

**Sun., March 6 - Holy Communion (Pastor Andrew leads)**

Memory Verse: "Therefore consider carefully how you listen." Luke 8:18a

Reading of Scripture: Luke 8:1-15

Message: Luke 3 Miracle 3: "Kingdom of God"

Text: Luke 4:43 " But He said to them, "I must preach the good news of God's kingdom in other cities too, for this is why I was sent."

Scripture: Luke 8:16-25

Blurb: In Luke Chapter 8 Jesus describes the Kingdom of God. Yet Jesus speaks in parables, and so we have to listen differently, deeply. When we do, we discover that we are transformed and made a part of God's family. Jesus extends the invitation of God's Kingdom *to you!*

***[Recorded Worship Beginning]***

**WELCOME** -Pastor David

**MEMORY VERSE** -Pastor David

"Therefore consider carefully how you listen." Luke 8:18a

**WORSHIP MUSIC SET** -Prerecording

*Death Was Arrested*

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

***[Live Worship Beginning]***

**GATHERING SONG:** *It Is Finished* -Sanctify

**WELCOME** -Pastor David

Open communion

**MEMORY VERSE** -Pastor David

"Therefore consider carefully how you listen." Luke 8:18a

**WORSHIP MUSIC SET** -Sanctify

*Strong Enough to Save*

*Not Just Stories*

*Stand By Me*

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

**[Both Recorded & Live Worship]**

**READING OF SCRIPTURE: Luke 8:1-15**

In Luke 8 Jesus tells his first extended parable. It's a farming story, about scattering seeds on different kinds of soil. The results are very different! Luke 8:1-15,

“1 Soon afterward, Jesus traveled through the cities and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom. The Twelve were with Him, 2 along with some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses. Among them were Mary Magdalene (from whom seven demons had been thrown out), 3 Joanna (the wife of Herod's servant Chuza), Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources.

4 When a great crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from one city after another, He spoke to them in a parable: 5 “A farmer went out to scatter his seed. As he was scattering it, some fell on the path where it was crushed, and the birds in the sky came and ate it. 6 Other seed fell on rock. As it grew, it dried up because it had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorny plants. The thorns grew with the plants and choked them. 8 Still other seed landed on good soil. When it grew, it produced one hundred times more grain than was scattered.” As He said this, He called out, “Everyone who has ears should pay attention.”

9 His disciples asked Him what this parable meant. 10 He said, “You have been given the mysteries of God's kingdom, but these mysteries come to everyone else in parables so that when they see, they can't see, and when they hear, they can't understand.

11 “The parable means this: The seed is God's word. 12 The seed on the path are those who hear, but then the devil comes and steals the word from their hearts so that they won't believe and be saved. 13 The seed on the rock are those who receive the word joyfully when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while but fall away when they are tempted. 14 As for the seed that fell among thorny plants, these are the ones who, as they go about their lives, are choked by the concerns, riches, and pleasures of life, and their fruit never matures. 15 The seed that fell on good soil are those who hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart. Through their resolve, they bear fruit.”

**GENERATIONAL BRIDGE -Pastor Andrew**

**MESSAGE: Luke 3 Miracle (Luke 7-9) 3: “Kingdom of God”**

**PP#1: Miracle: “Kingdom of God”**

“ But He said to them, “I must preach the good news of God's kingdom in other cities too, for this is why I was sent.” -Luke 4:43

If someone asked you, what was Jesus doing for three years on earth, how would you answer? I mean, if someone asked you why God came to earth in Jesus, your answer might include something about Jesus coming to die on the cross to save the world from our sins, right?, John 3:16? But what about these three years of public ministry *before* His death and resurrection? What was the purpose of this time? As we've been reading through Luke we've seen Jesus traveling around, preaching, teaching and healing. And that might be a good answer. *But why?* Lots of rabbis and prophets and preachers throughout history had traveling ministries. What is the point of Jesus' three public years?

The answer become clear here in Luke chapter 8. And you can also see it when you read through all four of the Gospels. Jesus' earthly ministry was to introduce—to usher in—the Kingdom of God. Make a note to the chapter 8 heading in your Bibles. Say: Jesus' earthly ministry: Usher in God's Kingdom.

