

Steve will lead the catch up on last week's service and then pass to Val

Jonah

Welcome to our 3rd story about boats.

In the last two weeks we looked at 'what makes a good story' and 'what are stories for' and you came up with lots of different answers. It seems stories have different messages for different people. They can give us a different idea each time we read them so its good to go back to well known stories and see what they are saying to us today.

First we will sing [My Lighthouse](#)

Today's story is one we will have heard many times over the years but let us hear it afresh today and see what it has to say to us.



Reading: Running Away from God

1 ¹⁻² One day long ago, GOD's Word came to Jonah, Amittai's son: "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."

3 But Jonah got up and went the other direction to Tarshish, running away from GOD. He went down to the port of Joppa and found a ship headed for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board, joining those going to Tarshish—as far away from GOD as he could get.

4-6 But GOD sent a huge storm at sea, the waves towering.

The ship was about to break into pieces. The sailors were terrified. They called out in desperation to their gods. They threw everything they were carrying overboard to lighten the ship. Meanwhile, Jonah had gone down into the hold of the ship to take a nap. He was sound asleep. The captain came to him and said, "What's this? Sleeping! Get up! Pray to your god! Maybe your god will see we're in trouble and rescue us."

7 Then the sailors said to one another, "Let's get to the bottom of this. Let's draw straws to identify the culprit on this ship who's responsible for this disaster."

So, they drew straws. Jonah got the short straw.

8 Then they grilled him: "Confess. Why this disaster? What is your work? Where do you come from? What country? What family?"

9 He told them, "I'm a Hebrew. I worship GOD, the God of heaven who made sea and land."

¹⁰ At that, the men were frightened, really frightened, and said, “What on earth have you done!” As Jonah talked, the sailors realized that he was running away from GOD.

¹¹ They said to him, “What are we going to do with you—to get rid of this storm?” By this time the sea was wild, totally out of control.

¹² Jonah said, “Throw me overboard, into the sea. Then the storm will stop. It’s all my fault. I am the cause of the storm. Get rid of me and you’ll get rid of the storm.”

¹³ But no. The men tried rowing back to shore. They made no headway. The storm only got worse and worse, wild and raging.

¹⁴ Then they prayed to GOD, “O GOD! Don’t let us drown because of this man’s life, and don’t blame us for his death. You are GOD. Do what you think is best.”

¹⁵ They took Jonah and threw him overboard. Immediately the sea was quieted down.

¹⁶ The sailors were impressed, no longer terrified by the sea, but in awe of GOD. They worshiped GOD, offered a sacrifice, and made vows.

¹⁷ Then GOD assigned a huge fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the fish’s belly three days and nights.

2 ¹ Then Jonah prayed to his God from the belly of the fish. **2**¹⁰ GOD spoke to the fish, and it vomited up Jonah on the seashore.

Let us pray:

Thank you Lord, for the gift of the Scriptures.

As we reflect on the Bible, make us open to your wisdom,

Receptive to your will and courageous in our response;

In the love of Jesus our teacher and our friend.

Amen

We are looking at different ways of worshipping and praying this month. Not everyone can pray by speaking, a lot of deaf people don’t have words but can still pray and God will understand their prayer.

We are doing the Lords Prayer in sign language, you can say the words if you want or just learn the signs, the message will be the same..

The Lords prayer (signed)

Our Father in heaven

Hallowed be your name

Your Kingdom come

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our sins

As we forgive those who sin against us

And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory
For ever and ever **Amen.**

Hearing in a different way.

We have heard the story read from the Bible and now we will hear it a different way, as told by Simon, Hannah, Hallam and Jemima.

[PLAY VIDEO](#)

Think about the reading and the improvisation – did you notice different things because of how the story was told?

What had the most effect on you?

What is it like in a storm? [PLAY VIDEO](#)

The pictures and words in the video accompany words from Sue Hickson-Marsey who is the station manager at Hornsea Inshore Rescue. We asked them to let us know what it was like to be on the sea in a storm.

Sue says:

“As a Skipper of a pilot launch in the North Sea I work in all weather conditions, dense fog, strong winds, snow and rain. It can be horrendous at times; the waves soon build up in the strong winds and I have been worried and concerned as to whether I’m going to get back to shore or not. But I’m still here thankfully and living to tell the tale.

It all goes very quiet on the pilot launch when the weather picks up, the launch can be thrown around in all directions disappearing under the waves. You can hear the drone of the engines but above all in a gale you can hear the wind howling and whistling around the mast – its not the best of experiences I can tell you!

At night it can be even more daunting, especially when you see the shadows of the dark waves towering above the pilot launch.

I never disrespect the sea because you never know whether she’ll take you out or not. So, I am always grateful that she lets me come home safely in one piece!”

It strikes me that Jonah doesn’t seem to be afraid, in fact he is asleep in the boat - I wonder why?

Have you ever been afraid?

Did you call on God?

What happened?

Something to consider as we listen to the next song or you can sing along.

