

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

Long Green and Kanawha Rds., near Glen Arm, MD

July 10, 2016

Worship 10:00 am                      Sunday School 11:10 am

**Large print hymnals are available                      see an usher**

This room is equipped with a sound loop for the hearing impaired

## Communion

*"Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long." (Psalm 25:4-5)*

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am)                      "Awake, arise..."                      56

Announcements

Prelude                      "Allegro"                      Franck

Scripture as Call                      Colossians 1:1-14 (*adapted*)

\*Hymn                      "We praise thee, O God"                      99

\*Opening Prayer

Scripture as Commandment                      Deuteronomy 30:9-14  
(*Common English Bible*)

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory                      "Sweet Hour of Prayer"                      Camil van Hulse  
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

Scripture as Confession                      Psalm 25:1-10                      (insert)

Sharing a joy, a concern, a word of testimony or praise  
(please be brief, and aware of God's listening presence)

Hymn                      "Break thou the bread of life"                      360

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture as Story                      Luke 10:25-37

Message                      "Mercy revealed"

Invitation                      (*Deacons come forward to serve*)

Hymn                      "I heard the voice of Jesus say"                      493

Unison Prayer                      790

Eating Together - Remember!

Hymn                      "Seed, scattered and sown"                      454

Drinking Together - Remember!

\*Hymn                      "Sent forth by God's blessing"                      478

\*Benediction

\*Postlude                      "I Am Trusting Thee"                      Deitrich

\* Rise in body or in spirit  
\* \* \* \* \*

# Scripture as Call

Colossians 1:1-14 (*adapted*)

We begin worship this morning with the first 14 verses of Paul's letter to the church in Colossae. Instead of hearing these words speaking to a group of long-ago believers located in a strange sounding town in a land far distant from our own, I encourage you to listen as if this letter was addressed to us. To that end, a few words (two, to be exact) have been altered, so that we might adapt this scripture into an invitation to us, to step into the call of Christ here and now. May these words awaken us, that we might arise to new life this very hour, as if we were stepping out of the waters of baptism, or exiting the empty tomb. Be called forth by God. Listen!

\* \* \* \* \*

(*From*) <sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, <sup>2</sup> To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in *Long Green Valley*:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

<sup>3</sup> In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of

the truth, the gospel <sup>6</sup> that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. <sup>7</sup> This you learned from *Pete*, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, <sup>8</sup> and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup> For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup> May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup> He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.\*

(*Pause to indicate scripture is completed, then*)

Rise, now, in body or spirit,  
and let us together sing #99:  
“We praise thee, O God”

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# Opening Prayer

O Lord, our God,  
who was before all beginnings,  
who will be present beyond all endings, and  
who is present with us today;

Grant us the sensitivity to  
sense your presence with us now,  
hear what you have to say,  
understand what we hear,  
receive what we most need, and  
love you as you deserve. Amen.

by Harold Z. Bomberger  
from *Living Waters*, #31, July 1996

Please be seated.

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## Scripture as Commandment

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

From the Torah, the commandments of God passed down through Moses, we hear this scripture from Deuteronomy. It is not so much a “do this” or “don’t do that” form of commandment. This word from God invites us to realize how near we are to the One from whom these words flow. Yes, the Lord is God, the Lord alone, and we are to have no other gods, nor graven images. And we are to treat each other with a “10 commandments” kind of respect. But these

are not impossible ideals far beyond our ability to understand or undertake. For the One we are to love with heart, soul, and might; the One who calls us to love our neighbor as our self, is as close to us as our very breath, and God’s word is engraved upon our heart. Listen to this scripture as a new kind of commandment.

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will help you succeed in everything you do—in your own fertility, your livestock’s offspring, and your land’s produce—everything will be great! Because the LORD will once again enjoy doing good things for you just as he enjoyed doing them for your ancestors, <sup>10</sup> and because you will be obeying the LORD your God’s voice, keeping his commandments and his regulations that are written in this Instruction scroll, and because you will have returned to the LORD your God with all your heart and all your being.

<sup>11</sup> This commandment that I’m giving you right now is definitely not too difficult for you. It isn’t unreachable. <sup>12</sup> It isn’t up in heaven somewhere so that you have to ask, “Who will go up for us to heaven and get it for us that we can hear it and do it?” <sup>13</sup> Nor is it across the ocean somewhere so that you have to ask, “Who will cross the ocean for us and get it for us that we can hear it and do it?” <sup>14</sup> Not at all! **The word is very close to you. It’s in your mouth and in your heart, waiting for you to do it.**

# Returning our Tithes and Offerings

God's commandments are not "*up in heaven somewhere*," nor "*across the ocean somewhere*" (Dt. 31:12-13). As the prophet Jeremiah promised, speaking for the Lord: "*I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*" (Jer. 31:33). Indeed, this "*word is very close to you. It's in your mouth and in your heart, waiting for you to do it*" (Dt. 30:14).