Jesus Himself told us this back in Luke 4, when He read from the scroll of Isaiah 61. It said that we would know when God's Kingdom broke out on earth when these transformations started to occur. Jesus then said, "Today, it begins, with me!" A little bit later, in verse 43, Jesus said it again. "I must preach the good news of God's kingdom in other cities too, for this is why I was sent."

**PP#2:** *Image representing The Kingdom of God coming into earth.*

The Good News of God's Kingdom started pouring out in Jesus. He taught about it, He demonstrated it in His healings and miracles, and then He clinched it by His death and resurrection. It then begins to spread like wildfire with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

So, you and I, we have now chosen to move from casual observer in the crowds to being active followers of Jesus. We follow Jesus, and we join in His work, His mission. We all, since the time of Jesus, have been continuing His ministry of spreading God's Kingdom. That's why He taught us to pray, right at the beginning of what we now call The Lord's Prayer: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." We pray about it because we do it.

So, if we're following Jesus and partnering with Him in bringing God's Kingdom into our world and lives, then we had better know a bit more about God's Kingdom, right?

I'm so glad you asked! At least Jesus is, because now, this is what He explains in chapter 8.

**PP#3:** Jesus' Public Ministry: Ushering in God's Kingdom

1<sup>st</sup> Tour: Galilee, Luke 4:43-44

2<sup>nd</sup> Tour: Galilee, Luke 8:1-4

3<sup>rd</sup> Tour: Galilee, Luke 9:1-6

So turn to Luke 8. Verse one marks the second of Jesus' tours around the area of Galilee. Make a note to verse 1 saying, "2<sup>nd</sup> Tour of Galilee." If you want to go back and mark Jesus' first tour, you can go make a note on 4:43 saying "1<sup>st</sup> Tour of Galilee." And looking ahead, you can mark 9:1 with the note, "3<sup>rd</sup> Tour of Galilee."

So, Jesus has been going out on tours, to usher in God's Kingdom. He's teaching God's words, preaching about how to live God's way, He's healing people both physically and spiritually, and wherever He goes, lives are changed. As we might say it, "God is doing something!" As John the Baptist put it, "The Kingdom of God is at hand!"

**PP#4:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

"1 Soon afterward, Jesus traveled through the cities and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom. The Twelve were with Him, 2 along with some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses. Among them were Mary Magdalene (from whom seven demons had been thrown out), 3 Joanna (the wife of Herod's servant Chuza), Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources.

But on His second tour, notice at the end of verse 1, this time "The Twelve" are with Him. But look closely at verse 2. This is often missed. We always think of Jesus and the 12, right? But

among Jesus' tour group—perhaps in the SUV behind the bus—are a group of women! And these are pretty important women, actually. They have decided to follow Jesus, too. There is Mary from the town of Magdala—Jesus had healed her spiritually (know: this is a different woman than in the previous chapter), a Joanna, whose husband was on King Herod Antipas' payroll, and a certain Susanna. This is the only named reference to Susanna in the Gospels. And Luke says, “and many others.” That's where you and I fit in. We've come to Jesus like the sinful woman in the previous chapter, and we now have spots in the SUV touring with Jesus, riding with these incredible women!

And notice what Luke says about them: they provided for Jesus and the 12 out of their resources! They're the support crew! This is amazing, right? I mean, where did Jesus get the funding for His ministry? He wasn't charging for His miracles. There were women with some means who made sure His bills were covered! Think about that! In a male-dominated world, it's women who pick up the tab! I love the idea of Joanna taking some of her husband's paycheck from Herod Antipas and using it to support Jesus! There's a sermon right here on giving! For you see, we're traveling with them, so this is what we are doing, too. We are, to this day, providing for Jesus' ministry out of our resources. And it's the women—so unlikely!—who get it done!

[Flip Chart Page:

Luke: Jesus Savior for the Unimportant

1. Gentiles (Luke 2:1 & 32)
2. Edge of the Empire (Luke 2:2)
3. Mary/women (Luke 2:5)
4. Poor/Shepherds (Luke 2:8)
5. Poor/Joseph & Mary (Luke 2:24)
6. Margins of the Temple (Luke 2:37)
7. Sick and Hurting (Luke 4-5)
8. Sinners and Gentiles (Luke 6-7)]

Remember back in Jesus' birth narrative we learned that Luke notices that Jesus is Savior for the overlooked and forgotten, right? Well it continues in Jesus' public ministry. Add two more to the list: in chapters 4-5 we see Jesus healing the sick and spiritually oppressed. In chapters 6-7 Jesus spars with the Pharisees but welcomes the sinners and Gentiles.

