

Calvary United Methodist Church
December 29, 2019

A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
Rev. R. Jeffrey Fisher

Children's Message:

Nahum 1:7

I invite our children to come forth for the Children's Message today. Good morning! It's so nice to have you here this morning. You all had a great Christmas? Wonderful! I'm glad to hear that. (Child speaks.) You got some good things, I suspect, lots of them, right?

Well, you know what? We are here today because we all got some wonderful gift from God. It's called...the name of...Jesus. And that's why we gather here week after week, because of this most precious gift. And there is a reason God sent His Son Jesus because he had to teach us how to love one another.

Love shouldn't be that hard, should it? But sometimes we just have problems. So He taught us how to love and how to care for one another. And there are some other people through the ages, they were called Prophets, people of the Old Testament, that foretold this man to come and they also gave us some stories to better understand why God had to send us Jesus.

How many of you remember the story about a man with a big boat and a lot of animals? The boat was? I mean the story, I'm sorry. Noah and the Ark, exactly. Why was there this ark and why did the man Noah build this? (Child speaks.) There was going to be a major flood. Do you know why there was going to be a major flood? (Child speaks.) God was going to recreate the people because the people were not very nice, were they? They were creating a lot of problems. And so God said we're just going to start over again and so He had two of all those animals come on.

Well, life started over again and years later people still don't listen very well. And there was another man who was sent to just one particular city and he went via a big fish. Do you remember this guy's name? You know it. (Child speaks.) Jonah. Ok, Jonah was told that there were some people that weren't listening to God. Is there anyone here that someone told you you're not listening? Yeah. We have those days, don't we? Well, as it was, God said these people in this city of Nineveh weren't being very nice and I am going to really correct them, because if you don't listen do your parents correct you? Time-outs or you can't have something and often get a headshake. You know, we all have that because listening and obedience is a very important thing and God wants us to behave and that's His rules about loving God first and loving others. And in the process, here's what Jonah said: I don't like those people. I don't want to help them. And it made God very mad so he tried to jump ship and go to Tarsus instead of Nineveh and that's what...what happened from when he was off the boat? (Child speaks.) He got gulped down by a big fish or whale or something like that and guess what? He went on the first submarine trip. The whale couldn't even stomach him, and he spit him up

on the beach and the place was Nineveh and God said: I want you to go tell everybody change, change your ways. Love me or there is going to be problems. And guess what? The great news is, is there good news in your house when you listen to Mom and Dad? Yes, exactly. Is there great news when you listen to God? (Yes!) Oh, yes, it's a very powerful thing when we listen to God.

It's not always about correcting us. Sometimes it's about listening about what it is you are supposed to do in life, like God just wanted Jonah to go do the right thing. God wants you and me to do the right thing and so there are a lot things in this scripture today that I want to show you. It's from Nahum. It says: The Lord is good. He is a refuge for strength in our times of trouble. He cares for those who trust him. Our God teaches us to trust him.

So, I want you to grab something out of here. Grab something. What's that? (Umbrella) Why would you use an umbrella? (To protect us.) To protect us from the rain. You got it right. God is our protector. Someone over here want to grab something? I wore it, it's not that bad! It's not my sock. Ok, so what is that? (A glove.) Give it here. Why do we wear these things? To protect us from, ok... What's that? (A hat.) Why would you wear that hat? (Well, it keeps you warm in the snow.) It keeps us warm when it is snowing. (And it protects us.) And it protects us. Dig deeper in here, what else can you find down in there? Let's go in the back first, dig deep. (Hand sanitizer.) Hand sanitizer. Why do we use that? (It cleanses us.) It cleanses us and protects us from germs and stuff. One more here. Oh, look at you, teacher's pet. What did you get? The Bible. (Child speaks.) Wow! It keeps us from going astray by listening to God's teachings. You are a preacher in the making!

All of those things you said, every one of you are correct. And there is so much more. God is our protector. God is our strength. God is our redeemer. God is so blessed when we listen and obey God. This man, Nahum, was telling people again, it's time to come back. And you and I are to tell our family and our friends and the people around us how important it is to follow God.

I thank you that you already know all that, but it is important that you tell your friends. It is so important that our family of Christian believers continues to grow. So I wish you a wonderful day, I thank you for coming today. I invite you to put the things back in here and I pray that God will bless you this coming week. Thank you all for coming up this morning.