



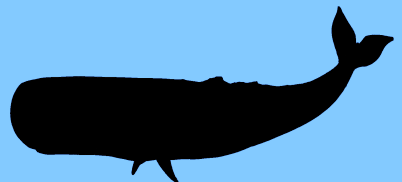
GOD FOR ALL NATIONS



# TRINITY CHURCH

**Growth Group Studies in Jonah**

Term 2, 2023



# TERM 2 2023 OUTLINE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Book</b>	<b>Bible Passages</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Week 1 (1-7 May)	Jonah	Jonah 1 & Mark 4:35-41	The Messenger & the Storm	3
Week 2 (8-14 May)		Jonah 2 & Matt 12:38-41	A Fishy Burial	7
Week 3 (15-21 May)		Jonah 3 & Luke 18:9-14	A Dramatic Transformation	11
Week 4 (22-28 May)		Jonah 4 & Luke 15:11-32	The God Who Shows No Favouritism	15
Week 5 (29 May - 4 June)	Joel	Joel 1	Time to Wake Up	Coming soon
Week 6 (5 - 11 June)		Joel 2:1-17	Blaze & Blessing	
Week 7 (12 - 18 June)		Joel 2:18-32	An Outpouring of Grace	
Week 8 (19 - 25 June)		Joel 3	The Harvest is Ripe	
Week 9 (26 June - 2 July)	Trinity Church Mt Barker Prayer Night: Monday 26th June			
Week 10 (3 - 9 July)	Growth Group Social/Mission Night			

# WEEK 1: THE MESSENGER & THE STORM

## Looking Back

*[All Together or Pairs/Triplets]*

## Connecting

3 quick questions:

- ❖ What's something you miss from your childhood?
- ❖ What's your favourite season of the year?
- ❖ How would someone know if you were stressed?

In 60 seconds, share:

- ❖ One thing from this week you'd like to thank God for
- ❖ One thing you'd like to ask God for

## Last Week's Application

- ❖ What did you find encouraging and eye-opening in Acts last term?
- ❖ What truths did you find confronting or challenging?
- ❖ In trying to speak more about Jesus and not fear the consequences, what have you learnt and what road bumps have you run into?

## Pray

- ❖ Give thanks to God for each other
- ❖ Ask God to grow each of you as disciples as you walk together in Christ
- ❖ Pray for specific thanks and requests
- ❖ Pray for help with what we're trying to apply
- ❖ Ask that God will transform us as we read and reflect on his word together

# Looking Up

[All Together]

Jonah is an Old Testament book that tells the thrilling tale of God’s disobedient messenger from the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We don’t know with certainty when or by whom the book was written, but the story is probably set around 700BC, when Nineveh was the capital of the regional superpower Assyria. Over the next four weeks, we’ll be exploring what these events teach us about God’s love for all nations.

*Using the colour coded readings in your Readings booklet, act out Jonah 1:1-17 (or at least read it dramatically!) You’ll need volunteers to be the narrator, God, the captain, the sailors and Jonah. You might also want to designate parts of your space as Joppa (in Israel), Tarshish, and Nineveh (see map in Readings booklet).*

1. What do we learn about God’s character in this story?
  
2. What do Jonah, the sailors, and us come to learn about Yahweh in this chapter?
  
3. What do the characters in the story teach us about right responses to God?

4. Why would God bother sending a message to Nineveh?

*Read Mark 4:35-41*

5. Mark obviously wants us to remember Jonah when we read this event about Jesus. What similarities and differences are there between these two messengers, and why do you think Mark has drawn the connection?

## **Looking Forward**

*[All Together]*

6. Jonah's sin put people around him in danger. When we disobey God's word, how do we endanger people around *us*?

7. Jonah looks like a complete turkey, but we're all guilty of ignoring God's word and doing the exact opposite. Where are you doing a Jonah at the moment and need to repent? (Refer to Ephesians 4 if you need help)

8. When the disciples saw Jesus' authority and power, they were filled with holy fear. How will you cultivate this healthy fear in your life?

