

## WORSHIP SERVICE PLAN

(Traditional & Online Service)

July 6, 2025 • Communion • 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Bible Profile: Noah

**Genesis 8:15-21; 9:11-17**

*"Leave the Ark"*

We can't stay in the Ark forever, but we can be in God's grace indefinitely.

### (online only) Preparation for Worship

Gather these items for worship. If you don't have a particular item, fret not:

- a piece of white cloth
- an end table or stand
- a plate with bread
- a cup with juice
- a glass or bowl of water
- a lighter/match
- a boat toy or image
- a computer or internet-accessible device
- a thank you card to God for something this week

For each item you have, thank God for the provision. For each piece you do not have, thank God you don't need it. Place the table/stand in the area you plan to worship. If more than one person will be present, place the table in the middle of where you will be seated. Drape the cloth over it. Arrange the cup, plate, glass of water, and other items on the table. Keep the Bible in front of you. Have enough elements for each person in your household.

### Questions for the announcement loop

*In preparing for Worship, consider the following:*

- What kind of guarantees do you require of God?
- What do you need to know or feel or have before you are ready to act on something God wants from you?
- What kind of guarantees do you require of other people? Of yourself?
- What can God count on from you? What risks does God take in blessing you?

### (10am only) Prelude:

*"Love Lifted Me"* arr. Melody Bober

### Opening Sentence

**Genesis 8:15-16 (CEB)**

God spoke to Noah, "Go out of the ark, you and your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you."

**Welcome to this service of Worship, We are glad you are with us! We have a few Community Notes for you to consider as we worship throughout the week...**

### Welcome Visitors!

We are glad you are here! Our nursery is in the Education Building and our restrooms are in the buildings other than the Sanctuary.

### When Do You Sail?

One of the challenges of living is deciding when to take risks. When do you take a chance on something or someone, without a guarantee of the outcome? When do you move forward knowing that you might lose or get hurt? As the phrase goes, you cannot sail the seas until you have the courage to leave the shore. What risks are you willing to take? What risks are you willing to take with God and God's direction for you? Is your life of faith dependent on how well God can guarantee your safety or comfort (or rightness)? What does God risk in blessing you?

### Bible Heroes

Over the next several weeks we will feature as a theme in the Morning and Online worship services a Bible hero. We will use the lives of these folks to watch how God operates and contrast their choice-making with our own. Starting this week with Noah and moving through Noah, Moses, Jesus, to the Gospel itself, we will explore lots of examples God

gives us to live, learn and, frankly, laugh at ourselves.

### Session Meeting Summary

On June 26, the Session met for their regular monthly gathering. After a devotion based on Mark 10:35-40, we prayed for each other and our church. We reviewed minutes and digital decisions (those are things voted on between meetings that have consensus; if any one member wishes to meet in person about something instead, we do so; a digital decision, when it happens, usually centers around something straightforward like which lightbulbs to use or a decision for which we were waiting for more information).

We received letters from Christy McCawley and Matt Lawrence in response to the congregational meeting on June 8th. Those will be published along with the Session's responses. It should be noted, however, that in response to Matt's resignation, the Session, meeting as the Board of Trustees, accepted his resignation and will elect a new president.

We also approved the financial statement for May. Committee Reports were received and highlights discussed, including our ongoing partnership with the Childcare Center with the VBS approach we took this year, Summer education plans, the new leadership for the Blood Drive, review of the HVAC replacement in the Fellowship Hall, status on the repair of the roof of the Education Building, and thanking Elder Kim Ragland for her work securing the grant for the Sanctuary roof resealing. After having researched and prayerful discussion, we said respectfully declined the request by Bradford Academy to make extensive use of our facility for their school.

We talked about the opening negotiations surrounding the Civitan lease renewal. The current lease and its current terms expired last year but the Civitan's lease payment and our acceptance of it affects the current lease being active moving forward. We anticipate a long process for this while we wait for a response from the Civitan's.

Elder Tammy Karnes was elected to serve on the Nominating Committee and Communion in August

was moved to August 10th in anticipation of the pastor's vacation.

For more details please do refer to the meeting minutes and financial reports as they are approved and available from the church office. As always, please do pray for your elected leadership.

### We celebrate our July birthdays!

#### (10am only) Greet one another in Christ!

#### (10am only) "What A Mighty God We Serve" CEL #672

**What a mighty God we serve.**

**What a mighty God we serve.**

**Angels bow before Him;**

**Heav'n and earth adore Him.**

**What a mighty God we serve. (2X)**

***We can't stay in the Ark forever, but we can be in God's grace indefinitely.***

In this moment, let us remain standing, take a deep breath, silence our devices, and continue in worship. Let us be called to worship together...

