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Jun

God Will Provide

Forming a Family/Preparing a People

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, YEAR A

When Scripture makes us want to flee, learning to stay, pray, sing, and tell the story faithfully.

REFERENCES

Genesis 22:1-14

Psalm 13

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

COLORS

Green

Worship Planning Notes

Focus text: [Genesis 22:1-14](#)

If last week's text was one to wrestle with, you may be thinking that this week's text is one to flee. Ok, I'm out! Seems like a good week for a hymn sing and early dismissal. Mount Moriah? Never heard of it. God asking for child sacrifice? Doesn't sound like the God I know. Abraham almost going through with it? Nope! Can't do it!

And yet...the text is still there. No amount of hemming, hawing, or sticking our heads in the sand will make it magically disappear. Here, next to stories about God who is faithful and good, who saves us and gives us abundant life, who guides us and inspires us, is the story of Abraham, Isaac, and God at the top of Mount Moriah. So, what do we do?

Start with prayer. Prayer always has a place in worship planning, but texts like this call for particular attention to prayer by the leaders crafting worship this week. What is the Spirit bringing forward to you in the story? What seems an especially relevant aspect of the story for your context right now? Where do you feel the tension and release in the narrative? How does this text read you as much as you read it? As you pray, keep these questions in mind and pay attention to where the Holy Spirit leads you.

Then, sing. One of God's main actions in this story is to provide. What songs suggest God's provision and care? Maybe something like "God Will Take Care of You" (*United Methodist Hymnal 130*) or "Be Still, My Soul" (*United Methodist Hymnal 534*). You might also choose to sing about the wounds we carry and our need for God in the midst of them with hymns like "Wounded World That Cries for Healing" (*The Faith We Sing 2177*) or "God Weeps" (*The Faith We Sing 2048*). God's provision can be wide-ranging in expression, so finding ways to sing of the many ways God does not leave us alone in our confusion and suffering can be a grace-filled and healing response to this text.

Finally, tell the story. Let it be what it is. And, if you anticipate having kids in the room, remember that this story can be scary and unsettling for children who are not yet old enough to wrestle with it. So, consider if there's another story of God providing that would be appropriate to share during a children's message. Or, have the children tell their own stories of how they think God provides. Also consider how you might use some of the guidelines suggested here to talk about this story, especially if children remain in the room during the reading of the scripture and sermon:

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/trauma-informed-worship-guidelines-for-intergenerational-worship>.

Author bio: *Dr. Lisa Hancock, Director of Worship Arts Ministries, served as an organist and music minister in United Methodist congregations in the legacy Northwest Texas and North Texas Annual Conferences. After receiving her Master of Sacred Music and Master of Theological Studies from Perkins School of Theology, she earned her PhD in Religious Studies from Southern Methodist University, where she researched and wrote on the doctrine of Christ, disability, and atonement. Lisa is also the co-lead of the Growing in Grace: Accessible Worship for All God's Children initiative.*

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