

Service Overview

Speaker: Stephen Bates

Sermon Series: History Makers

Message: History Makers - Jonathan

Scripture Reference: 1 Samuel 14: 6-14, 19: 1-6, 23:15-18 (NIV)

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Worship Singing

Song: How Great Thou Art by Stuart K. Hine, Carl Boberg

Song: No Other Name by Hillsong Worship

Song: Free Amen by Andrew Bergthold, Ed Cash, Franni Cash, Martin Cash, Scott Cash

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Oh Lord God, we want to thank you for the freedom that is found through Jesus Christ. Lord, we want to thank you that you have broken our bondage to sin, that you have set us free in your salvation. Jesus, we want to thank you for the freedom that is given to us through the Holy Spirit, who leads us, that we are not under obligation to the law, but we are led by your living Holy Spirit within us, who leads us to be like you, Jesus.

We want to thank you that he wells up joy and peace in us, as well as wisdom and guiding us in the ways of Jesus. And so, Lord God, we just thank you. We celebrate in your freedom today and Lord, as we come into baptism, oh Lord God, we just want to thank you so much for the freedom that is expressed in this act. We praise you, Lord God, amen.

--- Break as a member of the congregation undergoes baptism ---

Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events *Speaker: Kathy Bates & Mireille*

Mireille: In two months' time, we're going to be throwing a whole bunch of seeds out there in the kids holiday program. This is a program that's been open to the community for many years. It has about 150 kids who come to hear the gospel story, and they come readily. They come with joy, to celebrate that story with us. So we do dramas, we feed them and we love them with God's love.

Something like that needs a lot of help to get off the ground. So, if you're available on those days, July 9th to the 12th, to be a leader, to be on our tech crew or in our kitchen or down at the cafe, or on the barbecue on Friday, then I would love to hear from you. There is a sign-up sheet for help in the foyer. If you can scan the QR code and let me know of your availability for any of those jobs, from Tuesday to Friday 9th to 12th of July, that would be wonderful.

So that we can get the seeds out there, to all the kids who are coming up the next generation, of people to carry that gospel to the world. If you would like to help behind the scenes, in the next few weeks, you can meet me out at the fence. I'll be out there with the little jobs that need to be done in preparation for the program. Things like cutting crafts and taking on baking for the cafe or for the kids themselves, that would be really, really awesome.

Kathy: How wonderful, I'm sure for all of us, to see our youth leaders baptising the kids that they disciple through our Sunday morning and our Friday night programs. And I love, you know, just seeing Trish* and Jess* here who have only just graduated from school last year themselves. And,

you know, they're sowing back into the lives of kids who are younger than them. I just actually think they're role modelling something for all of us as well, to be sowing into the lives of those who are younger in the faith than us.

If you have recently joined our church and you're looking to make Parramatta Baptist home, I want to issue a really warm invitation. Next Sunday afternoon, we have a newcomer's afternoon tea, here at the church at 2:30, and will actually be down in the basement, if you would love to come to that.

It's an opportunity to know a little bit more about the heartbeat of our church and what it is this community that I'm joining does. Do I fit in this place? Do my values fit here, and where can I fit relationally here as well? So, we'll hear each other's stories and just help you take next steps as you join this community. So be super welcome to come to that.

Prayer *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Would you join with me in prayer? Oh Lord God, we just want to say thank you for the kids and young people at Parramatta Baptist. Lord, we just thank you for this great celebration this morning of Emma's* baptism. And Lord, also the five baptisms that are coming tonight as well.

Lord, we pray that all of our children and our young people would continue to grow in faith and wisdom led by you, Jesus, to navigate life well. Lord, we long for them to know the richness of your love, the kindness of your grace, as well as the reverence for you as Lord of their life. Lord, would you fill them with your Holy Spirit and lead them, Lord, to walk in your ways?

Lord, we want to pray for our youth camp next weekend as well. We pray, Lord, for those young people who are going who don't yet know you as Lord and Savior. Lord, may they meet you. And Lord, for those who do, we pray that they would be strengthened in their faith and in their resolve to walk in your ways.

Lord, may your presence move powerfully across the weekend. We pray, Lord, for your protection, for Ben and for the leaders in the lead up over the weekend. Lord, your word says that streams of living water will flow from within those who walk with you. And so, Lord, I want to pray that your living water would flow from each leader and each young person who knows you across the weekend, Lord, creating a place of life and of truth.