[Flip Chart Page:

Women in Luke

1. Elizabeth (1:25,42-43)
2. Mary (1:38,46-55; 2:19)
3. Anna (2:36-38)
4. Simon's mother-in-law (4:38-39)
5. Widow's son (7:11-17)
6. Sinful woman (7:36-50)
7. Women with Jesus (8:2-3)]

And therefore Luke notices the crucial role of women in Jesus' ministry. With Jesus and men usually on the main stage, Luke makes sure to include women on the stage, too, pointing out that Jesus gives them moments in the spotlight. He describes the incredible faith responses of Elizabeth and Mary, of Anna at the temple. Jesus notices Peter's mother-in-law who was sick in the back room.

The young man that Jesus raised from the dead last chapter, Jesus did in order to give him back to his mother. And the sinful woman weeping at Jesus' feet, well, that's who we are supposed to be. And then here, Luke records that it's the women who actually keep Jesus and the 12 rolling. Wow.

In fact, it's Mary Magdalene and the woman who remain close to Jesus at the cross, even when the 12 disappear! And when Jesus rises from the dead on Easter, He first appears not to the 12, but to Mary Magdalene and Joanna. Make a note to verse 3 saying, "See Luke 24:10."

**PP#5:** Parables of Jesus:

- A favorite teaching device of Jesus
- Uses something from everyday life to make a point
- There is an *obvious* application
- And a *hidden* application
- To reveal the hidden application, the listener needs to place herself in the parable

Well, we have so much to cover today, we best keep moving.

Verse 4, Jesus again uses parables to teach. Jesus used parables a lot. I imagine Him walking around, seeing a farmer scattering seed by hand, just like they did in those days—they would often scatter the seeds first and then work them into the soil—so Jesus sees a farmer and then turns to His followers and uses that image to teach.

**PP#6:** Kingdom of God

1. What kind of soil are you?

A parable would have an obvious application, like in this one, there are different results depending on the condition of the soil. But then there was also a hidden application that you can only get by placing yourself in the parable somewhere. So, in this parable, the question becomes, which soil type *are you*?

**PP#7:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

4 When a great crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from one city after another, He spoke to them in a parable: 5 "A farmer went out to scatter his seed. As he was scattering it, some fell on the path where it was crushed, and the birds in the sky came and ate it. 6 Other seed fell on rock. As it grew, it dried up because it had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorny plants. The thorns grew with the plants and choked them. 8 Still other seed landed on good soil. When it grew, it produced one hundred times more grain than was scattered." As He said this, He called out, "Everyone who has ears should pay attention."

Now, Matthew and Mark also record this parable, and Luke again shortens it. But Jesus' main point comes at the end of verse 8: *You who are listening should take this to heart!* You see, up in verse 4 it says that big crowds are following Jesus. But Jesus doesn't want observers and miracle-seekers. He wants God's Kingdom to spread: He wants a 100% increase! So, people, don't just remain spectators. Apply what you are hearing! Join in God's Kingdom: *receive* the message deeply by living it out!

**PP#8:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

9 His disciples asked Him what this parable meant. 10 He said, “You have been given the mysteries of God’s kingdom, but these mysteries come to everyone else in parables so that when they see, they can’t see, and when they hear, they can’t understand.

The ironic thing is, that those closest to Jesus don’t “get it” either! I am so grateful for the honest disciples. I’d be too scared to ask, “Um...what does that mean?” And Jesus encourages them! He’s saying that He’s speaking in parables because many people are listening for the wrong reasons...some are just seeking to entrap Him. They’ll never truly understand. But those who really care and are receptive, they will understand. That’s the disciples—and us. We may not understand at first, but we earnestly want to know this Good News.