#### (10am only) Call to Worship

*When God said, "Build the Ark"*

**Noah answered with craft**

*When God said, "Enter the Ark"*

**Noah answered with trust**

*When God said, "Leave the Ark"*

**Noah answered with courage**

#### Sing:

"Arky, Arky" Traditional Children's Camp Song

**1 The Lord told Noah,  
there's gonna be a floody, floody.**

**Lord told Noah,  
there's gonna be a floody, floody.**

**Get those animals out of the muddy, muddy,  
children of the Lord.**

#### Refrain:

**So rise and shine, and give God the glory, glory.**

**Rise and shine, and give God the glory, glory.**

**Rise and shine, and give God the glory, glory,  
children of the Lord.**

**2 The Lord told Noah to build him an arky, arky.  
Lord told Noah to build him an arky, arky.  
Build it out of gopher barky, barky,  
children of the Lord. (Refrain)**

**3 The animals, the animals,  
they came in by twosies, twosies.  
Animals, the animals,  
they came in by twosies, twosies,  
elephants and kangaroosies, roosies,  
children of the Lord. (Refrain)**

**4 It rained and poured  
for forty daysies, daysies.  
Rained and poured  
for forty daysies, daysies.  
Almost drove those animals crazies, crazies,  
children of the Lord. (Refrain)**

**5 The sun came out  
and dried up the landy, landy.  
Sun came out and dried up the landy, landy.  
Everything was fine and dandy, dandy,  
children of the Lord. (Refrain)**

**6 And that is the end of the story, story, story.  
That is the end of the story, story, story.  
Let's give God the glory, glory, glory,  
children of the Lord. (Refrain)**

#### **Prayer of Confession/Preparation**

*As much as we love God's comfort and blessings,  
we often fail to pray for good discomfort. That's got  
to change. It's important to talk about our  
shortcomings so that we're ready to hear what God  
has to say. Let us begin with silent prayer...*

*(Please pray silently...)*

**Pray: Holy God, we accept your protection. We  
adore your salvation. We sing and pray and live  
on your hopes and love. We even take credit  
sometimes for blessings you crafted (sorry  
about that). But we really, rarely, ever pray for  
your discipline. We just don't pray to be hurt by  
you, if it's for our good. We don't trust you to  
change us if it's not on our terms. We admit how  
much we need courage with you, God. You took  
and take big risks to be in relationship with us.  
Let us take a chance on you in the same way.**

**May we come to reflect your generosity as  
enthusiastically as we receive it. Thank you for  
listening, God. Amen.**

#### **(10am only) Assurance of Pardon**

*God's love can change everything, even the power  
of our sins over us. And it is God's will that we have  
this power:*

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

*The Peace of Christ be with you*

**And also with you.**

#### **(10am only) Gloria Patri (Glory to God)**

**Glory be to the Father**

**And to the Son**

**And to the Holy Ghost**

**As it was in the beginning**

**It is now and ever shall be**

**World without end: Amen, amen.**

#### **Reading of Scripture**

*Say: The Word of God doesn't just inform: it reveals.  
The Word of God doesn't just tell us the truth, it  
empowers us to live our true path. The Word of  
God, by God's own Spirit, teaches us to live. Let us  
be open to this gift of God and ask for help to  
understand. Let us pray...(everyone sings)*

**Pray/Sing:** "O, How I Love Jesus" CEL #92  
(GTG #232)

**O, how I love Jesus!**

**O, how I love Jesus!**

**O, how I love Jesus!**

**Because He first loved me!**

*Listen closely to the Word of God to us all and our  
ongoing place in God's story...*

#### **Read: Genesis 8:15-21; 9:11-17 (CEB)**

*God and Noah*

8:15 God spoke to Noah, 16 "Go out of the ark, you  
and your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with  
you. 17 Bring out with you all the animals of every  
kind—birds, livestock, everything crawling on the  
ground—so that they may populate the earth, be  
fertile, and multiply on the earth." 18 So Noah went  
out of the ark with his sons, his wife, and his sons'  
wives. 19 All the animals, all the livestock, all the

birds, and everything crawling on the ground, came out of the ark by their families.

<sup>20</sup> Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took some of the clean large animals and some of the clean birds, and placed entirely burned offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup> The LORD smelled the pleasing scent, and the LORD thought to himself, I will not curse the fertile land anymore because of human beings since the ideas of the human mind are evil from their youth. I will never again destroy every living thing as I have done.

9:<sup>11</sup> I will set up my covenant with you so that never again will all life be cut off by floodwaters. There will never again be a flood to destroy the earth."

<sup>12</sup> God said, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I am drawing up between me and you and every living thing with you, on behalf of every future generation. <sup>13</sup> I have placed my bow in the clouds; it will be the symbol of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember the covenant between me and you and every living being among all the creatures. Floodwaters will never again destroy all creatures. <sup>16</sup> The bow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth's creatures." <sup>17</sup> God said to Noah, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I have set up between me and all creatures on earth."