Lord God, we want to pray for our upcoming kids holiday program as well. Lord, we pray that you would move in the hearts of those who you would have lead and assist. Lord, we want to pray that you would draw many children to come. Lord, we want to pray that as our kids invite their friends from school, Lord, we want to pray for your favour over those invitations. Lord, would you put in this room those kids that you would have be here? Who will hear who you are? Who might actually choose to follow you, to live life to the fullest in you? And, Lord, may children come to know you as

their Lord and Savior through that program. And Lord, we just want to continue to pray for our 4 interns at PBC, that you would strengthen them and grow them as they set apart this year to learn and to serve.

Lord, today we're also mindful of our team who will gather in Prince Alfred Park in Parramatta alongside those who sleep rough or are marginalised. Lord, we pray that your spirit would minister the love and truth of Jesus to those who are doing it tough today. Lord, we just pray for our team. Lord, we pray that they might have open doors for conversations, open doors to express your love in tangible ways.

And Lord, we pray that there will be those in the park, Lord, who perhaps reached the end of themselves, Lord, as the prodigal son did. We want to pray, Lord, that there would be those who want to explore life that can be found in you. And Lord, for each of us in the places where you send us each week, Lord, would you help us to be salt and light?

Help us, our words and our actions, Lord, may they be distinctive and attractive, reflecting who Jesus is. And Lord God, we want to pray that there will be open doors of opportunity for faith conversations. And may we be brave enough to invite people of peace, those who are interested to know more of who you are, Jesus, to explore with us what the Bible says about who you are. We bless you, Lord. Amen.

Bible Reading: 1 Samuel 14: 6-14, 19: 1-6, 23:15-18 (NIV UK)

1 Samuel 14: 16-14: Jonathan said to his young armour-bearer, 'Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will act on our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few.'

7 'Do all that you have in mind,' his armour-bearer said. 'Go ahead; I am with you heart and soul.'

8 Jonathan said, 'Come on, then; we will cross over towards them and let them see us. 9 If they say to us, "Wait there until we come to you," we will stay where we are and not go up to them. 10 But if they say, "Come up to us," we will climb up, because that will be our sign that the Lord has given them into our hands.'

11 So both of them showed themselves to the Philistine outpost. 'Look!' said the Philistines. 'The Hebrews are crawling out of the holes they were hiding in.' 12 The men of the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, 'Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson.'

So Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, 'Climb up after me; the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.'

13 Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and feet, with his armour-bearer right behind him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer followed and killed behind him. 14 In that first attack Jonathan and his armour-bearer killed some twenty men in an area of about half an acre.[a]

1 Samuel 19: 1-6: *Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David 2 and warned him, 'My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. 3 I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I'll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out.'*

4 Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, 'Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly. 5 He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The Lord won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?'

6 Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: 'As surely as the Lord lives, David will not be put to death.'

1 Samuel 23: 15-18: *While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that[a] Saul had come out to take his life. 16 And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him to find strength in God. 17 'Don't be afraid,' he said. 'My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You shall be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this.' 18 The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh.*

Sermon: History Makers - Jonathan *Speaker: Stephen Bates*

Morning, everyone. Welcome to Parramatta Baptist Church. So good to have you here. I love every Sunday, I think I talk to someone I don't know. There's always new people in the life of the church. So can I just encourage you? If you're sitting near someone you don't recognise, you don't know who they are, would you go out of your way to say hello and introduce yourself, particularly if you've been here for more than 3 or 4 months.

In the long term in the history of the kings of Israel, all of them were judged by how much they were like King David. Now King David, despite his horrendous failures, was held in the highest honour among the kings. He was the standard by which they were all judged. But in David's life there was a man of great courage and integrity, a friend closer than a brother to him. And his name, as we heard, was Jonathan. We've been doing a series on history makers, and it's been the lesser known history makers in our scriptures.

Now, Jonathan is somewhat famous, but unfortunately, he's really famous for being the friend of David. And I don't know whether you've ever suffered that, that you're only known because you're the friend of somebody important. But what I want to say is that Jonathan is a history maker in his own right, as we saw even in those three little snapshots of his life.

