

Living Water Fellowship

4th Sunday in Pentecost

16TH JUNE 2024

COME TO JESUS

SONGS:

*Let Your Kingdom Come
Living Hope*

WELCOME & PRAYER:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING:

Jeremiah 38:1-13

¹ Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jehucal son of Shelemiah, & Pashhur son of Malkijah heard what Jeremiah had been telling the people. He had been saying, ² “This is what the Lord says: ‘Everyone who stays in Jerusalem will die from war, famine, or disease, but those who surrender to the Babylonians will live. Their reward will be life. They will live!’” ³ The Lord also says: ‘The city of Jerusalem will certainly be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon, who will capture it.’”

⁴ So these officials went to the king & said, “Sir, this man must die! That kind of talk will undermine the morale of the few fighting men we have left, as well as that of all the people. This man is a traitor!” ⁵ King Zedekiah agreed. “All right,” he said. “Do as you like. I can’t stop you.”

⁶ So the officials took Jeremiah from his cell & lowered him by ropes into an empty cistern in the prison yard. It belonged to Malkijah, a member of the royal family. There was no water in the cistern, but there was a thick layer of mud at the bottom, & Jeremiah sank down into it.

⁷ But Ebed-melek the Ethiopian, an important court official, heard that Jeremiah was in the cistern. At that time the king was holding court at the Benjamin Gate, ⁸ so Ebed-melek rushed from the palace to speak with him. ⁹ “My lord the king,” he said, “these men have done a very evil thing in putting Jeremiah the prophet into the cistern. He will soon die of hunger, for almost all the bread in the city is gone.”

¹⁰ So the king told Ebed-melek, “Take thirty of my men with you, & pull Jeremiah out of the cistern before he dies.” ¹¹ So Ebed-melek took the men with him & went to a room in the palace beneath the treasury, where he found some old rags & discarded clothing. He carried these to the cistern & lowered them to Jeremiah on a rope. ¹² Ebed-melek called down to Jeremiah, “Put these rags under your armpits to protect you from the ropes.” Then when Jeremiah was ready, ¹³ they pulled him out. So Jeremiah was returned to the courtyard of the guard—the palace prison—where he remained.

CHILDREN'S TIME:

SONG: *Good & Gracious King*

FAITH CHAT:

1. Have you ever done something intentionally different from what people around you were doing? (You chose to do what was right when others didn't)
2. What might that look like for you in today's world or a current situation?

THE MESSAGE: *LIVING COURAGEOUSLY: EBED-MELEK*

OFFERING SONG: *Rest My Soul*

PRAYERS:

THE COMMUNION:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship Video during Communion: What Love My God (CityAlight)

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

**(Name), † child of God,
Christ has made you his to live courageously in his Name!
-- Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: *Ancient of Days*

SHOW HIS LOVE

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Jeremiah 38:1-13. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you find most challenging? Why?
2. Have you or someone you know ever been 'punished' for doing the right thing? What happened? What did you do?
3. Why did God tell Jeremiah to prophesy "surrender" instead of fight? Read Jer 33:1-11. How does this promise of restoration depend entirely upon God fulfilling **BOTH** parts of his covenant (**BOTH** to punish **AND** to redeem/restore)?
4. Why do you think Ebed-Melek stand up for Jeremiah? What do you make of his timing his approach to the king?
5. What does the sending of 30 men to help suggest to you? Why does Ebed-Melek get rags & old clothes to put around the ropes they use to rescue Jeremiah? What does that detail say about Ebed-Melek's character?
6. Although he is out of the cistern, Jeremiah remains the king's prisoner. Much like the prophecy Josiah receives, that despite his faithfulness, Jerusalem will fall in punishment for its idolatry, the ultimate outcome belongs to God. Why then be faithful?
7. How do you react to the "wishy-washiness" of King Zedekiah? Why are leaders like that so dangerous to those they lead?
8. How do you react to the strength of character & courage of Ebed-Melek?
9. How does this all work out for Ebed-Melek? Think back to the story of Rahab & how she is saved even though Jericho is destroyed. When the world you know collapses, what is God's call to those who trust in him?
10. What does this text call you to do?

Remember:

Stand where you are, speak what is true, & act with compassion; all for others.