Speaking of "doing," now is the time to return to the Lord our monetary offerings for the ministries of this church. As you give, remember that this is not a payment for someone else to do what God wants for you to do. The desire and the ability are there – "***in your mouth and in your heart, waiting for you to do it.***" ... Amen. May it be so.

Ushers?

Offertory - "Sweet Hour of Prayer" - Camil van Hulse

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## Scripture as Confession

Psalms 25:1-10

The 25<sup>th</sup> Psalm is a prayer for guidance and deliverance. Within it lies words of confession. Please turn on your bulletin insert to the first ten verses of this Psalm, which we will read responsively, as a confession. Let's open our hearts in prayer as we read.

*(pause until all are ready)*

*One: To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

**All: O my God, in you I trust;**

*One: do not let me be put to shame;*

**All: do not let my enemies exult over me.**

*One: Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;*

**All: let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.**

*One: Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.*

**All: Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.**

*One: Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.*

**All: Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!**

*One: Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.*

**All: He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.**

*One: All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,*

**All: for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.**

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# Scripture as Story

Luke 10:25-37

We turn now to our gospel story for today. It is, perhaps, one of the most familiar of Jesus' parables. Like most good stories, we hear something new every time we truly listen to it. In this scripture, Jesus is asked an important question. Being the good rabbi, or teacher, that he was, Jesus first returned the question to the one who asked it, then he tossed out a story.

By the way, the word "parable" comes from the Latin word, "parabola," which means, "comparison." "*The kingdom of God is like...*" Jesus often said before launching into a parable. Now, in mathematical terms, a "parabola" is a curved line between two points equal distance from another line. Imagine, if you will, throwing a ball into the air. Instead of keeping your eyes on the ground after the toss, you focus on the arc this ball takes to get from one place to another. In a similar way, Jesus tossed out his stories, which make us pay attention to their arc. This "parabola" (if you will) flies over the question that led to the story, and ends up at a different place.

As you listen to what may be a very familiar scripture for you, pay fresh attention to the arc of the story Jesus tosses out. What words seem to grab you? Is there something new in this scripture to which you never really paid attention before? Or, maybe, something you once heard, but discarded, returns to your awareness. In other words, listen with new ears, and be prepared to share what you see and hear. I will begin my sermon with your responses. Understood? ... Well then, let all who have ears, hear...

<sup>25</sup> Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.

"Teacher," he said,

"what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> (*Jesus*) said to him,

"What is written in the law?

What do you read there?"

<sup>27</sup> (*The lawyer*) answered,

"You shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

and with all your soul,

and with all your strength,

and with all your mind;

and your neighbor as yourself."

<sup>28</sup> And (*Jesus*) said to him,

"You have given the right answer;  
do this, and you will live."

<sup>29</sup> But wanting to justify himself,

(*the lawyer*) asked Jesus,

"And who is my neighbor?"

<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied,

"A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho,

and fell into the hands of robbers,

who stripped him, beat him, and went away,  
leaving him half dead.

<sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road;  
and when he saw him,

he passed by on the other side.

<sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite,

when he came to the place and saw him,  
passed by on the other side.

- <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan while traveling came near him;  
and when he saw him,  
he was moved with pity.
- <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds,  
having poured oil and wine on them.  
Then he put him on his own animal,  
brought him to an inn,  
and took care of him.
- <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii,  
gave them to the innkeeper, and said,  
‘Take care of him;  
and when I come back,  
I will repay you  
whatever more you spend.’
- <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think,  
was a neighbor to the man  
who fell into the hands of the robbers?”
- <sup>37</sup> *(The lawyer)* said,  
“The one who showed him mercy.”  
Jesus said to him,  
“Go and do likewise.”

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## Invitation

*(the end of the sermon)*

And the Samaritan traveler saw the wounded man. Compassion led him to cross the road and provide care. Not only that, he took responsibility for this man’s recovery, taking him to a place of hospitality, the closest thing to a “hospital” in that day. Then he provided the means for this broken man’s long-term care, promising whatever it took to restore him to health.