There is much about him that was influencing not only David, but the kingdom as well. The scriptures record the life of Jonathan in three segments, three time periods. There was the time before he met David. There was the time of his friendship in the court of Saul with David. But then there was a time of exile when David was exiled from Saul, and the friendship that continued through that.

As I said, Jonathan is the oldest son of King Saul. King Saul was Israel's first king, and by virtue of Jonathan being the oldest son, he was next in line to the throne. What I want to do is give you a

quick overview of those three time periods, and then just give you some notice that I'm going to ask you to have a quick conversation with somebody near you about the character of Jonathan. Just a couple of very easy questions about what strikes you about who Jonathan is.

But let's go to the first time period. Chapter 14, the first passage that was read to us, is this record of Jonathan before he meets David. The Philistines were a group of people who became increasingly strong, and they were pressing into Israel's territory. We read that King Saul has an army of around about 600 men, and they've retreated from the attack of the Philistines. The Philistines have taken the high places. They have the advantage over Israel, and Saul is waiting. He's retreated and he waits.

In this stalemate, Jonathan, his son, slips away from the camp, and he slips away unnoticed by any of them, and he goes towards one of the Philistine outposts, and he does so with his armour bearer. It makes you smile when you read their conversation, does it not? "Let's go up and just see what the Lord will do. Perhaps the Lord will act on our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord."

There's something quite cheeky here, something quite disobedient, actually leaving his father, leaving the camp and just going off and just, "hey, why don't we just go and prod the Philistines and see what happens?" I love the way that he says to his armour bearer, "let's see what they do. Let's make ourselves known to them so they can see us. And if they say, "we're going to come down to you," well, we'll wait and do nothing. If they say "come up," then we'll know that the Lord has given them into our hands, and we're going to go up."

But when you think about it, all they are going to do is what the Philistines tell them to do. If they tell them to wait, they're going to wait, if they tell them to come up, they're going to come up. Jonathan is such a man of faith that he's like, "you know what? If they call us up to that, which is what we were always going to do, because we're in the position of strength, we're going to trust in the Lord that he will give them into our hands."

Well, that's exactly what the Philistines do. They call out to them, they insult them, and they say, "come on up to us, and we'll teach you a lesson." Jonathan sees that as an invitation by the Lord to go and teach them a lesson. And so, he climbs up hands and feet with his armour bearer, and they dispose of the Philistines in that outpost.

Now, when you continue to read the story, that surprise attack on that one outpost creates a sense of confusion in the other outpost and in the Philistine camp. And a battle between the Israelites and the Philistines follows. And Israel was able to regain control of those areas that they had previously lost. There's a lot more to that story as well, you can go back and read it, but in the end, at the end of the story, there's a little bit of disagreement between King Saul and his men, and they argue on behalf of Jonathan, and they point out to King Saul that it was Jonathan who won the victory. It was

Jonathan who initiated the fight. They don't say that "it wasn't you, King Saul," but it can be read into the story. And so Jonathan receives credit for that victory.

The second period is when David is brought into Saul's court, and obviously Jonathan is part of that. And it's then that David and Jonathan's friendship begins. In Chapter 18, we're told that Jonathan becomes one in spirit with David, and he loved him as he loved himself. What's really significant in this passage, though, is Jonathan makes a covenant with David. He took off his robe that he was wearing, and he gave it to David, the not just his robe. He also gave David his tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

This is a really significant action. Firstly, the nature of a covenant is that a covenant is made by a person in power and authority towards a person in a position of weakness. So we read in scriptures that it's God who initiates a covenant with us. You understand that God is the one who initiates a covenant, because he is in the position of authority over us.

Jonathan, as next in line to the throne of Israel, initiates the covenant with David. But in handing over, the robe, the tunic, the sword, the bow and the belt, that is an incredible honouring of David. And implicitly, in Jonathan doing that, he is handing over his right to the throne of Israel. It's not specifically mentioned there. That will come later, but there's a sense in which we see that Jonathan's devotion and love for David is very strong, in which he honours him. But there's also that sense of Jonathan sees in David the future king of Israel.

Still in the second period, not surprisingly, with that, taking place, there is jealousy within the court. But it's not a jealousy from Jonathan towards David. It's jealousy from Saul towards David. So in Chapter 19, so commands Jonathan and his attendants to kill David. But Jonathan, as we heard, does two things instead. Firstly, he warns David of those threats, and secondly, he speaks with his father. He speaks with the King, and he speaks well of David, reminding Saul of what David has done for the nation and pleading for David's innocence.

