

WELCOME TO LAKESIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026

11:00 AM

Welcoming

CALL TO WORSHIP

What does the Lord require of us?

To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

With what shall we come before the Lord?

With speech that is gentle, and words that build up.

How shall we live our faith?

With actions that bring peace, and works that lift up the lowly.

Come and worship God in spirit and in truth.

OPENING PRAYER

The hills hear your voice, O Lord. The mountains quake before you. As we call on your name, help us walk in the ways of righteousness and speak in tones of peace. As we seek to be blameless and do what is right, may our hearts be free from guile and deceit, that we be known as peace makers, the blessed children of God. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Jonah 3:1-10

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, ² “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” ³ So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” ⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

⁶ When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷ Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. ⁸ Humans and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. ⁹ Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.”

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

This is the Word of God, for the people of God

Thanks be to God.

Sermon Outline

I. The Frustration of the Frozen

- The "mess" of the recent winter storm.
- **The Struggle:** the futility of using a simple shovel against solid ice.
 - The physical toll: Sore hands and exhaustion.
 - The realization: Some things are impossible to move with human effort alone.
- **The Spiritual Parallel:** Our hearts can become just like that ice—thick, hard, and immovable.

II. Jonah: The Prophet with a Frozen Heart

- **The Layers of Ice:** Jonah wasn't just "cold"; he was frozen by pride, stubbornness, and hatred for his enemies.
- God used a storm and a fish to "break the ice," but even miracles don't always melt the heart instantly.
- **The One-Sentence Sermon:** Jonah's lack of effort (*"Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"*).
- **The Diagnosis:** Jonah was a "broken preacher." He did the work, but his heart remained stone-cold.

III. The Master Stonecutter at Work

- **The Second Chance:** "The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time." God doesn't give up on the "frozen."
- **The Power of the Word:** Even a reluctant, one-sentence sermon from a broken man transformed a whole nation.
- **The Promise:** Reference **Ezekiel 36:26**.
 - We cannot "shovel" our way to a new heart.
- **The Process:** God uses the "hammer" of His Word and the "sandpaper" of His grace to shape us into art.

IV. The Beauty of the Broken Jar (The Pivot)

- **The Illustration:** The Story of the Cracked Jar.
 - The girl, the river, and the leaking water.
 - The result: Flowers blooming along the path *because* of the leak.
- **The Revelation:** God doesn't wait for the jar to be fixed before He starts watering the garden. He uses our "leaks" (scars, mistakes, and weaknesses) to bring life to others.



V. Conclusion: From Ice to Living Water

- **The Call to Action:** Drop your shovel. Stop trying to fix your own heart through sheer willpower.
- **The Invitation:** Are you frozen in a habit or a grudge?
 - Are you feeling too broken to be useful?
- **Final Thought:** God isn't looking for perfection; He is looking for availability. Let the Master Stonecutter melt the ice and turn it into a flowing river of peace.

Announcement

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.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Source of justice and mercy, work through this offering to bring your gifts to the world: righteousness and peace, love and kindness, hope and joy. May our gifts truly express our gratitude for your many blessings for our church and for your children everywhere. Amen.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone or TEXT "Give" to (844)991-3430 to receive a unique link for you to give via text message. Or you can mail the check to the church: 2333 Hilliard Road, Henrico, VA 23228



BENEDICTION

Thank you for joining us!

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