

Announcements

Shelter: Our Shelter service continues each week at noon, both in-person and via livestream. This brief midweek service runs about 40 minutes, and reflections are taken from our Shelter daily devotional email. Join us, in-person or via livestream, any week.

Gospel of Mark: The Gospel of Mark class continues Sundays at 11am, via livestream-only.

Learning to Love - Race, Reconciliation, Forgiveness, and Discipleship: A mix of music, stories, testimonies, teaching, repentance, and forgiveness. Co-hosted by Grace Sacramento and Soaring Oaks, two of our sister churches in the PCA. Every Thursday in July, 7pm-8:30pm, in the Worship Room. No RSVP needed. Livestream will be available for those who cannot attend in person.

Valley Springs Christian Preschool: Our weekday preschool program for 3's, 4's, and 5-year-olds. Registration for the 2020-21 school year is now open. See www.valleyspringschristianpreschool.org or contact Danya Schulte: danya@valleysprings.org / (916) 786-7940 x106.

Text-to-Give: A new option to make giving easier. Simply text "give" to (669) 333-5880. You'll be asked to fill out a quick form to get set up for the first time. After that, giving is as easy as sending a text. Try it today!

Order of Service

5th week after Pentecost

July 5th, 2020

Gathered by God for Worship

Welcome

Call to Worship
Psalm 23

Song of Praise
Christ Our Hope In Life and Death

Prayer of Adoration

Renewed by God Through Grace

Confession of Sin
Luke 12:22-26

Declaration of Grace
Luke 12:32

Song of Renewal and Gratitude
Nothing to Fear

Set Apart by God for Service in Every Area of Life

Offering

Sermon

The Lord's Supper *

Profession of Faith: The Apostle's Creed

Sent by God to Serve Our World Together

Song of Response
He Will Hold Me Fast

Blessing

General Offering: June 22 - June 28	\$ 24,154
Weekly Budget Need	\$ 31,600
Last Week's Deficit	(\$ 7,446)
Budget Deficit (YTD).....	(\$ 186,237)

This information can also be found at valleysprings.org

* A gluten-free Communion option is available

Readings

Scripture

¹From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar. ²And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. ³But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." ⁴Now Abimelech had not approached her. So he said, "Lord, will you kill an innocent people? ⁵Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this." ⁶Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. ⁷Now then, return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

⁸So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid. ⁹Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done." ¹⁰And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you see, that you did this thing?" ¹¹Abraham said, "I did it because I thought, 'There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.' ¹²Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. ¹³And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, 'This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

¹⁴Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him. ¹⁵And Abimelech said, "Behold, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you." ¹⁶To Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is a sign of your innocence in the eyes of all who are with you, and before everyone you are vindicated." ¹⁷Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. ¹⁸For the Lord had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

- Genesis 20 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

Charitable Judgment
Genesis 20

The Life of Blessing
Brad Anderson

It is hard to make charitable judgments when tormented by great fears... (Genesis 20:11)

How does God remedy these great fears?

By clearing our fears toward man... (Genesis 20:1-7)

By coaxing our fears toward God... (Genesis 20:8-13)

By cultivating our faith in the God who can be trusted... (Genesis 20:14-18)

Reflection Questions

(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- When have you repeated the same mistake twice?
- Look for reasons why this story was inserted into Genesis at this point. 1) Was it for suspense? Will Abraham succeed in jeopardizing God's promise, after all? 2) Was it for irony? Who fears God more now – Abraham or Abimelech? After rescuing Lot from his folly, who now needs to be rescued? 3) Was it for anti-climax? After such spiritual exertion for Sodom, isn't it only human for Abraham to relapse? 4) Was it simply a case of déjà vu? When have we seen Abraham commit this same mistake before? Why doesn't God scrap plan A (with Abraham) for plan B (a more faithful father)? Instead how does God remain faithful to his covenant? To Abraham? Sarah? Abimelech? Who is the hero of this story: Abraham, Sarah, Abimelech, or God? Why?
- How does Abraham's response reveal both a lack of trust in God and misjudgment of the people of Gerar?
- Again, we see Abraham's interactions with the nations in Genesis 20. How does he bring blessing to the people of Gerar, even though he lies about the identity of his wife? Note also Genesis 21:22-34. What do we learn about Abraham and about the nature of sin when we compare Genesis 20:1-18 with Genesis 12:10-20? How do Jesus' words to the disciples in John 4:31-38 further demonstrate the breadth of Abraham's call to be a blessing to the world?
- Is there a person or group of people that you have made a less than charitable judgment toward in your heart? What would be at stake if you confessed your judgments toward that person, first to God and then perhaps to that person? What makes judgment so easy?
- When are you most tempted to deceive someone? What tends to be your underlying fears or judgments that can make this temptation most sharp?
- At what point can you most identify with Abraham in this story?