

Sunday February 21, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Genesis 9:8-17
“From Worship to Discipleship”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, discuss the following: “What might it look like during this Lent to ‘rend your hearts?’” (Notice this is plural. It is for individuals and for the community.)

Genesis 9:8-17 Context. This week’s reading recounts the promise that God makes never to destroy life from the earth again. It comes after God, displeased with the total depravity of human society, chose Noah, “a righteous man,” and his family, who in turn brought two of all the animals with them on the ark, to be the bearers of new life on earth after the flood. The story of Noah is the “midpoint” between that of Adam (ten generations earlier) and Abraham (ten generations later). The promise God makes is an unconditional covenant: God promises, no matter what, no matter how badly human beings might act in the future, never to destroy the earth again.

Read Genesis 9:8-17

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Genesis 9:8-17

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- What might be the difference between a contract and a covenant? [Biblically, a covenant is an arrangement between unequals; whereas, a contract is an agreement between equals.]
- What words and themes are repeated? How are these themes expressed in this passage?
- Read **Genesis 6:1-8**. How might this seemingly strange story be a fitting introduction to the story of Noah and the flood? How might this story of the flood be a story of re-creation? [Just as God brought forth life through waters of chaos in Genesis 1, so God is bringing forth new life through the waters of a flood.]
- How was the rainbow a sign of God’s promise? How might the church function as that promise today? What might that say about us?

- How is Jesus the ultimate covenant maker? How is Jesus the ultimate “bow” or “rainbow” as a sign of God’s presence in the world?
- How might the work of rending our hearts contribute to being a sign of God’s presence in the world? [God works mightily through the weak, broken, and humble to demonstrate God’s power and goodness.]

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Covenant God, we give you thanks for your faithfulness even when we are faithless. We especially give you thanks for Jesus, an eternal sign of your love among us. By your Holy Spirit, empower us, through our words and deeds, to be a sign of your grace at work in the world. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

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 trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.