

## Week 2: “Hosea: Forever God” (excerpts from 1–2, 11, and 14 )

Leaning into LENT

### Dwelling in the Word

1. Prayerfully read through Hosea 11:1-11 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

### Beginning the Conversation

1. Put yourself in Hosea’s shoes. His wife, Gomer, has never reciprocated his love for her. How would you respond to a spouse who treated you like Gomer treated Hosea? Are you treating God that way?

### Digging Deeper

1. Review Hosea 1 and 2. The prophets often used “sign acts” to get their message across. No “sign act” was as controversial than Hosea marrying a “promiscuous woman” (Hebrew *zenunim*, some translate it as prostitute) and then have three children with her to confront Israel with the extent of their idolatry and covenant breaking. What does this say about the importance of God’s message to the people? To us?
2. Names are important in the book of Hosea. “Gomer” means “to bring to an end”; “Jezreel” means “God scatters”; “Lo-Ruhamah” means “no pity”; and “Lo-Ammi” means “not my people.” All these names suggest God’s judgment on the Northern Kingdom because of their unfaithfulness. In contrast, the name “Hosea” means “he [Yahweh] saves.” Read Hosea 2:14, 19-23. How does God respond to Israel’s unfaithfulness?
3. Read Hosea 11:1-11. How is the relationship between Yahweh and Israel described? What is Yahweh’s response to Israel’s unfaithfulness? What do you think the meaning of verse 9 is: “I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not a human” (i.e., in what way are Yahweh’s actions not like human actions in regard to relationships?).
4. Read Hosea 14:1-8. What would Yahweh’s response be to Israel’s repentance? How does this vision of human flourishing give hope?
5. Hosea 14:9 concludes the book of Hosea with an encouragement to wisdom. If the book of Hosea is to be understood as an encouragement to walk in the ways of Yahweh, how would we understand that today?
6. It’s easy to read the prophets and feel like a failure, like we can never measure up to God’s standard of faithfulness. The truth is, we can’t (read Romans 3:10-12). But the good news of the gospel is that God became human in the person of Jesus and Jesus lived a perfectly faithful life on our behalf. If the necessary faithfulness in our relationship with God is accomplished by Jesus, then what responsibility do we have in the relationship now? How does that change how we understand the good work that God wants to do in our lives through the power of his Holy Spirit?

### Living it Out

1. What are some practical ways to evaluate whether and how you are growing in your relationship with God? Is growth in your relationship with God inevitable because it is the work of the Spirit? How might other Christ followers help you with the growth? How might you help other Christ followers grow in their relationship with God?

# Hosea: Forever God

excerpts from Hosea 1–2, 11, and 14

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Second Sunday of Lent (March 16, 2025)  
Greenfield Community Church

Leaning into **LENT**

## The Minor Prophets

Event	Super Power	Prophets
Fall of Israel (722 BC)	Assyria	<b>Hosea</b> , Amos, Micah
Exile of Judah (587 BC)	Babylonia	Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakuk, Obadiah
Return (538 BC)	Persia	Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi Joel* and Jonah*

## The Book of Hosea

Reading Hosea leads to questions:

- Why is it so harsh? So graphic?
- Who are all these people?
- What does all of this mean?
- Why does it even matter?

## The Message of Hosea

Hosea teaches us who God was in the past and still is today:

- **Faithful** (even to the faithless)
- **Fiercely loving** (for people's flourishing)
- **Forgiving** (to the repentant)



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## The Message of Hosea

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*Forever God, forever the same.*



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## Evocative Imagery

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2 analogies that are used to represent Israel's relationship to God:

- Marriage relationship
- Familial relationship

Both are intimate & committed



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## Faithful (even to the unfaithful)

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Hosea 1:1-10; 2:8-9, 14, 19-23 (NIV)

Gomer	<b>Broken</b> intimacy: covenant unfaithfulness	2:19-20	<b>Renewed</b> intimacy: renewed marriage
Lo-Ruhamah (No-Pity)	<b>Broken</b> compassion: no pity	2:23a	<b>Renewed</b> compassion on Lo-Ruhamah
Lo-Ammi (Not my People)	<b>Broken</b> bonds: loss of family bonds	2:23b	<b>Renewed</b> familiarity: Lo-Ammi becomes "My people"



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## Fiercely loving (for flourishing)

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Hosea 11:1-9

**Ephraim = Israel = Jacob**

"When Israel was a young man, I loved him like a son, and I summoned my son out of Egypt" (11:1).

"Yet it was I who led Ephraim; I took them by the arm, but they did not acknowledge that I had healed them" (11:3).



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## Fiercely loving (for flourishing)

*“How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? (11:8).*

*“Because I am God, and not man—the Holy One among you—I will **not** come in wrath! (11:9).*



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## Forgiving (to the repentant)

Repentance -> Forgiveness -> Flourishing

*“Return, Israel, to the Lord your God. Your sins have been your downfall! Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to him: ‘Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips. Assyria cannot save us; we **will not** mount warhorses. We will **never again** say “Our gods” to what our own hands have made, for in you the fatherless find compassion’” (14:1-3).*



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## Forgiving (to the repentant)

*“I will **heal** their waywardness and **love** them freely, for my anger has turned away from them. I will be like the dew to Israel; he will **blossom like a lily. Like a cedar** of Lebanon he will send down his roots; his young shoots will grow. His **splendour will be like an olive tree**, his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon. People will dwell again in his shade; they will **flourish** like the **grain**, they will **blossom like the vine**—Israel’s fame will be like the wine of Lebanon.*

*Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? I will answer him and care for him. I am like a **flourishing juniper**; your **fruitfulness comes from me**” (14:4-8).*



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## Forgiving (to the repentant)

*“Who is wise? Let them realize these things. Who is discerning? Let them understand. **The ways of the Lord are right; the righteous walk in them,** but the rebellious stumble in them” (14:9).*



## Implications

Hosea teaches us who God was to the Israelites:

- Faithful** → So he will be faithful to us when we are not.
- Fiercely loving** → So we can trust that he is working towards our flourishing even when we go through hard times.
- Forgiving** → So we can genuinely repent without fear because we know he will forgive and renew us.



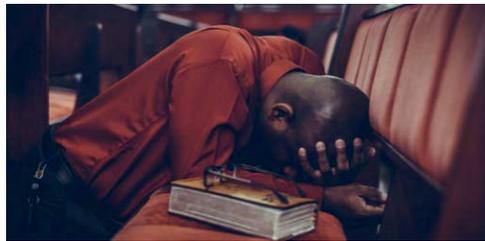
## Implications

*Forever God... towards individuals  
and communities*



## How then shall we live?

### Turn & Repent



“But God is faithful and fair. If we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure” (1John 1:9, NIRV).