**March 2024 Books of the Month – Jonah & Micah**

Lent is a season of the church year where Christians are called to reflect on the sufferings of Christ and to allow those reflections to spur us forward into spiritual growth. Truly, our God is a missionary God. He came for you and for me, offering us rescue from our sins and abundant life in Him.

But many years before Jesus was born, our unchanging missionary God was reaching out to offer forgiveness and true abundant life. One powerful example of this is the story of Jonah. Jonah is often referred to as the reluctant prophet. Jonah was a true prophet of God who deeply loved the Lord. However, Jonah struggled with how compassionate and good the LORD truly was. Jonah wanted the enemies of God’s people to be punished for their sins, rather than offered mercy if they would repent and turn to the LORD.

As you read this powerful Book of Jonah, I pray that the LORD would expand your heart (and my heart as well) to love and truly desire mercy for all people. Whoever the Ninevites may be to you, I pray that the LORD would fill us with His missionary heart towards them this Lent.

Our other highlighted book is Micah. This book is a reminder of God’s heart to be a missionary to His own people. Israel was called to be a light to the nations, but instead they were living in sin and corruption. This Book reminds us to pray for God’s transforming grace for His church today. The church is called to be God’s light to the nations. May this book cause you to be in prayer for yourself, for Chestnut Grove, for me as your pastor, for the Global Methodist Church, and for the church universal. With God’s help, may we strive to be that light on a hill sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

If there is any sin holding us back from all that God has for us, there is a place of victory over sin by God’s transforming power. Through repentance and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can and must walk in the freedom over the bondage of sin. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus and His transforming grace. By the time the sun (and the Son) rises on Easter Sunday this year, may we all resemble Jesus Christ more fully.

Lord’s blessings,

Tim