

NORTH FERRISBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AUG 9th SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE



<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-jonah-vomited-from-huge-fish-or-whale-old-hunstanton-detail-of-stained-112311327.html>

OPENING PRAYER

Lord, we come to you this day, seeking your healing and restoring love. Give us courage to reach out to you in the good and easy times as well as in the times of strain and stress. Open our hearts to receive your message of peace and hope. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

SANCTIFYING AND PERFECTING GRACE

469 Jesus Is All the World to Me

1. Je - sus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all;
 2. Je - sus is all the world to me, my friend in tri - als sore;
 3. Je - sus is all the world to me, and true to him I'll be;
 4. Je - sus is all the world to me, I want no bet - ter friend;

he is my strength from day to day, with -
 I go to him for bless - ings, and he
 O how could I this friend de - ny, when
 I trust him now, I'll trust him when life's

out him I would fall. When I am sad, to
 gives them o'er and o'er. He sends the sun - shine
 he's so true to me? Fol - low - ing him I
 fleet - ing days shall end. Beau - ti - ful life with

him I go, no oth - er one can cheer me so;
 and the rain, he sends the har - vest's gold - en grain;
 know I'm right, he watch - es o'er me day and night;
 such a friend, beau - ti - ful life that has no end;

when I am sad, he makes me glad, he's my friend.
 sun - shine and rain, har - vest of grain, he's my friend.
 fol - low - ing him, by day and night, he's my friend.
 e - ter - nal life, e - ter - nal joy, he's my friend.

SCRIPTURE READING

(Jonah 1:1-3) The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.” 3 But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

(Psalm 84:1-4) How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

SERMON

1 May God’s love and peace be with you. Before I begin today’s sermon, I would like to do the Lord’s prayer with you first. Let us pray. “Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.” Do you remember to whom we just prayed? Yes, we prayed to our Father. We didn’t pray to my father. We didn’t pray to your father, or his father or her father. But we prayed to our Father. In Korean, the Lord’s prayer starts like this. “하늘에 계신 우리 아버지.” uri means our, and a-beo-ji means father. So, the Korean version of the Lord’s prayer is just like the

same. It has been about one month for us to get to know each other. But even before we saw each other for the first time, we were actually in the same household because we call God our Father. What does it mean to call God our Father? Does it mean that God is male? No, God is neither male nor female. But we use the word, father, as an analogy. We use this word to describe our relationship with God. I heard of a story about a person who became a Christian because of this. She used to live in a country where religion is prohibited. And she came to Korea as an immigrant, and she became a Christian. The reason that she decided to believe in God was because she can call God our Father. She said she was so much amazed that she can call God our Father.

When I lived in Boston, I attended a church. Most of the church members were Korean immigrants. The church had a very special characteristic. We had a lot of visitors throughout whole year. There are many people who come to the US for various reasons. There were students attending colleges. And there were people who came here for business purposes. There were people who were visiting their family members. Right after they arrive in this country, even before they open a bank account, even before they make a cell phone, they come to church. One more interesting thing is that atheists come to church. Catholics come to church. Buddhists come to church. No matter what background they have, no matter what religion they have, they come to church. One reason is that church is the place where they can have Korean food. And the other reason that I believe is this. They know Christians call God our Father. As Christians call God as our Father, they think Christians would welcome them.

But, my siblings in Christ, there is something that we need to remember. It is such a beautiful privilege to call God our Father. As we are accepted

by Jesus Christ, we were reconciled with God. In God's grace, we call God our Father. But, calling God our Father has a significant implication that we are not aware of sometimes. Calling God our Father means to belong to the household of God. Calling God our Father means to be siblings with everyone on earth.

2 In the Bible, there are many stories about prophets. For example, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Micah are prophets. The prophets in the Bible share some important characteristics in common. First of all, they were chosen to be prophets by God. And they were called to proclaim the word of God. They were called to proclaim not only blessings and love, but also judgment. So, prophets were shunned by people. They were unwelcomed. Even they were persecuted. So, sometimes, they refused to be a prophet. In today's scripture, we see God calling Jonah to be a prophet. So, the scripture starts like this: "The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: "Go to the great city of Nineveh(נִיְנֵוֶה) and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But, Jonah didn't want to do so. Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh. So, he ran away from God. The scripture says, "Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord."

What we can hear from this scripture is that he refused to go to Nineveh, and he is trying to run away from God. So, we could assume that he didn't want to be an unwelcomed person among others, or he didn't want to proclaim God's judgment. But for Jonah, the reason was pretty much different. To understand him, we need to know the historical context of this story. Nineveh was actually the capital city of Assyria. Assyria was one of the strongest empires in Ancient near east. And Assyria was the

empire that finished the history of the northern kingdom, Israel. Assyria conquers Israel in 722 BCE. Assyrians reduced the people of God into captives. And they forced the people of God to move to other areas. By doing so, they tried to eradicate their language and culture. They tried to eradicate the identity of the people of God. Scholars assume that this book of Jonah was written after the period of captivity. It means that after they had been through the brutality of Assyrians, they were encouraged to think about God's universal love for all people. Now we can understand why Jonah wanted to run away from God. He could not possibly imagine being in the household of God with them. But, he was encouraged to say that they are also under God's love as he is.

