

Making God's Dream Our Dream
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Over the last three weeks, we've been talking about the theme of journey. Jeff talked about where we have been as a church. Last week, I tried to help us reflect on where we are right now. And today, we're imagining where we might go. But let me clarify what I don't mean by that. You might have come here thinking that I'm going to tell you what we're going to do in the next two-three years, maybe unveil a new mission statement, give you the action plan.

That's not what today is. That's the work of our Visioning process. That's something we will all decide together.

But instead, I want to invite you to be a prophet for today.

You know, when I was a kid, maybe the ages of a lot of the kids who are leading us today, and even in my early adult years, I thought a prophet was kind of like a fortune teller. I thought they were people who could tell us what was going to happen in the future...sort of like looking through a crystal ball.

But that's not really who prophets are. They don't have some sort of magic power that lets them see exactly what is going to happen in the future.

Rather, prophets are dreamers. They are able to imagine what God's dream for the world might be. In fact, our country's most famous prophet talked about dreaming in his most famous speech – do you know what it is?

Yeah, it's Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech."

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character...

I have a dream that little Black boys and Black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today.

Do you recognize those words?

But you see, Martin Luther King was not just telling us his dream. I think he was telling us God's dream for our nation. That's the thing about prophets. That are able to make God's dream, their dream too.

One of the greatest dreamers in our Bible is the prophet Isaiah. I mean he had some amazing dreams about who we might become as a people.

Listen to this one:

*Isaiah 2: 4 -- God shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.*

Wow! Isaiah is saying that God's dream is a world where there's no more war. Did you hear that. They'll turn their swords into farming tools – a weapon of death turned into something that brings food, that brings life.

God dreams of a world of peace. How can we make God's dream, our dream?

Or there's this one:

*Isaiah 11: 6 -- The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed^[b] together,
and a little child shall lead them.*

A wolf and lamb, a calf and lion lying down together. Imagine that. Wolves try to kill lambs. Lions try to kill calves, but in God's dream, they are no longer enemies. God dreams of a world where enemies become friends, where people who are angry and bitter and filled with hate towards each other, choose to forgive one another, choose to pursue the path of love over the path of hatred.

God dreams of a world of reconciliation. How can we make God's dream, our dream?

And I have one more for you. Listen to this one.

Isaiah 58: 6-8a -- Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn.

God dreams of a world of justice, a world where everyone is treated fairly, a world where the poor have everything they need.

God dreams of a world where people like us share what we have with those in need and where we try to fix any part of our society that harms others. How can we make God's dream, our dream?

Friends, I think God is calling us to dream a little bit right now, or more specifically, I think God is calling us to try to imagine what God's dream for us might be and then make that dream our own. So we're going to end this sermon by doing something a little bit different. On your pews are some pieces of construction paper and markers. Matthew's going to play a little music for us and while he plays I want you to imagine what God's dream for this world is right now and how we as a faith community might make that dream our own. What two or three words stand out to you as you dream? Right those words on the paper. Later in the service, when the offering baskets come around, simply place that paper in the basket. In the following weeks in Sunday school, our kids are going to do a bit of an art project by combining all of these words, our dreams, into a collage as together we strive to make God's dream our own.

Friends, thank you for dreaming a little today. And remember, if the words you put on that paper seem too good to be true, if your dream seems impossible, then it's probably close to what God is dreaming for us. Because God has the long history of giving us dreams that seem like they'll never come to be...until they do. Amen.