**PP#9:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

11 “The parable means this: The seed is God’s word. 12 The seed on the path are those who hear, but then the devil comes and steals the word from their hearts so that they won’t believe and be saved. 13 The seed on the rock are those who receive the word joyfully when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while but fall away when they are tempted. 14 As for the seed that fell among thorny plants, these are the ones who, as they go about their lives, are choked by the concerns, riches, and pleasures of life, and their fruit never matures. 15 The seed that fell on good soil are those who hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart. Through their resolve, they bear fruit.”

Jesus explains the hidden meaning. The sower is God, and the seed is God’s message of hope in Jesus. People receive God’s Word differently. So, consider the different ways *you* are hardened, are shallow, tempted, choked by worries and pleasures, or are eager and receptive.

**PP#10:** Kingdom of God

1. What kind of soil are you?
2. How do you need to become more receptive?

God’s Kingdom is like this: the Good News is received very differently. But God wants rich soil. So, which soil are you? We who have “ears should pay attention.” Application: how do you need to become better soil?

Jesus then follows up with another parable on the Kingdom of God.

**PP#11:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

“16 No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand so that those who enter can see the light. 17 Nothing is hidden that won’t be exposed. Nor is anything concealed that won’t be made known and brought to the light. 18 Therefore, listen carefully. Those who have will receive more, but as for those who don’t have, even what they seem to have will be taken away from them.”

Verse 16, “No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand so that those who enter can see the light.” We know this teaching from Matthew 5 and the Sermon on the Mount. But Jesus explains the hidden meaning here in verse 17, of why God gives His Word, His Light: “Nothing is hidden that won’t be exposed. Nor is

anything concealed that won't be made known and brought to the light." God's Word exposes everything for what it truly is. Application, verse 18, "Therefore, listen carefully. [There it is again: you who have ears!] Those who have will receive more, but as for those who don't have, even what they seem to have will be taken away from them."

**PP#12: Kingdom of God**

1. What kind of soil are you?
2. How do you need to become more receptive?
3. If you want more of God, you will get it!

Take to heart: those who have a taste of God's Kingdom and want more will be given more! Good news! There is more for you when you really want it. But those who don't really care, they're going to lose even their little bit of God. Again, the results of God's Kingdom—the transformation God intends—depends on our receptivity.

**PP#13: Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)**

19 Jesus' mother and brothers came to Him but were unable to reach Him because of the crowd. 20 Someone told Him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."

21 He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who listen to God's word and do it."

Jesus is on a roll here. So, when Jesus' family shows up, it's another teaching moment. Verse 19, "Jesus' mother and brothers came to Him but were unable to reach Him because of the crowd." Pause here a second. First of all, Mark gives more details saying that this is a family intervention. Make a note to verse 19 referencing, "Mark 3:21." It seems Jesus' family was getting concerned that His heavy schedule was causing Him to be a bit too divisive against the Jewish leaders. So, for a family intervention, notice that Joseph is not mentioned. He could be home working in the shop, but most likely he would have been there if he were still alive. So, Joseph is likely dead by now. Thirdly, Jesus has brothers! Now, if you're Roman Catholic, and you want to believe that Mary never ever had sex, then these are Joseph's kids from a previous marriage. Some also suggest cousins. But in Luke's simple telling, it is most likely that they were Jesus' younger half-siblings by Mary and Joseph. Now, at this time, Jesus' brothers don't seem to be among His disciples. Mark 6:3 names four of them, and says that Jesus also had some sisters. But after Jesus' return to glory, at least some of them become believers. One, named James, even becomes the leader of the church in Jerusalem. Note Galatians 1:19 and Acts 15:13.

Okay, Jesus hears that His family has come to see Him. Verse 20, "Someone told Him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.'" 21 He replied, 'My mother and brothers are those who listen to God's word and do it.'"

**PP#14: Kingdom of God**

1. What kind of soil are you?
2. How do you need to become more receptive?
3. If you want more of God, you will get it!
4. You become Jesus' family when you follow Him!

Jesus uses that moment as sort of a parable. My family? Who are my family, I mean, *really* my family? If I am only a human, then it is bloodline and legal relationship. But Jesus is God's Son. Who are His family in God's Kingdom? It is anyone who listens to God's word and applies it! You who have "ears should pay attention." Application: You become part of Jesus' spiritual family when you live out God's Kingdom.