2.2. A few years ago, in the night, I went to the church that I was serving at that time. It was in the middle of winter. It was very cold. To get inside, I tried to use the back door of the church. And I found that somebody was sleeping at the back door under the small porch. That night, I decided to pretend like I didn't see him. I thought he would leave the place tomorrow morning. But he came to the small space under the porch the next day as well. And the next day and the next day. At that time, I was responsible for the safety of the church building. And I didn't know what to do. And a couple of thoughts came up in my mind. One of them was this. The church is the house of God. And he is under the porch of the house of God. He might call God our Father. And God absolutely calls him my child. So, a child of God was in the house of God. So, I was not able to ask him to leave the place. He was at his Father's house, and he is my sibling. If you were there, what are we supposed to do?

Let us go a little further. We see so many people are being dislocated today. We are seeing the increasing number of climate refugees. We see many people are being dislocated by economic and political instability.

Still today, even right now, many people are traveling to find a new home at the risk of their lives. And, we see that it is so hard for them to settle down and find a new abode(어벼어드) for their families. It is not just happening in this country. It is happening worldwide. My siblings in Christ, what should we do? As the people who believe in heavenly Father, what should we do? I am not asking your political stance. I would like to humbly ask you to have the same struggle that I felt at the porch of the church on that night. We call God our Father. We sing, this is our Father's world. What would you do?

3 Driven by God, Jonah arrives in the city of Nineveh. He arrives in the city of the people who demolished his country. As the city was so huge, he had to walk around there for three days, proclaiming the word of God. Amazingly, people in the city all repented. So, seeing them repenting, Jonah was very upset. The Bible says, "to Jonah, this seemed very wrong, and he became angry." As he was so much angry at God, he prayed two times like this: "Lord, take away my life, it is better for me to die than to live." Can't we understand him? I can absolutely understand him. But God tries to persuade him. God tries to remind him of what love his people have received. God says: "shouldn't I have loving-pity for Nineveh, the large city where more than 120,000 people live who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?" My siblings in Christ, with this persistent love, with this patience, with this mercy, no one less than we are accepted. This is how we call God our Father.

3.2. I would like to introduce a painting for you. From September, we will be having Bible study, and one of them will be a Bible study based on artworks. This painting was drawn by Dutch artist, Rembrandt, in 1669. As we can see, this painting was created based on the story of the prodigal

son. This second son, who is kneeling before the father, left the house many years ago. Even he asked for the inheritance from his father as he left. In the ancient world, it meant he ignored his father, he considered his father to be a dead person. As we can see, his shoes are worn out. He is wearing colorless cloth. It means he is no longer treated as a person with dignity. Father's eyes are pointless. We can assume that he has lost his eyesight, waiting for his second son. But with his two hands, he is embracing the son. This painting reminds me of a verse from this story: "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him." My siblings in Christ, with this persistent love, with this patience, and with this mercy, no one less than we are accepted by our God. This is how we call God our Father, and this is how we became siblings in Christ.

4 When we understand our heavenly Father, we use our experience of our personal fathers, one of our parents. Some people prefer calling God with different names than Father because of their personal experience. But personally, I don't have difficulty in calling God, our Father thanks to my experience of my father. My father is a construction worker for the last 40 years. He could not finish his elementary education because he had to support his family. He goes out for work before sunrise, and he comes back after sunset. So, I was not able to see my father in the morning because he already went out for work. He does not have Saturday and Sunday. He does not have vacation. The only day he can rest is a rainy day. So, my family was not able to have a family vacation. Since he got married, he gave everything to make a living. So, his job is not a career for him. It was just a means of living as it is for many people. But, my father has helped me understand my heavenly Father. You know what? Our heavenly Father strives to give us the foundation of living for

every one of us. Our Father strives to give us the foundation of living. To give the sunshine to every one of us, to give the rain to every one of us, God strives.

So, a psalmist sings the work of God this way: How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young — a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

My siblings in Christ, let us participate in our God's work of love. Amen.

GRACE
2169 God, How Can We Forgive

1. God, how can we for - give when bonds of love are torn?
2. When we have missed the mark, and tears of an - guish flow,
3. Who dares to throw the stone to damn an - oth - er's sin,

How can we rise and start a - new, our trust re - born?
how can you still re - lease our guilt, the debt we owe?
when you, while know - ing all our past, for - give a - gain?

When hu - man lov - ing fails and ev - ery hope is gone,
The o - cean depth of grace sur - pass - es all our needs.
No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.

your love gives strength be - yond our own to face the dawn.
A priest who shares our hu - man pain, Christ in - ter - cedes.
As you, O God, for - give our sin, may we for - give.

WORDS: Ruth Duck (Matt. 6:12-15; 18:21-35; John 8:2-11)
MUSIC: Hebrew melody, *Sacred Harmony*; harm. from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, alt.
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ANNOUCEMENT

1. Committee Meetings

- Board of Trustees meeting on August 9th after fellowship meeting.
- Worship Committee meeting on August 15th after fellowship meeting.

2. Outdoor Worship

We are having outdoor worship service on August 16th and 23rd at 10AM in the church back yard! Please bring your own outdoor chairs and sunshades! Before we have worship, **we will have a special time for our children at 9:30AM.** Please pray for our Sunday School teachers who are giving energy for our children. In case that there is a possibility of rain, we will reach out to you all by Saturday morning, and the service will be broadcasted by Youtube instead of having outdoor gathering.

3. Please pray for those who leave their home as they are going to college. We pray that God may bless your next step!

4. Pastoral Visitation

Pastor Sunjae wants to visit all of you! He will stay outside with wearing mask while you can stay inside of your place. If you want to meet him or have any prayer to share, please contact using this email address.

sunjaehope@gmail.com