

## INTRO

- Name one feeling or emotion that described your "2020".

Each year in this sermon series, we look to start conversations surrounding mental health and see the spiritual connection and the wisdom and hope Jesus & Scripture offers us. Together, let's work to make our church a safe place for each of us to come as we are, bringing our pain and our brokenness, to a place of grace, acceptance and hope.

## READ

Isaiah 61:1-3  
Luke 4:18-19

## REFLECT &amp; RESPOND

After the baptism of Jesus and forty days spent in the wilderness, Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. He entered the temple, took the scroll, and with purpose, read these words from Isaiah 61. When he concluded, he said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." The words in these passages capture many feelings or emotions:

desperation grief mourning  
joy oppression gladness  
heaviness of spirit comfort  
sadness, sorrow, tears  
beauty & praise  
faint-hearted, disheartened, brokenhearted

*Qu: From Isaiah 61 and Luke 4, which word (s) can you identify with? What brings hope, consolation, comfort? Be specific. How does this word help you?*

## LET'S TALK

One definition of "tension" is the state of being stretched or strained. The past 11 months has stretched and strained us. And in this context, (the year we've had & the ongoing uncertainty still ahead) we join the "Let's Talk" conversation.

## LET'S TALK: Me and God

In Psalms 42 & 43, David acknowledged his tension between depression and hope. He felt one thing and also knew another thing to be true. He spoke to God, and to himself about his distress.

"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation."(Psalms 42 & 43)

*Qu: How can you relate to living in the tension between seemingly opposing emotions? Depression/sadness & hope? Grief & Gratitude? Can you name any others?*

## LET'S TALK: OTHERS

As Paul wrote to the Galatians: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

To bear one another's burdens, we need to talk. We need to listen. We need to be empathetic. We need to ask good questions.

*Qu: What questions might we ask one another to dig deeper, give space for honest answers and help one another describe ?*

## PRAY

From the Benediction (Prayer) at U.S. Presidential Inauguration on January 20, 2021:

"We need you, for in you we discover our common humanity, in our common humanity we will seek out the wounded and bind their wounds."

Rev. Silvester Beamen Bethel A.M.E. Church Willington, DE

- Pray for one another
- "Seek the Wounded": Pray that God would show each of us who we should reach out to this week.
- "Bind their Wounds": Pray for open, honest & supportive conversations about mental health.