We say it was God’s compassion that sent Jesus to cross over to our side of the road and care for us, not just in a quick fix sort of way, but long term. He took upon himself our wounds. That’s what real love does. “*This is my body*,” Jesus said as he broke the bread with his discipleship on the night before his crucifixion. *(move the bread from the worship center to the smaller table closer to the congregation)* His body was broken, like that of the man who “*fell into the hands of robbers*.”

“*This is my blood*,” Jesus also said as he lifted the cup on that long-ago night. *(move the juice from the worship center to the smaller table closer to the congregation)* The prophet Isaiah said of the suffering servant, “*he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed*” (53:5).

We come to a time of communion, a time to remember the arc of God’s salvation story. It’s not just a story about someone else, however. We have questions. “*What must I do to inherit eternal life?*” We speak what

we know. *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."* And we question further. *"Who is my neighbor?"* And the Lord parables us – we become part of the story.

We are the beaten and broken, whom Jesus came to heal. We are the hypocrites who look away. We are astounded by the most unlikely persons God chooses to use in treating the wounded of this world, the "Samaritans" we least expect to be the hands of Jesus. And, wonder of wonders, we even become part of the healing mission, being the once hated, now unexpected "Samaritan" to someone else. Yes, as we break bread and drink from the cup of Christ, we remember and partake in the arc of God's saving grace.

I have purposely moved the bread and cup from its usual place for 2 reasons. First, I do so to emphasize that I (your pastor) do not stand between you and God. I am not your mediator. Jesus is. And in the Holy Spirit, Christ is right smack dab in the middle of you all, tending your wounds, restoring you to wholeness, empowering you to walk with new life in your step, following Jesus.

My second reason for moving the bread and cup is so that I can accompany your singing on guitar, thus giving our organist the opportunity to simply participate in communion herself, instead of having to play. The deacons will do their job and pass the plates of bread, and later, the cup. As they do so, please turn in your hymnal to #493, and let us sing together, "I heard the voice of Jesus say."

## 493 I heard the voice of Jesus say

KINGSFOLD CMD

1 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Come un - to me and rest.  
 2 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Be - hold, I free - ly give  
 3 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "I am this dark world's light.

Lay down, O wea - ry one, lay down your head up - on my breast."  
 the liv - ing wa - ter, thirst - y one; stoop down and drink and live."  
 Look un - to me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."

I came to Je - sus as I was, so wea - ry, worn and sad.  
 I came to Je - sus, and I drank of that life - giv - ing stream.  
 I looked to Je - sus, and I found in him my star, my sun,

I found in him a rest - ing place, and he has made me glad.  
 My thirst was quenched, my soul re - vived, and now I live in him.  
 and in that light of life I'll walk till tra - v'ling days are done.

Text: Horatius Bonar, *Hymns Original and Selected*, 1846, alt.

Music: English folk melody, *English Country Songs*, 1893; adapted and harmonized by Ralph Vaughan Williams, *English Hymnal*, 1906  
 Harmonization copyright © Oxford University Press, London

# Unison Prayer

#790

Blessed are you, O God.

You set aside

this bread as a sign of your Son's broken body,

this cup as a sign of his shed blood,

this basin as a sign of his servanthood.

Through them you have made us partakers of Christ  
and of one another.

As we go forth, give us grace

to count others better than ourselves,

to love our enemies,

to seek peace.

Send the Spirit of truth to keep alive in us

what Jesus taught and did,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, forever and ever. AMEN

