

11-12-2023 Worship Service

Welcome!

This morning's message is based on that most interesting prophet, Hosea. The prophets of old had the unenviable task of trying to describe to the people what they were really like, compared to what God wanted and needed them to be like. The prophets were amazingly creative with the examples and analogies they came up with – Hosea is no exception.

Opportunities for Celebration and Service --

- Senior Coffee this Friday with Nora and Forrest Miller – during covid they decided to drive every road in Harvey County... they'll share photos and experiences.
- Thank you for those who've signed up to bring food and help with the Community Thanksgiving dinner; that is one week from today and we need more help!
- As some of you know, Lois Janzen has been going to Bethesda daily for the past two weeks for physical therapy and rehab for her shoulder. She's done so well that she no longer qualifies for that service, so now she'll be happy for phone calls or visitors.

Morning Prayer –

O God, you have made us and all that is. You love us, as you love all your children and all that you have created. We thank you God, for your love and compassion, for your creativity and your boundless imagination. Thank you for the ancient stories that help us to see your love and faithfulness across the generations, across the centuries and millennia. These stories help us to know that in spite of the ways your people are unfaithful and even though we break the covenant with you over and over, you don't give up. You are a God of perseverance and patience. And God, we're also humbled by the biblical stories. As we find ourselves within them, we begin to understand our deep need for your grace and forgiveness. Help us, with your Holy Spirit's presence, to be able to repent, to turn around, to come back to you and your covenant love.

As we're gathered here together, as your people, we offer you our prayers. We bring prayers of gratitude and thanks for gift of healing – thank you for ways that Lois Janzen's injuries have begun to heal. Thank you for the healing that Judy has experienced. We're grateful for the ways that people we know and love have regained health after having covid or flu or other viruses. You have created us with amazing healing properties and we can also see how you've worked through medical and scientific advances. We're grateful! And we pray for continued healing to happen. We pray also for the healing of wounds in our souls and our hearts.

We pray for those who are grieving. We think of DJ and Marilyn and their family. We pray for Justine, for Scott and Cindy. They are all grieving deaths that came unexpectedly and, it seems, too soon. Grant your comfort in the coming weeks and months for these and their loved ones. We pray for those who are grieving losses at Hesston College – losses of jobs, losses of trust, losses of future hopes and plans. Be present with your love and comfort and wisdom.

O God, we pray for our congregation as we wrestle together with discernment and decisions about how we'll move forward in the coming year. We thank you for Luann and her willingness to come and walk the journey with us. We thank you for those who will serve in leadership positions and for all who will participate in being your church in the coming months. Help us to keep our eyes on you – that we may tend to the details and also focus on the bigger picture of what it means to be your people in this world, in this time and in this place. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Redeemer and our example. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication –

O Lord, for these and all your gifts we give you thanks. We ask for your blessing on this money and on each one who has given. We ask for your blessing on every gift that you have granted to each person. May we all be generous and loving in the ways we give back. Amen.

Benediction –

As you go from here, may you ponder the words that you've heard. May you proclaim the good news that you've learned. May you produce good fruit for God's kingdom.