

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

August 7, 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

*“God brought Abraham outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.”*  
(Genesis 15:5-6)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am)                      “Amazing Grace!”                      143

Announcements

Prelude

A WORD to lead us into worship                      Psalm 33:12-22

\*A Prayer – “We wait for You”                      *(back of bulletin & on screen)*

\*Hymn                      “How Great Thou Art”                      *(insert & on screen)*

A WORD from “in the beginning”                      Genesis 15:1-16

A Responsive affirmation of faith                      710

A WORD of encouragement and warning                      Luke 12:32-40

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory                      (Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

A WORD on faith lived out                      Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

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

Hymn                      “Sweet hour of prayer”                      11

Pastoral Prayer

A Gospel WORD                      John 1:1-5

2016 Annual Conference Wrap-up Video

\*Hymn                      “This little light of mine”                      401

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

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

Today’s sermon and service will be posted on [www.lgvcob.org](http://www.lgvcob.org)  
and our church’s *facebook* page.

The first 3 hymns today were chosen by Stan Groves as favorites.

## **Church Calendar this week:**

Wednesday – Quilters – 9:30am

Sunday – Morning Praise – 9:45am

Worship – 10am

## **Long Green Church Directory**

**Phone 410-592-9300**

Ministers

The People of this congregation

Pastor

Pete Haynes (410-592-6343)

Secretary

Allison Funkhouser (443-840-0739)

Head Ushers

Organist

Kay Kearns

# A WORD to lead us into worship

Psalm 33:12-22

1 - A WORD to lead us into worship.

2 - Psalm 33:12-22. Listen.

*(pause)*

1 - Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,  
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

2 - The Lord looks down from heaven;  
he sees all humankind.

1 - From where he sits enthroned  
he watches all the inhabitants of the earth —

2 - he who fashions the hearts of them all,  
and observes all their deeds.

1 - A king is not saved by his great army;

2 - a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

1 - The war horse is a vain hope for victory,

2 - and by its great might it cannot save.

1 - Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,

2 - on those who hope in his steadfast love,

1 - to deliver their soul from death,

2 - and to keep them alive in famine.

1 - *(pause for emphasis)* **Our soul waits for the Lord;**

2 - he is our help and shield.

1 - Our heart is glad in him,

2 - because we trust in his holy name.

1 - Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,

2 - even as we hope in you.

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## "We wait for You"

- 1 - Led by a Psalm, we open ourselves to the Lord together in prayer.
  - 2 - The words are on both the back of your bulletin as well as on the screen.
    - 1 - We have added parts to make it a responsive prayer.
    - 2 - It begins with all our voices joined together as one.
  - 1 - On the bulletin, the parts we all read are in bold print.
  - 2 - We divide up into "left" and "right."
    - 1 - This is your left and right.
    - 2 - On the bulletin, the parts the "left" side of the congregation speak are in italics.
  - 1 - The "right" parts are in regular print.
  - 2 - Please rise in body or spirit, and be open to God in prayer. *(pause till all are ready)*
  - 1 - We begin with our voices joined together.
- 

All: **We spend so much time waiting.**

Left: *Waiting in line at the grocery store.*

Right: Waiting for a medical diagnosis.

Left: *Waiting for food at a restaurant.*

Right: Waiting to hear about a job opportunity.

Left: *Waiting for a response to an e-mail.*

Right: Waiting for a baby to be born.

Left: *Waiting for something to start.*

Right: Waiting for something to end.

All: **This life is out of our control.**

Left: *Our political power,*

Right: physical strength,

Left: *emotional investment,*

Right: human knowledge

Left: *hold no comparison to God's might,*

Right: wisdom,

Left: *mercy,*

Right: and grace.

All: **We wait on the Lord**

Left: *with respect,*

Right: with gladness,

Left: *basking in God's steadfast love,*

Right: filled with new life.

All: **We put our hope in the Lord,**

Left: *expecting,*

Right: trusting,

Left: *depending on God -*

Right: our help and our shield.

Left: *God is everything we need.*

Right: Our soul waits for the Lord.

All: **Lord, let your faithful love surround us  
because we wait for you.**

# How Great Thou Art

by Carl G. Boberg

translated by Stuart K. Hine

(When the hymn is finished)



1

O Lord my God, when I in awe-some won-der con-sid-er  
When through the woods and for-est glades I wan-der, I hear the  
But when I think that God, His Son not spar-ing, sent Him to  
When Christ shall come, with shout of ac-cla-ma-tion, and take me

3

all the works Thy hand hath made, I see the stars, I hear the migh-ty  
birds sing sweet-ly in the trees; when I look down from lof-ty moun-tain  
die, I scarce can take it in, that on the cross my bur-den glad-ly  
home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in hum-ble a-dor-

6

thun-der, Thy pow'r through-out the u-ni-verse dis-played; Then sings my  
gran-deur and hear the brook and feel the gen-tle breeze;  
bear-ing He bled and died to take a-way my sin;  
ra-tion and there pro-claim, "My God, how great Thou art!"

9

soul, my Sav-ior God, to Thee. How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my

13

soul, my Sav-ior God, to Thee. How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

(pause slightly between statements – speak deliberately)

- 1 - Stand and be still for a moment.
- 2 - Be aware of God's greatness.
- 1 - Allow the goodness of the Lord to overwhelm you.
- 2 - God is beyond our comprehension.
- 1 - Even so, the Lord is present among and within us.
- 2 - Be still and know that the Lord is God.

