

## Interactive lesson



*picture from MMMS personal photo*

Have you ever been camping? <Let them respond>

What do you sleep in when camping? <Let them respond>

How safe are you in a tent? <Let them respond>

You can see here Keven adjusting the tarp over our old pop-up camper. Would you say our camping set up was pretty secure? <Let them respond>

How does it compare to the safety of a house?  
<Let them respond; protection vs weather, animals>

So for true security, it is better to trust in a house with solid walls, locks, and neighbors we know.

What about for life problems? To whom do you turn?  
<Let them respond>

How comprehensively can they help you?  
<Let them respond>

Would you trust the government to take good care of you? <Let them respond>

Have you ever had anyone show up unexpectedly, to help you, that you called a “Godsend”?  
<Let them respond>

For true help with life problems, it is best to trust in our Savior, to protect us. God’s grace covers us

when we seek the Lord. The Holy Spirit may move through others to help us, and through us to help others. May we always rest secure in the love of God, comfortable and safe in Christian community.

## Gospel lesson

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus is warned of danger to Himself. Listen to hear for whom He is worried.



*picture from*

<https://havenlight.com/products/i-would-gather-thee-by-liz-lemon-swindle?variant=41851162427556>;

*credit: Liz Lemon Swindle*

**Luke 13:31-35**

(NRSV)

<sup>31</sup>At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you."

<sup>32</sup>He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work.

<sup>33</sup>Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.'

<sup>34</sup>Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together

as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

<sup>35</sup>See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

*The word of God for the people of God*

<Hymn "The Care the Eagle Gives Her Young" UMH #118>

## Message: Under the Wings



pictures from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/gathered-up-in-jesus>

Please pray with me?

Patient Savior, as we take time now to further consider today's scriptures, please

- speak Your words through my mouth,
- open our ears to hear Your message, and
- abide in our hearts,

That we may be gathered closer to You, under the wings of Your love. Amen.



*picture from*

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/gathered-up-in-jesus/second-sunday-in-lent-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes/second-sunday-in-lent-year-c-graphics>

We continue our Lenten series with “Under the Wings.”

“When Jesus compares himself to a mother hen, the door is open for finding ways to communicate the grace and love that we need to confess and repent.

We can remember together that no matter how far short it seems like we fall, how far we lag behind on the discipleship path, God has not given up on us; there is still a place for us at the table of the Lord.

Let our prayers, even the prayers of confession, be full of thanksgiving for forgiveness and for grace. Let us be inspired to love more, to risk more, to reach out more, to include more.”



*picture from MMMS personal photo*

When I was last in California, I rented a car. At the desk where I had to pick up the keys, the personable clerk asked me, “What are you here for?” I replied, “My mother is dying; I am trying to get to her in time to say goodbye.”

The clerk paused, visibly taken aback. He commented, “Wow, I thought I was having a rough day, but that changes my perspective.”

Sometimes we need perspective changes. Recently I have seen posts on social media complaining about the increase in gas prices. At least we have fuel, cars to drive, and intact roads. Many people in Ukraine do not. I am willing to pay a little more in the hope that the war might end sooner, that fewer people in the world get bombed or oppressed.

How much we go about our days, taking for granted our security, grouching about things that are of little consequence? How blessed are we, that we do not even realize the protections afforded to us?

[Someone identified as Lisa K. included this reminder in a Facebook post:](#)

I crawled into a warm bed last night & I know where I'm sleeping tonight. There is a roof over my head & the house is warm. The fridge & cupboards have food. My pups are safe , fed, & happy. I turn on the tap & have clean water.

I am blessed. If I have to take less trips, walk a bit further, so be it. We are luckier than most people that we share this world with.

The psalmist today spoke about enemies assailing, and being able to take shelter in the Lord's tent. What wonderful security we have, to be able to turn to the Lord when we feel our lives are threatened!



picture from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/yo-abram-promise/>

Yet God loves us even more than that. When Abram spoke with the Lord about not yet having children, God did not just reassure Abram about having a son; the stars in the sky were used as a visual to represent how many offspring he would have.

