



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Some of us expect our elected leaders to protect us from dangers, and are horrified when they do not, and actually increase our risk. “Pluck me out of the net they have laid secretly for me.” Where shall we find comfort and strength in adversity?

Pray

Redeeming God, you see our difficulties and rush to our side. As we look for miracles, you provide the miracle of redemption, helping us turn our meaningless suffering into meaningful joy in the face of danger and destruction. Help us understand and believe. Amen

Act with or without Family

We are often able to be the means of alleviating another’s suffering, of being the hands and love of God embodied. The next time you see another in pain, whether a brother, sister, parent, child, ask, “How can I help?” And if they don’t know, stay by their side as well as you can.

Saturday, May 9, 2020

John 8:48-59 <https://tinyurl.com/ycebmvr>

Ponder

In this passage Jesus claims to be the “I Am” who revealed his name to Moses. With this statement he is naming himself as the Word or Logos who was with God in the beginning of the world. This is the claim that is outrageous to his hearers. “Who DO you think you are?!” is the outraged response whenever someone appears to claim greater importance than previously thought. We too have experienced these feelings of outrage, some of us when our children finally become mature enough to show us ourselves. And perhaps we too have experienced the outrage of others, in sentences that tend to begin with the thought “How dare you....”.

Pray

Naming God, sometimes we think we are your children, and find safety in your arms. Sometimes we think we are your equal, and are outraged by those who “presume” they deserve something from us. Sometimes we have the courage to join the I Am of Jesus. Help us face the consequences with courage. Amen

Act with or without Family

Make a list of sentences in your journal that start with “I am...!” Are any outrageous? Are any making you too small? Are you certain of one particular one? Ask for feedback, at the dinner table or in the backyard. “Who do you say that I am?” And never forget you are a beloved child of God.

David Crowder Band, “I Am”. <https://tinyurl.com/yceajfpy>

Monday, May 4, 2020

Ezekiel 34:17-23 <https://tinyurl.com/yaccqvhk>

Ponder

There were two major exiles experienced by the Jewish people, the Assyrian and the Babylonian. Ezekiel experienced exile during the first stage of the Babylonian exile. He was a priest, who was then called to be a prophet. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah’s. Yahweh had just called Ezekiel to prophesy against the “shepherds” of Israel, the leaders. They had been feeding themselves instead of “their sheep.” But the lost, strayed, weak and powerless, and those who have suffered at the hands of the leaders, are the focus of God’s concern. <https://tinyurl.com/yfc252p3>

Pray

Merciful God, you look out for us when we are vulnerable , and challenge us when we are powerful. Clearly, your heart is with your little ones. Help ours also be. Amen.

Act with or without Family

Drive through the edges of our little town, or wherever you live, going to poorer places you may not usually visit. Observe and consider respectfully the needs of those who live there. Ponder how you can join an effort to help. And if you are one who needs help, call for it!

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Psalms 100 <https://tinyurl.com/yapd8e5l>

Ponder

When was the last time you shouted for joy? The word used for praising God translates “shout” and is the same word Joshua used when he commanded the Israelites to march seven times around Jericho and then make a noise that raised the roof! Another interesting point is that “all you lands” were being encouraged to shout for joy. The psalmist was inviting everyone, not just the Jews, to praise God. Isaac Watts used this psalm when he wrote what we use for the Doxology. “Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below.”

<https://tinyurl.com/y8g3mp6g>

Pray

Oh God, some of us have lost our voices. Some of us only whisper when in need. Many of us have been taught not to speak up! How can we praise you and give thanks that we are your beloved flock of vulnerable sheep made strong by a loving shepherd, without letting our voices exclaim? Let us also shout with joy because you have saved us! Amen.

Act with or without without Family

In the privacy of your room, make a small joyful noise. If you can be together with someone, tentatively make a happy noise together. If you can think and feel how good it is to have a God who loves, protects, guides and redeems us through life and past death, go outside and exclaim loudly "PRAISE GOD!" And next time we gather in our building, think about making that noise as you see the ones you love!

Paul Robeson singing, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho". (skip the ads)

<https://tinyurl.com/yanmeo4v>

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Matthew 20:17-28 <https://tinyurl.com/yb4c8pme>

Ponder

Here is the message that the disciples continue to forget or misunderstand. God calls us to sacrifice for others, not to triumph over them. God calls us to be guardians of justice for the poor, exiled, immigrant, injured, powerless, not the ones who either ignore or even take advantage of them. This is social justice. This is the call of Christianity. Why is this so hard for us to understand?

Pray

Vulnerable One, we think we know what you mean when you ask us to follow you. But we are so surprised when asked to sacrifice ourselves, to suffer with your little ones, even to die in shame when others don't care to reward our virtue. We are upset when good people suffer! And...We are, some of us, outraged when advised to stay home to protect more vulnerable others. We think "we don't need no stinking masks, they make it hard to breathe and besides WE FEEL FINE." Help us realize our power lies in chosen identification with the sheep of your pastures. We can join the ones who have been shouldered aside and forced to drink filthy water. Amen.

Act, with or without Family

Take a trip in your little or big town again. First find the water treatment plant, pause and ponder, giving thanks for the essential workers who keep protecting your supply of fresh clean water (see Ezekiel passage again).

Next, as respectfully as possible, drive around the richest parts of our little town, or the big city where you live. Where do you think James and John were planning to live with Jesus? Think about, talk about, what it means in your life if you see how Jesus might live on both "sides of the tracks." If you have something to share, there are many reputable places online where you can donate to care for God's littlest sheep.

Ten Largest Drinking Water Treatment Plants in the World.

<https://tinyurl.com/y9exne9r>

Thursday, May 7, 2020

Acts 27:1-12 <https://tinyurl.com/ycqd937q>

Ponder

The geography and weather details of that journey would be fascinating for those who love maps and weather reports. This account is also filled with names of real people, with personal details about Paul's needs on the journey to be tried in Rome. How unusual that a prisoner would be allowed to consult on the safety of the journey, and that his judgement be considered. Nevertheless and despite consultation and experience, they carried on, into great danger.

Pray

Voyager God, the journey of our lives is sometimes toward Jerusalem and death, sometimes toward Rome and trial, and sometimes simply into places and futures unknown to us. Guide us with your Holy Spirit's sustaining love for us, whatever tempests we face. Amen.

Act with or without Family

Watch this well done video of Paul's journey, and ponder the journeys of your own lives. Where have you been "tempest tossed?"

<https://tinyurl.com/ya6k3jdp>

Friday, May 8, 2020

Psalms 31:1-5 <https://tinyurl.com/ydyfsafe>

Ponder

"Into your hand I commend my spirit." We do look for security in all kinds of different places. We have friends from Chicago who won't visit us because they think of central Indiana as a terribly dangerous place, and historically, they have some reason to believe this. And there are some of us here who are alarmed at the thought of the dangers of Chicago. Those of us who followed the guidance of Dave Ramsey probably were able to have six months of living expenses saved, and haven't felt the desperation of others out of work for six weeks.