Now, Saul was not always a rational man in his actions. Can you imagine the risk that Jonathan was taking, going and confronting Saul, even though he was his father? He was also the king. And Jonathan was not the only son. He risked his life. He risked the accusation of being treacherous, of conspiring against him, to actually speak well of David. But Saul listens to his son, so listens to Jonathan, and he swears an oath at that stage not to kill David.

Quick glimpse at the third time period, Saul's jealousy and his obsession with destroying David continues. By now, the prophet Samuel has anointed David as king over Israel. But David is now a hunted man. And so David, instead of being the king, finds himself hiding in caves and surrounding himself with a band of malcontents. That's probably the best way to describe them.

David had served Saul well. David had caused him no harm. He had not done anything wrong. And yet David finds himself public enemy number one in Israel. Imagine how confusing that would be anointed as king and yet living as a fugitive. At many times David's life was in danger. And when you read the Psalms, many of David's Psalms were written at this time.

They were written in this time of being hunted down by his enemies. And we read that there's this mix of fear and confusion. "What is going on? God, where are you? God, why are you letting people do this?" But at the same time, he was holding on to the promises of God. In 1 Samuel 23, Saul is hunting David, and Jonathan comes to David and we're told, as was read to us, that Jonathan helped David find strength in God.

And he says to David, "do not be afraid. My father will not harm you." And so Jonathan speaks words of truth, and he reminds David of God's calling upon his life. And again he says this to David, "you will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you." Jonathan is heir to the throne of Israel, but he acknowledges David's God-given position as the next king.

I just want to give you about three minutes and hopefully there's somebody nearby you who you can speak with about that. We'll just have to think about it. How would you describe Jonathan? What stands out to you about him? You've got three minutes.

--- Break as the congregation discusses the character of Jonathan. The top words used to describe Jonathan by the congregation were 'humility', 'loyalty', 'integrity', 'brave', 'courage', 'faith' and 'trust'. ---

In this first period, where we tell the story, we say 'the courage of David', he is filled with faith in God. And I think that fine line between courage and recklessness, I mean, it just seemed like whatever Philistines said, Jonathan was up for a fight with the Philistines. Was it recklessness? No, there was a sense of which he had this incredible faith and trust that God had handed them to him.

Not only is he courageous and filled with faith, he he's also very skilled, right? You heard what he did. He climbs a cliff against 20 men who have a superior position to them, with his hands and feet. He climbs up with one other person and he takes out that outpost. Incredibly skilled and athletic.

The other thing that we see is that Jonathan takes initiative. Saul was waiting, maybe for reinforcements, waiting for better weather. We don't know what Saul was waiting for. But Jonathan took an initiative, and he did what his father should have done. In the second period, again, we see the courage, except this time it was courage in the way in which, at significant risk to his own life, Jonathan stood up for David.

So there's a sense of loyalty to David, but there's also this standing up for David as well. He refused to allow his father's jealousy to bring about this injustice. There's also the humility that we see in this aspect, in that he befriends David. Jonathan is the heir to the throne. He is the Prince William of

Israel. Back in those days, Jonathan is in a position of power and authority. And yet he bestows great honour on the youngest son of a much lesser known family. We see also his love, and it's a love that is done with humility, it's honouring the other person.

In the third period of Jonathan's life, again, we see his courage. This time, it's his courage in continuing a friendship with a fugitive. David is public enemy number one. And yet Jonathan continues his friendship with him. And his courage gives courage to David. Do you know that? Do you know one of the best ways to get courage is to be with somebody who is courageous. Have you ever stood on the edge of a ten meter jump down into water and you go, "I don't want to do that."

But then you see a six-year-old kid jump off into it and you go "what? You know what if that six-year-old kid can jump into there, so can I, right?" That may be a true story, right? It is. But there is a sense in which when we are with people of courage, it gives us courage. We're inspired by the courage.

Again, we see his love, expressed in humility as he makes himself second to David. Like, what a what an incredible thing to do. Jonathan is not saying, "I don't want to be king. I'm out of the picture in this incredible statement of faith." What he's saying is, "God has made you a king, and I will be second to you."

