



# United Methodist Church of the Pines



715-356-3041

Email: [office@umchurchofthepines.org](mailto:office@umchurchofthepines.org)

Website: [www.umchurchofthepines.org](http://www.umchurchofthepines.org)

[www.facebook.com/churchofthepines](https://www.facebook.com/churchofthepines)

415 Chippewa Street, Minocqua, WI

Mailing: P.O. Box 144

Minocqua, WI 54548



January 24 - 30, 2021

## Scripture Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

*Those who walk with God will always reach their destination. - Anonymous*

Actor Tom Cruise is known for the running he does in his movies. Reportedly, he does not permit anyone to run *with* him in his running scenes. One study added up all the running scenes in his movies and discovered that Cruise is running more than 20 minutes in his movies — nothing but running.

In today's reading, we encounter another runner. His name is Jonah. A well-known division of this book in the Bible emphasizes all the running Jonah does.

In chapter 1, Jonah is running *from* God.

In chapter 2, Jonah is running *to* God.

In chapter 3, Jonah is running *with* God.

In chapter 4, Jonah is running *ahead* of God.

Here is a brief reminder of the plotline for the amazing story of Jonah.

God wants Jonah to go to Nineveh, the capital of Israel's archenemy, Assyria. God wants Jonah to preach judgment.

Jonah says that God has the wrong guy, and he runs. He boards a ship and tries to hide. A storm comes, and Jonah knows that he is to blame, and he is tossed overboard and a big fish swallows him whole, like a smaller fish swallows a minnow. But, the fish doesn't like Jonah in his stomach and hurls him onto a beach.

Now, Jonah is willing to preach, and he is astonished when Nineveh repents. He is more than astonished; he is *angry*. Why? Because God relents and withholds judgment. Jonah hoped that Israel's enemy would be destroyed. He crawls under a gourd bush for shade from the heat, but the bush dies, and Jonah complains.

Then, God gives Jonah the scolding he deserves. God says: "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush? ... You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

Perhaps we're not doing any running of any kind anymore. But today, even if we cannot literally run or walk, let's try to run *to* God and run *with* God in our hearts and minds!

—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Loving God, may I keep in step with you today. Amen.*

