**Showers to Flowers** (graphic)

In 2020, there were an estimated 52.9 million adults aged 18 or older in the United States with mental illness. This number represented 21.0% of all U.S. adults.

*\*\** [*https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness*](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness) *\*\*Make this a footnote on the slide*

Young adults aged 18-25 years had the highest prevalence of AMI (30.6%) compared to adults aged 26-49 years (25.3%) and aged 50 and older (14.5%).

*\*\** [*https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness*](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness) *\*\*Make this a footnote on the slide*

Causes of mental illness: **Biological**

Causes of mental illness: **Phycological**

Causes of mental illness: **Environmental**

**All** mental health issues happen because we live in a **broken world**.

Struggling with your mental health **does not make you weaker** than others or more **deserving** of **hardships**.

Mental health treatment **should include** a medical approach.

As a church we must approach mental illness in the same way God would approach any brokenness: with **grace and mercy.**

God can **miraculously heal** all physical and mental needs.

**Dark Days**

(Psalm 88) *\*page 406*

“LORD, **you are the God who saves me**; day and night I cry out to you.

May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry.

**I am overwhelmed with troubles and my life draws near to death**.

I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like one without strength.

I am set apart with the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave, whom you remember no more, who are cut off from your care.

You have put me in the lowest pit, in the **darkest** depths.

Your wrath lies heavily on me; you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.

You have taken from me my closest friends and have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape;

my eyes are dim with grief. I call to you, LORD, every day; I spread out my hands to you.

Do you show your wonders to the dead? Do their spirits rise up and praise you?

Is your love declared in the grave, your faithfulness in Destruction?

Are your wonders known in the place of **darkness**, or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

But I cry to you for help, LORD; in the morning my prayer comes before you.

**Why, LORD, do you reject me and hide your face from me?**

From my youth I have suffered and been close to death; I have borne your terrors and am in despair.

Your wrath has swept over me; your terrors have destroyed me.

All day long they surround me like a flood; they have completely engulfed me.

You have taken from me friend and neighbor— **darkness is my closest friend**.”

1. Darkness can last a **long time**.

If **outwardly** you are experiencing darkness but **inwardly** you are experiencing the love of God, **you’re going to make it**.

1. Darkness can teach us the **grace of God**.

God is not your God because you have it all together. God is your God because **he’s the God of grace.**

1. Darkness is a great place to become a **person of greatness**.

When you **pray to God** when you **don’t feel God** it builds a strength and **greatness within you.**

1. Darkness is ultimately **temporary**.

Jesus experienced **darkness as his only friend** so that in **your darkness** you can know that **Jesus is your friend**.