**Jonah***Obedience to the mission of God*

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| Date (2018) | Speaker | Topic | Passage | Extra |
| April 8 | Jim Leavenworth | And God says: ‘Go!’ | Jonah 1:1-3 |  |
| 15 | CH | The story of God making and saving us | Jonah 1:4-16 |  |
| 22 | Paul Friend | Prayer in the deep | Jonah 1:17-2:10 |  |
| 29 | George Campbell | The power of the Gospel | Jonah 3:1-10 |  |
| May 13 | Scott Hamilton | Surprised by mercy | Jonah 4:1-11 |  |

The book of Jonah is for many a familiar story of a faltering prophet unsuccessfully trying to avoid God. Yet as E. Peterson puts it, “the kind of slapstick clumsiness is not frivolous. This is deadly serious. While we are smiling at Jonah we ourselves keep God at a comfortable distance.”

This book is hugely important for the Church today. The Church, including Bellevue, needs a fresh vision of God’s mercy and grace. The Church needs a deepened understanding of God’s call on our life. The Church needs to be moved to renew their participation in God’s passion for reaching the ‘Ninevites’ of today. The book of Jonah challenges us to share the heart of God who says ‘should I not pity Nineveh, that great city?’ God has compassion for the nations including even the enemies of God’s people.

Of course the story has even more depth through the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus used Jonah’s time inside the fish as a sign of the period he would be in the ‘heart of the earth’ after his death and before his resurrection (Matthew 12:39-42; 16:4; Luke 11: 29-32). And the mercy shown the city of Nineveh is the mercy show to us ‘who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him’ (Col.1:21-22).

May we respond in true worship and obedience, delighting in the work God is calling us to participate in.