Then, to reassure Abram about the land being given to him, God performed a covenant ritual with Abram, one that by tradition could not be broken except by death. Did you notice the theophany of the smoking pot and flaming torch - miniature versions of the pillars of smoke and fire by which Abram's descendants were led through the desert, to also proclaim a covenant at Mount Sinai?

God's love and protection stayed with the people even as they became less faithful under the kings, even through the exile, even until they again returned to the promised land and still lost direction in faith.

Jesus spoke to that, when he bewailed Jerusalem. He was not worried about Herod trying to kill Him, nor was He willing to turn aside from the painful task ahead. Instead, He lived secure in God's protection and demonstrated God's love for the people.



picture from <https://havenlight.com/products/i-would-gather-thee-by-liz-lemon-swindle?variant=41851162427556>;  
credit: Liz Lemon Swindle

Jesus's concern was for their safety and well-being, despite their rejection of Him: "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, **and you were not willing!**"

People often display self-destructive behaviors instead of healthy ones. Paul wrote to the Philippians about those who live as enemies of the cross: their god is the belly, their glory is in their shame, and their minds are set on earthly things. Yet our loving God, our Creator, will transform our humiliation into glory - if we just let Him! We need to trust in Jesus.

Knowing God's grace supports and protects us, we can reach out in love to others. We can invite them into the nest of grace. Your homework for this week is to trust in God enough to talk to someone else about

Him, and to invite them to come to church with you so that they can learn more about our awesome Savior.

Let us now confess in prayer to our glorious God.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Pastor: O God, whose loving knows no ending, still you long to gather us under your wings. For the words of hatred we have spoken and the words of love we have withheld:

People: O God, forgive us and gather us under your wings of mercy.

Pastor: For the walls we have built up and the barriers we have refused to take down,

People: O God, forgive us and gather us under your wings of mercy.

Pastor: For the greed that makes us frantic and the gifts we pass by without seeing,

People: O God, forgive us and gather us under your wings of mercy.

Pastor: For what we have done and for what we have left undone,

People: O God, forgive us and gather us under your wings of mercy. Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON:** Sisters and brothers, God's promise of mercy is sure: you are forgiven and loved as you are. Come now and rest under God's sheltering wings and know that you are home.

**AFFIRMATION FROM ROMANS 8:35, 37-39 UMH #887**



*Leader:*

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?  
Shall tribulation or distress,  
or persecution or famine,  
or nakedness or peril or sword?

*People:*

No! In all things we are more than conquerors  
through the One who loved us.  
We are sure that neither death nor life,  
nor angels, nor principalities,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.

*<Doxology>**<Offertory / Pastoral Prayer>*

Let us pray:

Generous God, as we travel this Lenten journey, allow  
us to walk beside Jesus as he makes his journey into  
Jerusalem.

As we offer our gifts this morning, may it be our way  
of saying we won't turn away from the problems and  
conflicts of this world; but like Jesus, we will  
walk toward them.

All we take for the journey is the compassion, mercy, and sacrifice that he carried—moving toward what waited in the Holy City.

We journey in Christ's steps and pray in Christ's holy name.

- Lord, please help the people of Ukraine who journey in exile from their homes due to the war.
- Send Your Spirit to address world/social problems
  - end bigotry, dismantle racism, reform systems persist
  - bring world peace
- Guide our Leaders – local, state, federal, international, and especially of Your church.
- Hold those who cannot be with us in Your loving embrace until we see them again.
  - Family far off
  - Travelers
- Lord, please help {these members of the body of Christ whom we lift up} with Your healing touch and comfort:
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- Thanks for

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All these things we pray as You taught us to pray:  
<Lord's Prayer>

<Hymn "O Holy Spirit, Root of Life" TFWS #2121>

<Benediction>



background picture from  
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/gathered-up-in-jesus/second-sunday-in-lent-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes/second-sunday-in-lent-year-c-graphics>

Like an eagle lifting up her weary children,  
God will carry you.  
Like a mother hen gathering her brood,  
Jesus Christ will shelter you.  
"Like the murmur of the dove's song,"  
the Holy Spirit will dwell with you.  
Do not be afraid. Go forth in God's peace. Amen.