**PP#15:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

"22 One day Jesus and His disciples boarded a boat. He said to them, 'Let's cross over to the other side of the lake.' So they set sail.

"23 While they were sailing, He fell asleep. Gale-force winds swept down on the lake. The boat was filling up with water and they were in danger. 24 So they went and woke Jesus, shouting, 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!' But He got up and gave orders to the wind and the violent waves. The storm died down and it was calm.

Okay, hang in there: one more story. You might remember this one. Jesus decides He wants to cross over the Sea of Galilee, over to the east side, the non-Jewish side. More on that next week. Verse 22, "One day Jesus and His disciples boarded a boat. He said to them, 'Let's cross over to the other side of the lake.' So they set sail." Jesus is exhausted from constant teaching, and there are experienced fishermen in the boat. So, He dozes off. Verse 23, "While they were sailing, He fell asleep. Gale-force winds swept down on the lake. [The Sea of Galilee is below sea level, and winds—when the conditions are right—can suddenly turn from a nice breeze to dangerous gales.] The boat was filling up with water and they were in danger. 24 So they went and woke Jesus, shouting, 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!' But He got up and gave orders to the wind and the violent waves. The storm died down and it was calm."

**PP#16:** Luke 8:1-25 (CEB)

"25 He said to His disciples, 'Where is your faith?'

"Filled with awe and wonder, they said to each other, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!'"

Jesus then turns to His disciples and make a parable-like application. Verse 25, "He said to His disciples, 'Where is your faith?'" The problem wasn't that they were frightened. It was that they were certain they were going to die. Jesus, in a sense, is saying, "After all the miracles you've seen me do, knowing that I have all power and authority, why are you freaking out? You're with me. We're doing God's Kingdom work. You know I'll take care of things. Why didn't you apply your faith in me to this moment? You who have 'ears should pay attention!'"

"Filled with awe and wonder, they said to each other, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!'"

Finishing the story: "Filled with awe and wonder [there it is again, the reaction of wonder and praise], they said to each other, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!'"

It seems their understanding of what it means that Jesus is the Messiah needs to be expanded a bit more, right? But do you see the application here? The winds and waves listen to and obey Jesus. The people, not so much! And this story provides the context for the next story coming up. For after having calmed the storm in the weather on the boat, we'll find out next week that when Jesus lands, He calms the spiritual storm of a demon-possessed man.



**PP#17: Kingdom of God**

1. What kind of soil are you?
2. How do you need to become more receptive?
3. If you want more of God, you will get it!
4. You become Jesus' family when you follow Him!
5. You who have ears, *listen!*

In Jesus, God's Kingdom is breaking into our world, changing things, transforming reality. It's coming to us in Jesus, but then, as Jesus' disciples, it also comes *through* us. So, God's Kingdom requires receptivity on our part, an openness, a true desire for more of God. But hear the Good News! God's Kingdom includes you! You become part of God's family! God made us with ears, both physical on our heads, and spiritual ears on our souls. And we hear Jesus saying, "You who have ears, *listen!*"

I'm going to ask Pastor Andrew to come and lead us in a spiritual listening exercise. That's a fancy way of talking about Holy Communion. But really, that's what it is. We will hear Jesus' invitation spoken clearly and plainly. Jesus offers us more of God's Kingdom. Brothers and sisters in Christ: we who have ears, let's hear!

Pastor Andrew?

**PRAYERS, HOLY COMMUNION -Pastor Andrew**

Prayer of Confession  
 Words of Assurance  
 Introduction  
 The Great Thanksgiving  
 Words of Institution  
 Receiving of the elements  
 Prayer  
 Offering

**[Live Worship Only] CLOSING SONG: *The Way* -Sanctify****OFFERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS -Pastors Andrew (recording), David (live)**

Wednesday night: No meal, youth group or Echo (spring break)  
 Some grow groups are meeting and Young Adult Game Night (with pizza)  
 Next Sunday's message: "Miracle! Demons and Death"  
 Read ahead: Luke 8:26-56

**MEMORY VERSE -Pastors Andrew (recording), David (live)**

"Therefore consider carefully how you listen." Luke 8:18a

**BENEDICTION -Pastors Andrew (recording), David (live)****POSTLUDE -Pastors Andrew (recording), David (live)**