Hymnal #790

©1991, John D. Rempel

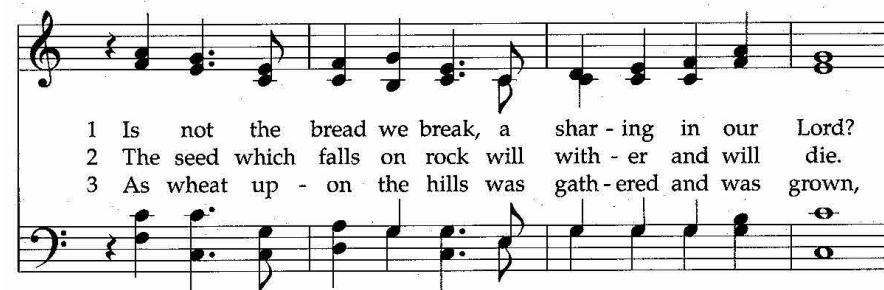
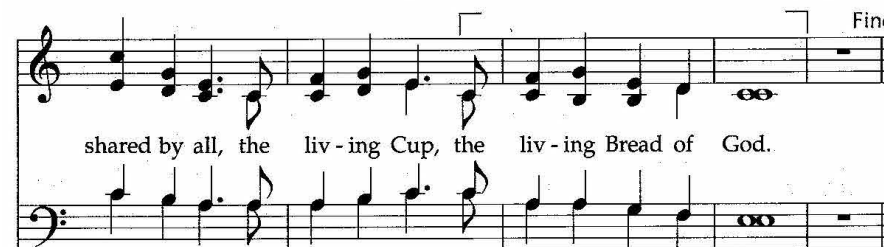
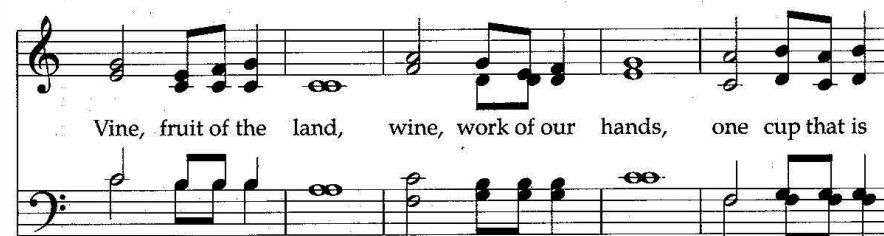
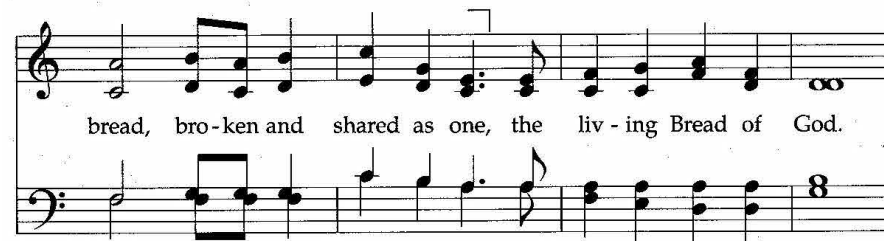
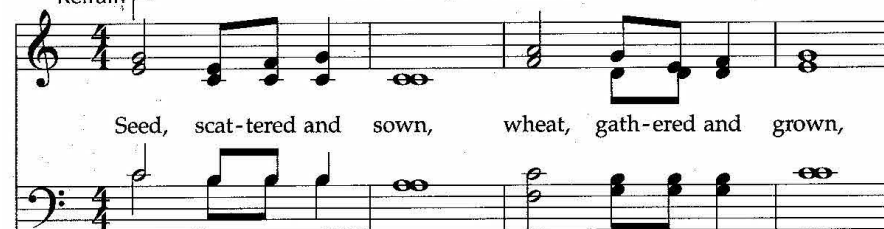
## Eating Together – Remember!

Let's eat the bread of life together ... and remember!

## 454 Seed, scattered and sown

Refrain

EKKLESIA Irregular with refrain



Text: based on Didache, 1 Corinthians 10, and Mark 4:3-6, Dan Feiten, 1987, *Gather*, 1988

Music: Dan Feiten, 1987, *Gather*, 1988

Text and Music copyright ©1987 Ekklesia Music

Harmonization copyright ©1990 Marilyn Houser Hamm

Is not the cup we bless, the blood of Christ out - poured?  
 The seed with - in good ground will flow - er and have life.  
 so may the church of God be gath - ered in - to one.

D.C.

## Drinking Together - Remember!

Let's drink from Christ's cup together ... and remember!

## 478 Sent forth by God's blessing

Unison

ASH GROVE 66 11. 66 11D

1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,  
 2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing

the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.  
 the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face.

The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed  
 Our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,  
 the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.  
 em - brac - ing the chil - dren of each tribe and race.

Harmony

The fruit of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls reach - ing,  
 With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us,

shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.  
 u - nite us as one in this life that we share.

Unison

His grace did in - vite us, his love shall u - nite us  
 Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing  
 to work for God's king - dom and an - swer his call.  
 give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westerdorf, People's Mass Book, 1954, alt.

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Music: Welsh folk melody, harmonized by Gerald H. Knight

Harmonization copyright ©The Royal School of Church Music

# Benediction

We are part of the arc  
of God's salvation story in Jesus Christ.  
May you be "parabled" this week –  
tossed by Jesus into your neighborhood  
to be a good neighbor to those around you.  
May the oil and grace of Christ  
continue to heal your wounds,  
so that through them  
you may become more compassionate  
in a world that is filled  
with hate and distrust.  
As you open yourselves  
to the grace and mercy  
God continues to show you,  
extend that grace and mercy  
to others around you.  
May God bless you along the way.