

**Sunday, July 24, 2022 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

Bible Study – Hosea 1:2-10

“Pity on the House”

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes)

In groups of two or three, respond to the following, “What is the hardest thing you’ve ever had to do?”

Hosea 1:2-10. Context. The prophet Hosea was active in the third quarter of the 8th century BCE (750-725) in the northern kingdom of Israel and was a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah who was active in the southern kingdom of Judah. Hosea lived in a time of social upheaval, political chaos, and war. As Hosea understood it, the cause of Israel’s troubles was its unfaithfulness to God’s covenant. To symbolize this unfaithfulness, God commanded Hosea to take a “wife of whoredom,” that is a promiscuous woman, bear children by her, and give them symbolic names pointing to God’s judgment upon the nation. His action would have been scandalous, incomprehensible and shameful in the patriarchal society of his day, for they undermined the very stability of that society; and yet, by them Hosea tells his contemporaries that this is precisely what God has done in making a covenant with them – a people incapable of being true to the covenant. The name of the first child, Jezreel, was the name of a valley where Jehu had seized the throne of Israel through a vast and merciless slaughter not only of the entire family of Ahab, but also of several members of house of David. The name of the second, Loruhamah, literally means ‘she is not pitied;’ the name of the third, Lo-ammi, ‘not my people.’ Each of the three names of the children points to God’s judgment; but there are also hints of reconciliation in this account, probably added by later editors.

Read Hosea 1:2-10

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 Hosea 1:2-10 again

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

- What would be your first reaction if God asked you to marry a spouse you knew would be unfaithful?
 - Trust God and obey.
 - Pretend you didn't hear God.
 - Assume you didn't hear God correctly.
 - Disobey.
- How are the people of Israel like Gomer?
- What do the names of Hosea's children reveal about the people of Israel?
- Might it be important that the first child is noted as a "son" of Hosea and Gomer, while the next two children Gomer "bore" have no connection to Hosea?
- How would you feel as Hosea as you watched Gomer's actions? What might this reveal about God?
- **(R)** Thankfully, God does not call us to such raw acts as Hosea to reveal God's character and displeasure. What does God call us to that might reveal God's character?

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). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, end by praying the following or a similar prayer:

God of faithfulness, you are faithful even when we are faithless. We give you thanks that you desire our freedom and forgiveness. In light of the compassion that we have received, empower us to seek to extend compassion to all those around us who are in need. **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.