*One: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us...*

**All: Thanks be to God!**

### Children's Sermon

*Adults, you'll need:*

- a good place for a trust fall game
  - Don't forget to wait for answers
- "Trust Me"
- Today, we're going to play a game. I will stand here and you take a few steps away from me and face me. Then all you have to do is fall forward. Ready?...

- Okay! Now, we're going to do the same thing only this time, when you step away, turn with your back toward me and fall backwards. Ready?...
- This is sort of how our faith works. God asks us to trust when we can tell what's happening. But God also asks us to trust when we can't see what will happen. God promises to be there. And we sometimes have to trust that God will be there.
- So when you're around the people who care about you, ask them about times they had to fall backwards into the arms of God.
- Don't forget to pray!

### (10am only) Anthem:

"People Need the Lord" arr. Mary McDonald;  
Soloist: Noah Melton

### Sermon: "Leave the Ark"

There's a lot to like about the story of Noah and the Ark. Famously, the menagerie is a part of our cultural imagination. Animals lined up, two by two, filling their way into the massive structure of the boat to avoid the coming doom. In some respects, it reminds me of our time living in Florida. One year in particular, the hurricanes were bad a frequent and numerous. The governor declared some areas for evacuation and you could see the cars, trucks, people, all filing out of the area to safety. Safety.

How many of us direct our lives around the idea of safety? And what does that really mean? When we look at the state of the world currently, it evokes for some the heady days of the Cuban Missile Crisis or other wars that left us feeling on the brink. Drills that had us building bunkers and practicing getting under desks at school. But wars are the only ways we long for safety. Maybe we take our food for granted. Maybe we take our shelter for granted. Maybe we take our bank or investment accounts for granted. Maybe we take our laws or even our beliefs for granted. Maybe we take our loved ones, our homes, for granted. We can make ourselves crazy obsessing about whether we are safe enough. We know all too well there are no guarantees.

But you can imagine what it was like for Noah and his family. God has given him this inane huge

mission to build the Ark. You can imagine the skepticism of his neighbors. And how did he avoid pranks or people sabotaging the building effort? What was it like gathering the materials? What would Noah have done if his family ditched the effort? And this was all challenges he could SEE.

And, let's face it: when the animals started to file in sevens and twos (read the whole story!), you know he had to experience some vindication on some level. I mean it was all happening the way God promised. After everything he went through to even build the Ark, much less get in it and watch the rain fall, and hear the cries of people begging to be let in, he hadn't even gotten to the hard part yet.

This isn't to say that everything that happened to this point wasn't hard. But after floods came and changed the face of the earth, at some point the waters would recede. At some point the land would reappear. At some point, the place God had used to effect their collective salvation would hit shoreline and they would have to face up to the completely unknown and inevitable.

They had to get off of the Ark.

It reminds me of the story of the Transfiguration. Jesus, glorified, shining, standing with Moses and Elijah, the voice of God booming. It was as though the rest of the world didn't matter. And yet, they had to come down from the mountain. The cross still had to happen.

They had to get off of the Ark.

They had to leave the safety, the familiarity, the comfort (such as it was) of the Ark. They had to re-enter the world. They were all given the same command as Adam and Eve: replenish the earth. The earth had been unplugged and then plugged in again. How do they guarantee they won't make the same mistakes? How do they avoid the things to go so horribly wrong? How would they meet God's new terms and demands that they...

Well, wait. What did God demand? What contract did God actually draw up? It turns out, God didn't do any of that. Like the earth itself, God simply

decided to act, out of God's own grace. Noah didn't make a plea: "Hey God, what if you did...?" or "What if humanity promises to...?" God decided on God's own volition to give a concrete commitment:

"When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will remember the covenant between me and you and every living being among all the creatures. Floodwaters will never again destroy all creatures."

Importantly, Noah was in the same position that we're in. He didn't earn God's grace, it was given. He didn't design God's promise to us and all Creation, God spoke it to be. Noah, didn't force God's hand or otherwise make God do anything. A heartbroken God chose to make a covenant with earth.

Now, let's be clear: also like Noah, we aren't simply bystanders to God's grace. It's not that anything Noah did or didn't do didn't matter. It matters that Noah said "Yes" to building the Ark. It matters that Noah's family helped him. It matters that Noah got in the thing. It matters that Noah got off of the Ark when the time came. It matters that Noah offered sacrifices of thanksgiving.

Just as a side note, it matters that we say "Thank you." Spoken as someone is terrible at remembering to do so, it matters to God that we say thank you.

But if you think for a moment that Noah's sacrifice is what tipped the scales to God placing the rainbow in the sky, just remember who gave Noah the whole building the Ark plan in the first place. God had decided long before Noah said "Yes" to save Creation from the calamity that was coming.