*[Pairs or Triplets]*

9. Put what you've learned today into 3 short points:



10. Who will you share this good news with this week?

*Practice different ways you could share this (eg. "Just the other day I read the Bible with a group from church and learned...")*

11. What will you do as a result of what we've learned?

*[Sin to repent of? Actions to take? Beliefs to change? Things to praise God for?]*

Pray for each other: Thank God for what he's taught us, ask for his help to put his word into practice, pray for help to share what you've learnt.

# WEEK 2: A FISHERY BURIAL

## Looking Back

*[All Together or Pairs/Triplets]*

### Connecting

3 quick questions:

- ❖ If you were a bird, where would you build your nest?
- ❖ Who do you feel inspired by?
- ❖ What is one thing that really annoys you?

In 60 seconds, share:

- ❖ One thing from this week you'd like to thank God for
- ❖ One thing you'd like to ask God for

### Last Week's Application

- ❖ Discuss your applications from last week's study
- ❖ In trying to put these applications into practice, share what you learned, how you were encouraged and where you got stuck
- ❖ Help each other identify ways to overcome the road-bumps

### Pray

- ❖ Give thanks to God for each other
- ❖ Ask God to grow each of you as disciples as you walk together in Christ
- ❖ Pray for specific thanks and requests
- ❖ Pray for help with what we're trying to apply
- ❖ Ask that God will transform us as we read and reflect on his word together

## **Looking Up**

*[All Together]*

Last week we met Jonah, God's messenger who went AWOL (Absent WithOut Leave). We saw how gospel-writer Mark contrasted Jonah against God's ultimate messenger, Jesus. We reflected on God's nature and the foolishness of our sin. Yet we also saw God provide a merciful rescue.

*Read Jonah 2*

1. Have a quick google on your phone and find some pictures of Jonah inside the fish. What do you think it would have really been like in there?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does Jonah recognise:
  - a) about his situation
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b) about God
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c) about himself



3. Jonah was so hardened, it took a couple of days basting in the digestive juices of a fish to bring him to humbly cry out to God. What circumstances has God used in your life to bring you to remember God and cry out to him?

*Read Matthew 12:38-41*

4. What is Jesus saying about himself and the people of his generation?

Jonah's 'kind-of-resurrection' pointed to Jesus' actual resurrection. Jesus' actual resurrection means that all who trust him will have an actual resurrection as well. After death, God will bring the lives of all who trust in Jesus up from the pit.

## **Looking Forward**

*[All Together]*

5. How does what we have learnt today (about repentance, God's mercy and the hope of resurrection) affect our lives?

6. What assurance does God's character give us when we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness?

7. Is confession a regular part of your prayer life? How might this need to change?

*[Pairs or Triplets]*

8. Put what you've learned today into 3 short points:



9. Who will you share this good news with this week?

*Practice different ways you could share this (eg. "Just the other day I read the Bible with a group from church and learned...")*

10. What will you do as a result of what we've learned?

*[Sin to repent of? Actions to take? Beliefs to change? Things to praise God for?]*

Pray for each other: Thank God for what he's taught us, ask for his help to put his word into practice, pray for help to share what you've learnt.

# WEEK 3: A DRAMATIC TRANSFORMATION

## Looking Back

*[All Together or Pairs/Triplets]*

## Connecting

3 quick questions:

- ❖ If you could take one luxury item camping, what would it be?
- ❖ Are you more of a dessert or mains person?
- ❖ What's your favourite restaurant?

In 60 seconds, share:

- ❖ One thing from this week you'd like to thank God for
- ❖ One thing you'd like to ask God for

## Last Week's Application

- ❖ Discuss your applications from last week's study
- ❖ In trying to put these applications into practice, share what you learned, how you were encouraged and where you got stuck
- ❖ Help each other identify ways to overcome the road-bumps

## Pray

- ❖ Give thanks to God for each other
- ❖ Ask God to grow each of you as disciples as you walk together in Christ
- ❖ Pray for specific thanks and requests
- ❖ Pray for help with what we're trying to apply
- ❖ Ask that God will transform us as we read and reflect on his word together

## Looking Up

*[All Together]*

After running away from his mission, Jonah finally repented and received God's mercy. Jonah now arrives at the great city of his enemies and delivers the message God sent him to deliver.