But there's this assumption that Jonathan is making, "you and me, David, we're a pair. We will do this together. We will lead this nation together. But I will be second to you." Incredible humility in submitting himself to God's purposes. There's loyalty also. Loyalty to who? There's loyalty to David, but there's also loyalty to his father. Twice in this passage, David goes to his home, and Jonathan, we're told, returns to his father. Jonathan knew that David would be king, but Jonathan does not choose to be with David out of loyalty to his father. Twice scriptures record that Jonathan went back. Jonathan went home. Jonathan went to be with his father. He didn't switch sides.

Courage, faith, love and humility. They're pretty good characteristics, aren't they? If only we could call our sons Jonathan, knowing that that's what they get. It doesn't work like that. These four things are worth imitating because when you look at them, they look and they sound a lot like Jesus, don't they? Jesus taught without fear. He tore down incorrect perceptions about God. He associated with people without fear, eating with sinners, with tax collectors, touching and healing the sick and the lepers.

We see the courage of Jesus when he takes on the moneylenders and the traders in the temple. But nowhere is Jesus' courage and his humility more evident than in the account of his betrayal and his crucifixion, and in the death of Jesus Christ, we see what courage is. Courage is being willing to do what needs to be done. Courage is not bravado. Courage is not doing what other people won't do. Courage is a willingness to do what needs to be done despite fear, despite anguish, and despite the cost. See, Jesus knew what awaited him at the cross. There was not only death, but there was also separation from God at that point. And yet, despite the dread and the anguish that Jesus felt, we

read that these were his words, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me, yet not my will, but yours be done."

It was Mark Twain who wrote that, "courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not the absence of fear." And the theologian Karl Barth put it this way, which I like, "courage is fear that has said its praise." You see, there's something about those passages, those writings that I find deeply comforting because fear is a feeling that we all experience at times, and at times it's an appropriate feeling.

Courage is not reserved for the fearless. Courage is not reserved for the brave. It's not reserved for the strong. It's not reserved for the athletic, and it's not reserved for the heroes of the faith. Courage is for ordinary people, and courage is seen in ordinary people who choose to do the right thing, despite the fear that they and we feel.

And as I wrote the sermon, I had cause to think about where I'd seen courage, and I had a list and I just could have kept writing. And I don't have time to talk about all the stories of courage that I've witnessed, and I'm not going to talk about the ones that I've read about. Courage is simply ordinary people choosing to do the right thing despite what they fear, despite what they feel.

I think the first thing I thought about was actually just seeing the courage of three young men, who over the years, refused to allow cancer to destroy their spirit or destroy their faith. The first one I did that journey with was a guy called Andrew*. The second, a guy called Nick*. And then there was a couple that I married some years ago. I didn't do the journey with them, but I saw and watched the story of Shaun*.

And the courage that each of them displayed, refusing to give in, refusing to get bitter, refusing to blame God. Though at times I'm sure there was ugliness in what they felt. But there is courage in that. Courage is not for the brave and the fearless and the heroes of the faith. Courage is for ordinary people who choose to do the right thing despite what they feel.

I saw the courage of their wives as they did that journey with their husbands. I've seen the courage of parents at a graveside. I've seen the courage of survivors of abuse as they tell their stories, but refuse to be defined by that abuse. And I've heard the courage of Christians from places such as Iran and Algeria and Nigeria who refuse to deny their faith in Christ, in the process risking prison or death.

You know these stories of courage as well, and they're the stories of ordinary people who feel the same fear that we do, and yet ordinary people who in the feeling of that fear or that anxiety of facing the cost of making a decision, choose to do it. Courage is ordinary people choosing to do the right thing, choosing to do the God thing despite the fear and the grief and the anguish. It is ordinary people choosing to hold on to the promise of God's constant presence. It is ordinary

people are choosing to hold onto the promise of his unfailing love for us, despite everything. And it is ordinary people choosing to draw courage from a community of family and of friends.

See, we need courage. We need courage to face the uncertainties of life. God works out his plans not just in the good things of life, but in the whole array of the human experience. And sometimes we pray, and God might answer our prayer and miraculously fix our situation. But sometimes the miracle that God performs is simply his power to sustain us and care for us, even through the worst of times.

