



# grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

August 31-September 6, 2020

Sermon by Rev. Stephen Coleman

Sermon Series: “2020: What Have We Learned?”

Sermon Title: “The Elephant in the Room”

Notes from sermon on 8/30:	Things to Pray For This Week:
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### Family Focus Question:

What have you learned in 2020 as you have faced the pandemic and the racial unrest?

### Questions for Small Groups

- 1) What has been most helpful to you in the past to help you process your grief?
- 2) In what ways during this pandemic can we still be in ministry to others who grieve?
- 3) What does this passage from 2 Samuel tell us about God?

### Monday, August 31: Read 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27

Stephen Coleman will deliver the sermon on Sunday that begins our fall sermon series, “2020: What Have We Learned?” He will address what is probably the first emotion we feel with this question...the “elephant in the room”: *grief*. One thing we have learned is that all of us have experienced loss of some kind. Part of the difficulty of this year is the emotional stress that our losses and griefs have brought us.

Today we hear a lesson from 2 Samuel where David deals with the loss of his friend Jonathan and his King, Saul. In response to the loss, he writes a beautiful poem, song, eulogy in honor of these two men. David names and acknowledges the grief of the nation of Israel and his own personal grief. David gives us an example to follow. We all must find a way to name and process our grief and the emotions of grief. The focus of Stephen’s sermon will be on grief. We will define it and name it. Stephen will encourage us to face our losses and trust in the power of God and the desire of God to always raise us from the dead and give us new life. Newness and new life can occur if we can find ways to face our grief. Through the words of a beloved pastor who has helped so many of us through times of grief, we will find healing and hope. Through the writings of beloved prophets and teachers who simultaneously experienced unimaginable loss, ecstatic joy, and tenacious faith, we will find guidance and light. Yes, we have learned much already in 2020, but we can look forward to what God has yet to show us, and how God can use it all to heal and transform the world.

**Tuesday, September 1: Read Mark 5:21-24, 35-43**

We believe it's too late – that we are beyond hope. There has been too much death, division, environmental damage, racism, and hatred. Where has God been? Does God even know or care what we are going through? In today's incredible gospel passage we witness a savior who sees our pain, responds, and heals...but not as quickly as we often want. Yes, this little girl was healed and revived. We know plenty of people who were not...at least on earth. Today, let us have faith in a savior whose power, love, and attention transcends our human boundaries of time, space, and perspective. Let us draw close to our Christ who hears our cries, knows those whom we love, and tells us, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

**Wednesday, September 2: Read Lamentations 3:23-33**

Some of us avoid the book of Lamentations, failing to recognize the healing power of collective grief. We believe we must suffer in silence, put on a happy faith, and only come to God in joy and thanksgiving. One of the greatest things about our Bible, however, is that it teaches us that we can bring any emotion to God, including anger, grief, and despair. Today's scripture offers hope, exhorts us to be patient, and shows faith. Feel free to keep reading through more chapters and verses in Lamentations this week to experience a fuller gamut of emotions, finding words for your feelings. Don't worry – God can take it. God has seen people in worse situations than this. God has delivered them from worse situations, too.

**Thursday, September 3: Read 2 Corinthians 4:5-12**

Paul's incredible words to the church in Corinth shows us the incredible strength and resilience available through God's grace for those who trust in the power of the cross. There is no promise of any easy life, but there is a promise of a great purpose and ultimate victory. Our own individual actions and surrounding circumstances could easily be described as "clay jars" nowadays – nothing pretty or obviously precious on the surface. But our attitudes, reactions to circumstances, and words can help reveal the great treasure inside all of us: the light of Christ that will outshine the darkness.

**Friday, September 4: Read Psalm 30**

Today let us all offer this psalm up to God, asking for God's mercy and healing. Let us ask God to turn our wailing into dancing, our fear into faith, our depths of despair into rejoicing from the royal mountain. Let us pray for our world as a whole and for each individual affliction we and our loved ones are experiencing. Be sad, get angry, cry, and implore. Through it all, know that God is here, God is listening, and God is working.

**Saturday, September 5: Scripture Memorization: 2 Corinthians 4:8-9**

"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"

**Sunday, September 6: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of Common Confession:** *We confess to you Almighty God what we are. We are often afraid to admit what lies in the depth of our souls. Help us not to shrink from self-knowledge. Give us courage to face our anger, our hurts, our disappointments and our losses. Give us courage to face our sins, those times when we did not love you or others as we should. You know us as we are, O God, and you love us. Forgive our sins. Cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Heal us with your tender touch. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.*