1. If you were to march onto the streets of Adelaide and openly declare that Adelaide was about to be destroyed, what do you think the outcome would be?

*Read Jonah 3*

2. What do you think about Nineveh's response to God? How do you account for such a radical response?

*Read Luke 18:9-14*

3. What do you think about the tax collector's response to God? How do you account for such a radical response?
4. In these two passages, what do we learn about true repentance?

## Looking Forward

*[All Together]*

5. How might you use the story of Jonah to answer someone who thinks God couldn't forgive them? (practice answering each other in pairs/triplets)
  
6. Can we sometimes give people an impression of Christianity that leaves them feeling justified, or in right relationship with God, without having led them to true repentance? What do we need to change in the way we talk about Christianity to correct this?

Nineveh's response was a miracle. But so is every person who responds to Jesus with faith and repentance! The same God who sent Jonah and brought Nineveh to their knees is sending you and me, and we have an even greater message than Jonah's!

7. How does the story of Jonah affect your confidence and optimism when it comes to talking about Jesus with unbelievers?

*[Pairs or Triplets]*

8. Put what you've learned today into 3 short points:



9. Who will you share this good news with this week?

*Practice different ways you could share this (eg. "Just the other day I read the Bible with a group from church and learned...")*

10. What will you do as a result of what we've learned?

*[Sin to repent of? Actions to take? Beliefs to change? Things to praise God for?]*

Pray for each other: Thank God for what he's taught us, ask for his help to put his word into practice, pray for help to share what you've learnt.

# WEEK 4: THE GOD WHO SHOWS NO FAVOURITISM

## Looking Back

*[All Together or Pairs/Triplets]*

## Connecting

3 quick questions:

- ❖ What's your favourite colour to wear?
- ❖ What's your least favourite colour to wear?
- ❖ What's your favourite holiday destination?

In 60 seconds, share:

- ❖ One thing from this week you'd like to thank God for
- ❖ One thing you'd like to ask God for

## Last Week's Application

- ❖ Discuss your applications from last week's study
- ❖ In trying to put these applications into practice, share what you learned, how you were encouraged and where you got stuck
- ❖ Help each other identify ways to overcome the road-bumps

## Pray

- ❖ Give thanks to God for each other
- ❖ Ask God to grow each of you as disciples as you walk together in Christ
- ❖ Pray for specific thanks and requests
- ❖ Pray for help with what we're trying to apply
- ❖ Ask that God will transform us as we read and reflect on his word together

## **Looking Up**

*[All Together]*

So far, God’s messenger who went MIA (Missing In Action) got swallowed by a fish, repented, was given a second chance, preached his way through Nineveh, and—amazingly—all of Nineveh repented, and God showed them mercy. Now, a very grumpy Jonah reveals why he never wanted this assignment in the first place.

*Read Jonah 4:1-3*

1. Why is Jonah so angry?
2. Why is Jonah’s attitude so hypocritical?
3. How has Jonah changed since chapter 1?

*Read the rest of Jonah 4*

4. What point is God making with the plant and the worm?



*[On Your Own]*

5. Read Luke 15:11-32 and highlight or underline everything the older son does that reminds you of Jonah
  
6. Underline everything the father does that shows mercy and compassion that reminds you of God

## **Looking Forward**

*[All Together]*

7. Grace is scandalous. How can you guard your heart against a Jonah / older brother attitude?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. While we may not say what Jonah said out loud, we often show the same kind of resistance and refusal to do our bit to save perishing people. Write yourself a prayer you could pray regularly asking God to soften your heart to love the lost.

*[Pairs or Triplets]*

9. Put what you've learned today into 3 short points:



10. Who will you share this good news with this week?

*Practice different ways you could share this (eg. "Just the other day I read the Bible with a group from church and learned...")*

11. What will you do as a result of what we've learned?

*[Sin to repent of? Actions to take? Beliefs to change? Things to praise God for?]*

Pray for each other: Thank God for what he's taught us, ask for his help to put his word into practice, pray for help to share what you've learnt.





**TRINITY**  
CHURCH