We need courage to do what is right. We need courage to tell the truth because sometimes it's easier to forgive, to lie. But we also need courage to forgive. We need courage to take responsibility for our mistakes. It's so much easier to try and cover them up or excuse them. We need to ask for forgiveness from God or from others, instead of denying or making excuses.

We need courage to take the risks we need to take. I'm not talking about being reckless. I'm not talking about being unwise. But there's a sense in which life calls us and requires us at times to be adventurous and creative. It calls us to step into the unknown, and it feels like a risk. We need courage to take risks.

And we also need courage in order to build relationships of depth. It feels so much safer to keep people at a distance because if they get close, what do they do to us? Oh, it hurts sometimes, doesn't it? And the closer we get, the greater our vulnerability to being hurt by them. But we need the courage to let others in. We need courage to learn to trust others, and we need the courage to allow them to get to know who we are.

Courage is ordinary people like you and I choosing to do the right thing, the God thing, despite our fear. Over these past six weeks, you will have seen that God calls and he uses ordinary people to fulfill his purposes. It was Caleb and Rahab, and Deborah and Josiah. Last week there was Hannah, and this week there is Jonathan. Each one of them shaped the history of God's people, and each one of them were part of God's story that would ultimately lead to the coming of Jesus Christ and his death and his resurrection. They were ordinary people like you and I, but they were people who chose to act with courage, with faith and humility. And they were people who chose to submit their hopes and their plans and their dreams to the sovereignty of God and his purposes.

You know, it just struck me over and over again those words of Jonathan, "you will be king of Israel, and I will be second to you." So how long had Jonathan looked forward to becoming the next King of Israel? And yet he gave up his hopes, his dreams, and submitted them to the sovereignty of God.

They say this is our call as followers of Jesus Christ. This is our call to follow Jesus, to submit to him, submitting all that we are and all that we have to His Lordship.

Post-Sermon Prayer *Speaker: Stephen Bates*

Allow me just to pray. Father, we thank you for your love, and we thank you for your presence. And we thank you also for the people that you place around us, family and friends and a church community.

And father, I pray that for each one of us that we would find courage to do that that which is right and that which honours you, that which blesses us as we hold on to those truths that you are with us, that you love us and that we belong. We belong to a family.

Lord, I want to pray, particularly this morning, for any who feel a sense of anxiety or fear that have come in today. Maybe it's been there for a while, maybe around a situation or a situation that just doesn't seem like it will resolve.

But I pray that whatever we carry that we would entrust that to you. And that we would do that which is right, that which you've asked us to do, that which we know would bring you most glory. Father, I pray that you would fill us with your peace, a sense of your love and your presence. And that in the everyday, but also in the significant things that we face as well, that we would choose to act with courage and faith and humility and love.

And, Lord, may our lives glorify you in all things. Amen.

Worship Singing

Song: Oceans (Where Feet May Fall) by Joel Houston, Matt Crocker, Salomon Ligthelm

Conclusion *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

So may we each go in courage this week in the places where God leads us, in the things that he leads us into. I just want to issue an invitation, if there are any of you, perhaps as you hear the story this morning, you think, "I'm so unfamiliar with the Bible." If you would like to explore what the Bible is about or what these stories that we're talking to are about, I just want to issue that invitation. Grab Steve or I, and we would love to just find a way that we can help you explore what the Bible is about, what these stories mean, how they fit in the bigger context, rather than just random stories.

As we talk about courage, sometimes one of the courageous things someone can do is actually to ask for prayer for something that is going on in our life. We have a prayer team and we will meet you in the place of faith for whatever it might be that you need prayer for this morning, and we would just love to present that to God and meet him in that place of trusting, that he is God and he will move. So I want to invite any who would like prayer into anything at all. We will be across the front here praying this morning.

Otherwise, I encourage you to stay for morning tea before you jump out into the cold weather today, and God bless you. Have a great week everyone.

Online Outro *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Hey, thank you for joining us online today. We pray that you have been blessed and encouraged. And if there is something from today that you would like us to pray into with you, don't hesitate to let us know.

If we haven't met you, we'd love to hear from you. And you also welcome to come and join us in person as well. To know more about our church, please go to our church website and you can also find more details about who we are through our newsletter. And you can subscribe to that through our website as well.

God bless you and may you have a great week.

**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*