God's guidance. Waiting for God's provision. **But waiting is not passive.** It's active. It's about seeking God, listening to God's voice, and preparing for God's call. Heeding God's call is a lifelong process. It's about continually seeking God, listening to God's voice, and responding to God's call. It's about living in obedience, trusting in God's promises, and waiting for God's timing.

So, as we go about our daily lives, let's remember the call of God. Let's remember that we are more than just our occupations or roles. We are children of God, called to be God's ambassadors in the world. Let's remember that we cannot run away from God's call, but that God pursues us with a persistent and powerful call. Let's remember that heeding God's call requires trust and waiting, but that God is our rock and our salvation, and God will not let us be shaken. And let's remember that heeding God's call is a lifelong process, a daily choice to seek God, listen to God's voice, and respond to God's call. Amen.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE, LET US PRAY WITH YOU & FOR YOU

- **Mrs. Nancy Whitson** has moved to ARIA of Brookfield. Ms. Nancy is doing well but does have some memory concerns and is still having multiple days of dialysis. Cards and notes of encouragement and support would be greatly appreciated. **Mrs. Nancy Whitson, 18740 West Bluemound Road, Room 103, Brookfield, WI 53045.**
- We continue our prayer vigil for **Mr. Dennis Liepert** on his extensive journey of recovery. Creator God, your children humbly come as intercessory for Bro. Dennis and Ms. Tammy to ask that You would work a full recovery in Bro. Dennis' body - whatever is causing this persistent problem. We believe and look forward to better times for them. Give Bro. Dennis strength and encouragement; he can endure anything with You by his side. We pray that You would, in Your mercy, give him back the health and strength he needs. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Cards and notes of love and support can be mailed to: **Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Tammy Liepert, 7361 Tower Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- Healing and supporting prayers for **Mr. Robert (Bob) and Mrs. Joy Kuhaupt**. Both Mr. Bob and Ms. Joy are experiencing significant health challenges and ask for your caring and supportive prayers. Card and notes can be mailed to: **Mr. Robert and Mrs. Joy Kuhaupt, Sussex Mills Apts., W240 N6345 Maple Ave., #116, Sussex, WI 53089.**
- **Mrs. MaryLou Himes** is still recovering from eye surgery but 50% of her eyesight has returned; the ophthalmologist feels more of her eyesight may return as healing continues. Ms. MaryLou will still have to have another eye surgery soon. We beseech You, Lord, to touch the body and eyes of the Ms. MaryLou with Your healing hand. Guide the process of recovery, restoring vision and optimal health. Lord, during this period, we ask that you grant Ms. MaryLou the gift of peace that calms worries, and the patience to wait for Your perfect timing. Holding on to this faith, we offer up this prayer in the powerful name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Cards and notes of encouragement can be mailed to: **Mrs. MaryLou Himes, 1800 Annie Street, #4, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Ms. Mary Rogge** continues healing from Rotator cuff surgery. Ms. Mary is appreciative for your cards and notes of encouragement and love. We give God thanks for Mr. Roger and the Family, who are supporting and caring for Ms. Mary. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge, 4436 Magna Vista Drive, Jackson, WI 53037.**
- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** is grateful for your continued prayers for healing, restoration, and strength. She is very appreciative for your love, prayers, and support. Ms. Sandy is also grateful for prayers for Mr. Pat and the Family as they care and support her through this season of treatments and healing. Cards and notes can be sent to: **Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Bro. Bob Krell** is rooted in our hearts and prayers as we shower him and the Family with our love, care, and support. It was a marvelous blessing to have Bro. Bob with us in worship last Sunday; "I'm doing well and slowly getting my strength back". We continue to pray for Bro. Bob's healing, restoration, and strength. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Mr. Michael Cahoon**, son of Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and is still on a journey of treatments. We pray that You will bless the means used for Mr. Michael's recovery and those who administer them. Grant that his sickness may be to his spiritual benefit and that he may live the rest of his life more faithfully according to Your will. For You are the source of life and healing and to You we give praise and glory, now and forever. Amen. Cards and notes filled with prayers encouragement can be sent to: **Mr. Michael Cahoon, C/O: Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, 1615 Beverly Lane, WI 53090.**
- Prayers of strength and courage for **Mr. Tom Damp**. Dear God, please give Mr. Tom strength when he is weak, love when he feel forsaken, courage when he's am afraid, wisdom when he feel unwise, comfort when he feels all alone, hope when he feel rejected, and peace when Mr. Tom is in turmoil. Amen. Card and noted can be mailed to: **Mr. Tom Damp, 1707 Sunset Ridge Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- We give thanks and praise that **Mr. Ben Barth**, husband of Ms. Heather Wolf, granddaughter of Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge. recipient of a new heart and new lungs- give thanks for your continued prayers and support. O God, You have told me in your Word to "be strong and of a good courage" and to "fear not". You have said that "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. Please overwhelm Mr.

Ben with cards and notes for continued healing, strength, and restoration. Correspondence can be mailed to: **Mr. Ben and Mrs. Heather Barth, 223 South 11th Ave., West Bend, WI 53095.**

- We remain in prayer and support for **Mrs. Ann Cording**. Thank You, Provider God, for giving me all that I need. Thank You for inviting me to come to You any time with all my needs and requests. Thank You for your Word to lead, guide, and direct me. Loving God, I come to You now asking for wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit for the decisions I have to make in my life. You have told me in your Word that if I lack wisdom I should ask because You give to all who ask for wisdom generously. Thank You for being true to your Word. In the name of Jesus, Amen. Cards and notes of love and care can be mailed to: **Mrs. Ann Cording, 1416 S. Silverbrook Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: **Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, appreciates your continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: alankempf33@gmail.com; or cards and notes to **Mr. Allan and Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.**

We continue to celebrate our 175th year of service, commitment and Methodism in West Bend, Wisconsin.

“Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future”

Prayer: We listen to the stories of the call of the disciples and find them interesting but unrealistic. When we look at our own lives, we believe that we could not leave everything to follow someone we didn't know. We have many responsibilities and ties which keep us from following. But God is persistent. God understands our confusion and doubts. And God continues to call us to be in ministry and mission in this world. It may not mean leaving everything behind, but it does mean being willing to serve wherever God calls us. That's hard. We want to place conditions on service, and usually those conditions are "if we have time", "if we have energy"; "if we can just try serving God for a little while to see how it all works out". Still God calls to each of us. Discipleship is difficult. Forgive us, patient and persistent Lord, for the very many times we turn our backs on serving you and focus on our own comforts. Forgive us when we look the other way when people are in need. Forgive us our angry attitudes and actions which hurt rather than heal. Wrap your arms around us, healing our wounds, binding us to you. Gently move us into service in your name. Amen.

In Christian love,
Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin

Thank you for LIVING your Faith!

“Grateful’ is an inadequate word for how I feel. Faithful supporters like you have shown us how God's love can change the world. Your financial gifts in December 2023, helped us face difficult struggles and allowed us to continue in our mission. We are so blessed to have a loving supporter like you. Thank you for your generous gifts that help us keep our doors open.”

We are grateful for each of you!