

January 22, 2021

Dear Friends,

Come as You Are

There's nothing like school closures, stay-at-home orders, ten months with little to no people contact (or too much contact with the same few people), personal suffering, sociopolitical tensions, and perpetually foggy glasses to bring out one's shadow side!

I know some of you are feeling like this has been a good season of contemplative space and happy relationships, but most of you are not feeling that way! It seems to me that sadness with a side dish of grumpiness and all manner of addictions (from our phones to mood-altering substances) are on the rise. This makes sense. We need help.

What to do when you are exposed? What to do when your underbelly is showing?

First, remember God loves you. *God's love precedes and outruns your faults and failures.* Sit there for a long moment. Let God's love dawn on you.

Then, face yourself. *From the safety of being loved, stop hiding.* Acknowledge your weakness (which is not the same thing as sin) and confess your sin (which is any manner of life separate from or opposed to God). God will work with you. That's what God does. He supports us, forgives our sins, redeems, and restores our lives, ultimately to a fullness beyond imagination.

May we be honest before him. No need to act like you are perfection in the flesh. *The Gospel, the good news of God through Jesus Christ, is that we come to God as we are, open to his rescue (that's faith).* Then we participate with him as he takes us from there.

Sunday Online Worship Gathering at 10 a.m.

I hope we see ourselves clearly enough to be okay with God's rescue of the Ninevites in the book of Jonah. They were so overtly evil that the prophet Jonah could not stand to see them forgiven. That is a problem. We're warned repeatedly in the Bible about the dangers of judging people in a manner that ignores the grace we have received ourselves.

This is the third Sunday in the season of [Epiphany](#). How does God reveal himself through the book of Jonah? To prepare for Sunday's sermon by Rick Hiemstra, please read the book of Jonah – it's only two pages long.

For a Zoom link to the service, please [contact me](#).

*Please join the Zoom meeting after 9:30 a.m. to avoid problems entering.

For this week's scripture readings and other announcements, go to [Sunday's bulletin](#).

Sunday School for grades 4-6 at 11:15 a.m.

Please contact our [family pastor](#) for a link to 'send' your child to Sunday School (Gr. 4-6) at 11:15 a.m.

Prayer Gathering: January 26 at 11:30 a.m.

Please [send in your prayer requests](#) so that the prayer team can remember you this week.

Trust in the LORD and Do Good

If we are having trouble knowing what to do these days, Psalm 37 offers some straightforward advice: "Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him..."

When life was complicated this past week, I repeated these words to myself: Trust in the LORD and do good. And I went from there. Let's do this together.

Please keep in touch if and as you are at the end of your rope.

With love and prayers,

Pastor Kerry Kronberg (with the whole team)