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CONNECTIONS

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

**Sunday:** Job 1-4

**Monday:** Job 5-7

**Tuesday:** Job 8-10

**Wednesday:** Job 11-13

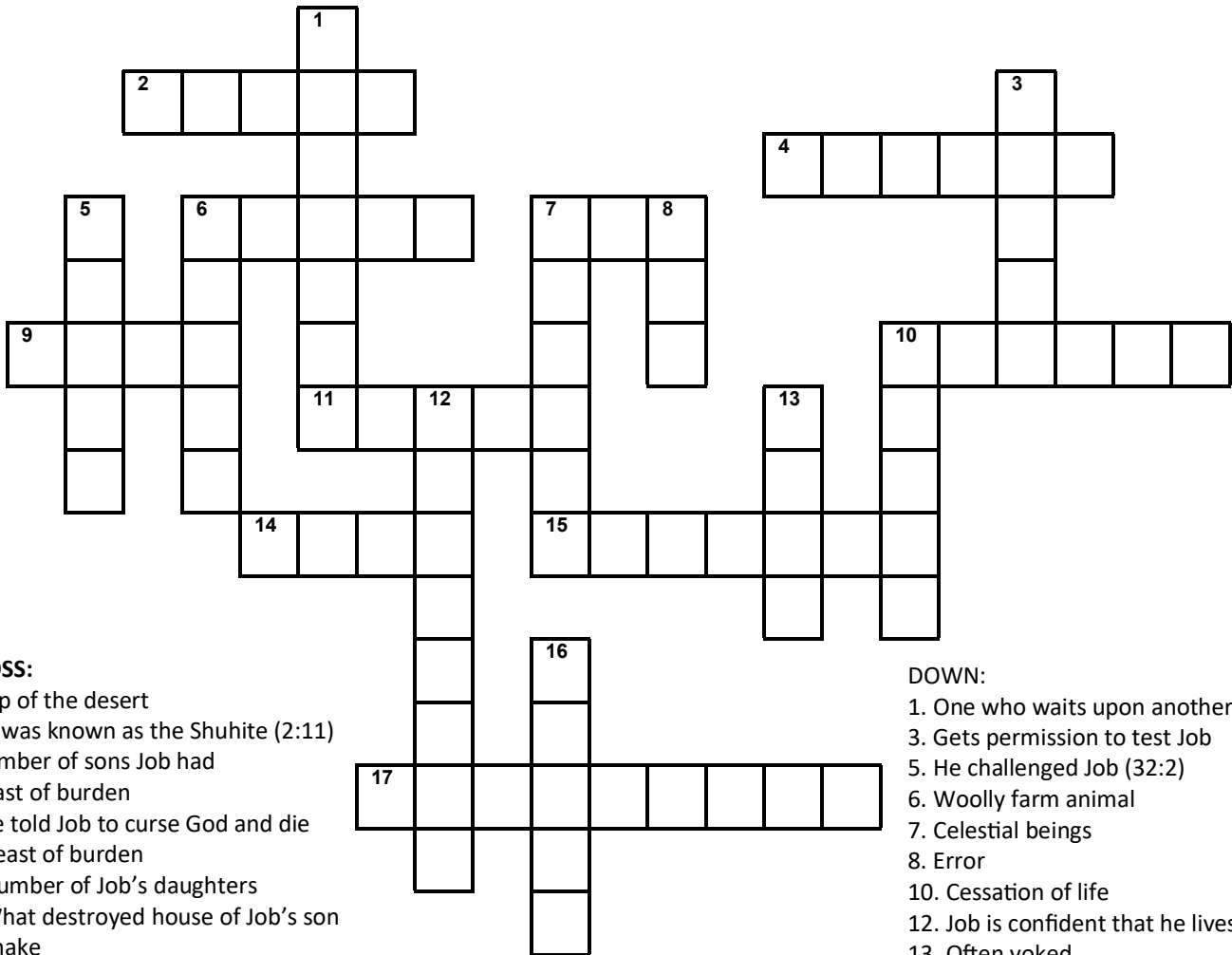
**Thursday:** Job 14-17

**Friday:** Job 18-20

**Saturday:** Psalms 7-9

## THE PATIENCE OF JOB

In our readings this week, we begin the story of Job. He was a man who had everything, and then lost everything. Although tempted to abandon his faith in God, he didn't. All the clues in this crossword puzzle come from the book of Job. Some references are provided.



### ACROSS:

2. Ship of the desert
4. He was known as the Shuhite (2:11)
6. Number of sons Job had
7. Beast of burden
9. She told Job to curse God and die
10. Beast of burden
11. Number of Job's daughters
14. What destroyed house of Job's son
15. Snake
17. Large sea creature (41:1)

### DOWN:

1. One who waits upon another
3. Gets permission to test Job
5. He challenged Job (32:2)
6. Woolly farm animal
7. Celestial beings
8. Error
10. Cessation of life
12. Job is confident that he lives (19:25)
13. Often yoked
16. Open sores

JOB IS TESTED



**ANSWERS — Across:**  
 2. camel; 4. Bildad; 6. seven;  
 7. ass; 9. wife; 10. donkey;  
 11. three; 14. wind;  
 15. serpent; 17. Leviathan.  
**Down:** 1. servant; 3. Satan;  
 5. Elihu; 6. sheep;  
 7. angels; 8. sin; 10. death;  
 12. Redeemer; 13. oxen;  
 16. boils.

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## Community Connections

As we continue in the new year, we find ourselves still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and we still need to commit to wearing face masks, practice social distancing, washing our hands and refraining from being in groups of people. It's been challenging for everyone! Staying connected with you is very important to our Church of the Pines' congregation.

And, one of the ways to do this is through our "Community Connections." There are scripture readings, prayers, devotionals, and activities, which can be mailed or emailed. It's easy to subscribe and it's FREE! If you know of someone who would like to subscribe to Community Connections, have them call Merry at 715-356-3041 or email her at [office@umchurchofthepines.org](mailto:office@umchurchofthepines.org).

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## Worship with us from HOME

If you haven't attended Church of the Pines' worship services on Facebook on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. **YOU ARE INVITED!**


If you have a Facebook page on the internet, go to <https://www.facebook.com/churchofthepines/live/> just prior to 10:00 a.m.

If you don't have Facebook, you can watch a video after the service ends by going to our church website at [www.umchurchofthepines.org](http://www.umchurchofthepines.org) and clicking on "Worship Service Videos" and then click on date of the service.

Pastor Mark Gilbert also leads a Prayer Service on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. You can participate by going to the same sites as listed above for Sunday worship.

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You can also listen to Church of the Pines Sunday sermons by using your phone. It's simple....just use your telephone and call 1-715-203-1990 and listen to the most recent sermon. It's easy...and you can listen any time and at your convenience.



Call 1-715-203-1990  
to hear our latest sermon

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If you have a need and would like to be lifted in prayer, please call Church of the Pines at 715-356-3041 or email [office@umchurchofthepines.org](mailto:office@umchurchofthepines.org). and we will pray for you.



## Need Prayer?

If you are alone or you know someone who is isolated and could use a friend, let us know and we can connect you with one of our Community Care Calling Crew members who will give you a call of encouragement and support. Call Merry at 715-356-3041 or email at [office@umchurchofthepines.org](mailto:office@umchurchofthepines.org) for more information.