



Lent 2

February 25, 2018

Me & You & the Generations after You

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

Focus statement: God's covenants and promises are not just for our ancestors, or for us, but also for our descendants. Although God is able to fulfill what has been promised, our human ways sometimes get in the way. What might be coming between Me (God) and You (the people), or between you and your descendants?

Summary statement for bulletin: Between Me & You and generation after generation, God's promise and God's love grow longer.

Song suggestions

HWB 20 Come and See

HWB 162 The God of Abraham Praise

HWB 616 Children of the Heavenly Father

STJ 2 Hamba nathi (Come, Walk with Us)

STJ 29 You Are All We Have

STJ 44 The Love of God

God's Love Is for Everybody by Bryan Moyer Suderman

I Will Bless You by Bryan Moyer Suderman

Between Me & You theme song

Between me and you,
and generations to come after you,
I have established a covenant true,
I choose to be there with you.

Call to worship

Leader: Come, sons and daughters of Abraham and Sarah, nations born of barren lands,
you who stand here because of promises fulfilled, come and worship your God.

People: **We were born through the faith of our ancestors, just as our faith will give life to future generations;
even as we hope against hope, we come to worship our God.**

Leader: Welcome home, children of God. Welcome to this house of God.

Confession

God of our ancestors and our descendants,
promising Abraham and Sarah children at their age just seems mean.
For them to believe that promise sounds foolish—
almost as foolish as expecting that same faithfulness from us.
That was then, this is now.

We are not used to waiting.
If something we want takes too long, we itch to move on to the next thing, even when waiting is important.

Forgive us.
Forgive our impatience and refusal to believe in what we cannot see.
Build in us the willingness to hope against hope.
Help us to value and contribute to a future yet unseen.
Instill in us a faith to inspire future generations.



Words of assurance

I will always keep the promise I have made to you and your descendants,
because I am your God and their God.

Between Me & You enactment (children's feature)

Supplies: several scarves

Action and noticing

- As in week 1, stretch out a scarf between you and a volunteer, with each of you holding one end of the scarf.
- Ask: Do you see how the scarf is stretched out between me and you?
- Notice how long it is.
- Tie another scarf to the end of the first scarf. Notice the new length.
- Keep tying on more scarves to make a very long string of scarves, involving more volunteers to hold the now much longer scarf chain.
- Notice how long it is now!

Wondering

- I wonder how long we could make this chain of scarves.
- Imagine if this chain of scarves just went on and on and on.
- Do you remember how big the scarf was last week (and we imagined it even bigger)? We talked about how God's love is *so* big—for me, for you, and all the creatures too.
- Now look at how *loooooong* the scarf is. God's love is like that! God's promises are like that! They are for a *loooooong* time! For me, and you, and future generations too! They are for your children, and their children, and their children—and all children!

Responding through song: "For Me, For You"

God's promises are for me, for you, your children's children too!

God's love is for me, for you, your children's children too!

Sermon seeds

Between

Covenant between God and Abraham (Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16)

Peter/Satan between Jesus and his mission (Mark 8:31-38)

Self between us and following Jesus

- Although God's vast, inclusive covenant with Noah remains, this week's covenant with Abraham narrows in focus to one family in order to flesh out how and through whom it will unfold. The covenant extends from generation to generation.
- The Romans text declares Abraham the father of all of us who share in Abraham's faith. God's covenant is radically inclusive, and through faith anyone can find themselves a son or daughter of the "father of many nations."
- Peter tries to get between Jesus and his peculiar good news of dying. When do we get in the way of Jesus' good news or try to bypass the challenging reality of suffering being part of that good news?

Benediction

You may choose to speak this benediction to one another by echoing: after the leader reads each line, the congregation repeats it.

We are people of God.
We go in God's love
to extend God's love
and live God's promise.