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**Rev. Danny B. Leonard**

**Thursday March 19, 2020**

Hello Everybody. Welcome to 10 @ 10. I'm Danny Leonard, one of the pastors at Memorial UMC. During this time of social distancing, the clergy at Memorial will share a devotion with you each morning at 10am. We hope you will find encouragement in our sharing and feel free to share these devotions with your family.

Angela and I were getting settled into a new parsonage when our children were toddlers. Part of the process of settling in was selecting a theme for the children's bathroom. That's something I learned you were supposed to do. It is a good idea having a theme because it ensured that everything matched and it decorated that space.

We chose Noah's ark as the theme. The story of Noah's ark is one of the most beloved Old Testament tales. It is a sweet, adorable theme. I never realized there were so many things that were in the theme of Noah's ark. Images related to Noah's ark were on wall paper boarder, and all sizes and shapes of animals. Smiling animals. Happy animals. There were colorful rainbows. Wall hangings, pictures, diaper pails. Delightful.

But if you know the entire story of Noah's ark, some parts of it would not show up in a themed space. All we think about is the beginning and the ending of the story. Rainbows and unicorns. Maybe not unicorns. Our bathroom theme made no mention that the story was about the greatest ecological disaster ever, having destroyed everything living on earth. Somehow the images of the ark that adorned the walls left out the smells and mess that was the result animals living in overcrowded conditions for months.

And there was Noah. Noah. Thank goodness Noah wasn't portrayed as the 950-year-old man he was when he died. I'm also grateful there were no images of Noah passed out drunk and naked in his tent. He did that, you know. He started out as a righteous and God-fearing man. He didn't ask for all of this.

This wasn't a Gilligan's Island kind of adventure. It wasn't an adventure that Noah scheduled for his family. Another part of the story shows us a fearsome image of Noah's ark, as huge a vessel as it is, bobbing helplessly on turbulent waters, chased hither and yon by howling winds. God is off wreaking destruction upon the planet, and seems to have given no further thought to Noah, his little family and their animal cargo. God was after all, wiping everything clean. The entire world had gone astray and God chose this way to get a restart.

Noah didn't ask to be involved in this drama. But he was right in the middle of it.

But then come words of grace: just three little words. The Bible says, "**God remembered Noah**" The Lord does not abandon him to the ocean swells, after all. God closes "the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens." And then, a full year after the flood began, the earth is dry once again: dry enough to bear the weight of human feet.

We want to be remembered. It is uplifting to reunite with friends from high school and to be recognized, to be remembered. Some want to leave a legacy, as such, and be remembered for the good they have done in their life.

In the Psalms, the writers, when in a time of turmoil or trouble, often call out to God, beckoning God to remember them.

God remembered Noah. The wonder of it all is this: the great Creator God, the one who fashioned space and time out of nothing, is yet able to remember individuals. That's a remarkable claim. Noah and his family are not alone. We are not alone.

There come times, in our lives, when storms and floods descend. Possibly the coming wave of a pandemic. In a desperate hour, we may feel as though we're bobbing on the waves, floating on chaos itself. God's solution, in such a dark hour, is not what we're typically inclined to ask for. God offers those who are "at sea" not so much a spectacular rescue, but rather a slow and steady process of the waters' subsiding. Through it all, God remembers us. And with that remembering comes the promise of new life.

God remembers us because we are the work of his hands. God created us individually, and wonderfully.

We want to be remembered. It doesn't mean that all of life will be without problems but it means that God remembers us. God know us.

You are remembered during these days. We remember you in our prayers.

During these times of uncertainty, I hope you, too, will remember others and if you have the opportunity to serve them, I hope you will.

God remembered Noah. God remembers you. May God bless you.