Song: [Do not be afraid](#)

Jonah ran away because he didn't want to do what God had asked of him.

Jonah knew God would forgive the people of Nineveh and he didn't think they deserved it.

Questions to think about:

What does this say about Jonah?

What does it tell us about God?

What about us, do we try to ignore God?



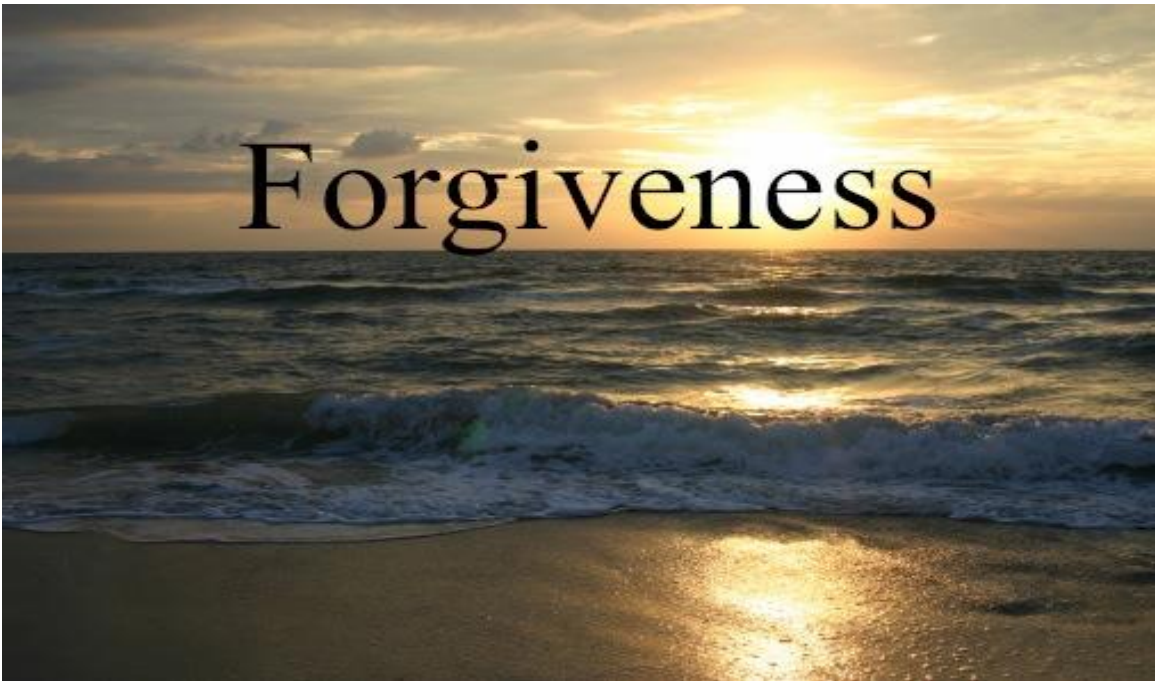
Let us pray:

Shall we start by thinking of all the things we are thankful for and give our thanks to God

What are you *thankful* for?

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Sometimes we do things we shouldn't and don't do the things we should – lets ask God to forgive us and give us the strength to forgive others.



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Jonah tried to ignore God and run away, lets ask God for courage to hear His voice and follow His lead.

A graphic with the text "I WILL FOLLOW GOD'S PLAN" in a playful, colorful font. The words are stacked: "I WILL" in yellow, "FOLLOW" in white on a green arrow pointing right, "GOD'S" in blue, and "PLAN" in green and yellow. To the right of the text is a stylized yellow sun with rays. Below the text is a decorative border of small yellow squares.

Jonah tried to sleep through the storm – are we guilty of trying to ignore the troubles in our world?

Let us pray for our world and its leaders



Let us pray for our family and friends, especially at this time when we cant see them as much as we like.



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And finally we will pray for those in our prayer book this week:

David and Vivienne

Dean Chelsea and their new baby

Zara

Ann

David Sykes

Teachers preparing for a new school year

Beirut

Encourage them Lord, strengthen them and surround them with your love

All these prayers we ask in Jesus name

Amen.

Song: [I will go in the strength of the Lord](#)

To do this week:

You could read the whole story of Jonah in your own Bible.

Is it a story of obeying God? or Forgiveness? or hearing Gods will for our lives?

Has reading the whole story changed your mind about the kind of person Jonah was?

You could draw a picture that captures the important part of the story for you. I wonder which bit you liked the best. You could add it to the rainbow outside church or send it to Margaret to put on the church Facebook page.

You could make a big fish like the one that saved Jonah and show it to us next week. There are lots of ideas of how to make a fish online.

Look forward to seeing you all again next week and see where the story will take us!

Let us pray:

Go in the strength of the Lord, to the work he appoints you to do, and:

May God's Word be in your heart.

May God's Word be on your lips.

May God's Word be in your touch.

May God's Word direct your feet.

And on this day and all your days to come

May God's Word be the life you live. **Amen.**