So where does that leave us?

I think it leaves us with a choice. Actually, it leaves us with lots of choices. When faced with opportunities to help, to save, to ease suffering and to make for peace, we take them, even when it seems crazy. And when God just wants us to settle down and allow God's Spirit to work around us and literally change the world around us, we submit

and let it happen. And when the time comes to take those risks with God, to enter into the unknown and trust God's hand, that we remember well Noah and the Ark. Because we can't stay in the Ark forever, but we can be in God's grace indefinitely.

### Song of Reflection

"Love Lifted Me" CEL #508

### [Offering

God chooses to love us, abundantly. We should respond by choosing to be loving, abundantly. This is why we should give and share what we have and who we are. Let us reflect together on what has been given...

### (10am only) Offertory

"I've Got A Home in That Rock" arr. Barrie Carson Turner; Soloist: Lora Melton

### (10am only) Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.**

### Blessing

(text online only)

Let there be no doubt, Great God: you love us. And we are grateful. Let there be no doubt, Great God: we should be loving in turn. As we receive the gifts you provide, may the gifts we are meant to be emerge. In the great name of Jesus Christ, we pray this together. Amen.

### Service of Communion

- Say: Let us first show we belong to a faith larger than ourselves. Let us say what we believe:

**I believe in God's hopes—**

**That God created us for a reason,**

**That God chose people for a reason**

**That God fought for us for a reason**

**That God fought against us for a reason**

**That God called us out on our sins for a reason**

**That God made us partners with God for the building of the kingdom**

**That God created us for a purpose**

**That God has called us to be prophets, priests, teachers, students, companions, travelers,**

**historians, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and most importantly children leaving our Arks of safety for the sake of God's grace, Because God's love really does change everything and makes us people of God because of Jesus Christ Who was, who is, and is to come. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

- Say: The Lord be with you...and also with you. God invites us to the Table as we are, given who we are! God invites us to the Table even though we may think we don't belong. Yet God invites us, does NOT force us, because God still loves us. So let us answer together as one Church across time, across our homes, across our various situations, and eat and drink of what the Lord offers. Let us pray...
- "Down to the River to Pray" Traditional  
**O Christians, let's go down,  
let's go down, come one down.  
O Christians, let's go down,  
down to the river to pray.**
- **O Children, let's go down,  
let's go down, come one down.  
O Children, let's go down,  
down to the river to pray.)**
- Creator God, you have done so much to ensure our futures. You have made and kept your promises. You have blessed us beyond our imaginations (seriously, we didn't even know we needed some of what you've given us). You have even given your life to see to it that we meet you in a New Heaven and a New Earth. You have demonstrated unbridled and incomparable courage with us.
- It seems the least we can do is say "thank you." But more, we could demonstrate courage with you. We could venture away from our places of safety: our homes, our routines, our perspectives, our philosophies, even our beliefs. Help us leave all the Arks you have provided and walk on the new shores you are showing us. Help us be like you: help us take a chance on our relationship with you.
- Thus, let us be Godly people. Let us make a harvest of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,



gentleness, and self-control. Teach us to live lives weeding out apathy, selfishness, cravenness, callousness, and evil. We pray this not only for ourselves, but for so many that we can name... (take time to name your own prayers)

- Thank you for believing in us, Thank you for transforming us. Thank you for teaching us, even how to pray when words fail us, saying,
- **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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**
- (take the bread in your hands) On the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took the bread and having blessed it he broke it, gave it to his disciples and said, "This is my Body given for you. As often as you eat of it, do this in remembrance of me." (break and eat some of the bread)
- (take the cup with juice in your hands) In the same manner he took the cup, and, having blessed it, he gave it to his disciples and said, "This cup represents the new covenant sealed by my blood for the forgiveness of many. All of you drink of it." (drink some of the juice)
- Say: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup we proclaim the Lord's saving death until He comes. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.
- The only proper response to the grace of God is gratitude. Let us pray together with the whole Church:
- **Pray: Thank you, God, for making us your kingdom. Help us live out that thanks by being a refuge to all you call us to. Thank you for including us at your Table. Help us do the same with ours. In the great name of Jesus Christ we pray this together. Amen.**

## **Sending & Benediction**

*Let us say together our benediction...*

**We can't stay in the Ark forever, but we can be in God's grace indefinitely.**

(raise your hands and say) "Get up, take heart, Jesus is still calling you..."; Go, and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guide your hearts and minds this day and forever more. Amen!

**Sing: "Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us" GTG #187**

**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
You have bought us: we are yours.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
You have bought us: we are yours.**

## **(10am only) Postlude**

*"Arky, Arky" (Reprise) Traditional Children's Camp Song*

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## **Hymn of Sending**

(10am) "I've Got Peace Like A River" GTG #623