(a time of silence)

- 2 - Please be seated

# A WORD from "in the beginning"

Genesis 15:1-16

- 1 - We turn to the book of "Genesis," which means "in the beginning."
- 2 - Along the way of his journey with his child-less wife Sarai,
  - 1 - following God into an unknown future,
  - 2 - based solely on a promise of a place to call "home,"
    - 1 - & the assurance of abundant children & grandchildren;
    - 2 - Abram is once again visited by the Lord. Listen.

*(pause)*

- 1 - After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."
- 2 - But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? ... You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir."
  - 1 - But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them. So shall your descendants be."
  - 2 - And Abram believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

- 1 - Then he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess."
- 2 - But Abram said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?"
  - 1 - "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."
  - 2 - He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. *(pause)* As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.
    - 1 - Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

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# A Responsive affirmation of faith

Turn in your hymnal to #710, or follow the words on the screen, and let us respond to this WORD from “in the beginning,” with an affirmation of faith.

*Leader:*

We affirm that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
Miriam, Hannah, and Mary is our God.

*People:*

We affirm that God has come to us in our likeness,  
taking the form of a servant in Jesus of Nazareth.

*Leader:*

We believe that god, in Christ,  
suffered the pain and agony  
of the cross to provide for our salvation.

*People:*

We believe that God demonstrated power  
over sin and death  
by raising Jesus from the dead  
and declaring that the risen Christ is Lord.

*Leader:*

God has given us new life and freedom  
in the fullness of the Holy Spirit,  
who is the guide and power  
of the community of believers.

*ALL:*

We believe that in the end, God's rule of peace and justice  
will be fully established  
and that Jesus Christ will reign forever and ever.

Hymnal #710

Adapted from a liturgy of baptism by Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.,  
Baptism and Church Membership, Worship Series 3, ed. James H. Waltner,  
copyright © 1979 Faith & Life Press/Mennonite Publishing House.

# A WORD of encouragement and warning

Luke 12:32-40

- 1 - Starting with a psalm, we ventured forth with Abraham “in the beginning,” trying to count the stars in the sky.
- 2 - Now we turn to the Gospel of Luke for a word of encouragement and warning. Listen.

*(pause)*

- 1 - Jesus said:
- 2 - “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
- 1 - Sell your possessions, and give alms.
- 2 - Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailling treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.
- 1 - For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- 2 - Yes, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- 1 - “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit;
- 2 - dressed for action
- 1 - your lamps lit
- 2 - be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet,

- 1 - so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks.
- 2 - Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes;
- 1 - truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them.
- 2 - If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.
- 1 - “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming,
- 2 - he would not have let his house be broken into.
- 1 - You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”
- 2 - “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit...”

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# Returning our Tithes and Offerings

- 1 - *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*
- 2 - What is most important to you. If, for instance, a fire was raging in the hills above your home, and you had only minutes to grab but a few things for your escape – what would you take with you?
  - 1 - *“Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit.”*
  - 2 - We remember Abraham because of his willingness to pick up and follow God into an unknown future, traveling light, guided by only a promise. And also his wife, Sarah, upon whom the burden of choosing and packing essentials no doubt fell. Are we part of that promise which lit their way? Are you and I among those stars Abraham could not count?
    - 1 - *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”*
    - 2 - God provides for our needs. Not just in some distant tomorrow, but today. “Give us our daily bread,” we pray. And there is enough for our journey. Treasure for the road.
      - 1 - *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*
      - 2 - May what you share as an offering just now be from your heart... Ushers?

# A WORD on faith lived out

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

- 1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
- 2 - the conviction of things not seen.
- 1 - Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.
- 2 - By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.
- 1 - By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going.
- 2 - By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
- 1 - By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised.
- 2 - Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.”
- 1 - All of these died in faith without having received the promises,
- 2 - but from a distance they saw and greeted them.

- 1 - They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth,
- 2 - for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.
- 1 - If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return.
- 2 - But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.
- 1 - Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God;
- 2 - indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

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# A Gospel WORD

John 1:1-5

Stars in the night sky. Abraham was invited by God to look up and try counting them. An impossible task, for there are too many. “*So shall your descendants be,*” the Lord promised. And, over time, it became so.

Stars in the night sky, however, provide little light. While each one is like the sun in our solar system, they are so far away. By the time the light from them reaches us, it is but a speck in the evening canopy above us. The ancients looked up and made connections between them that we today still see. There is *Ursa Major*, the *Great Bear*, which we know as ... the *Big Dipper*. Or *Ursa Minor*, the *Little Bear*, or ... the *Little Dipper*. This star goes with that star to make a pattern. However, that light is far away. Today we know it has travelled millions of miles and years just to twinkle in our night. So dim. So far away.

By faith, Abraham journeyed with God, the distant light of all those stars a promise onto which he held. He never got to see the promise realized. But still he walked, believing in what he could not see.

And so we turn now to the gospel of John, and a passage that provided the theme for our denomination’s annual conference this year. It starts out just like the first book in the Bible, Genesis. It speaks of a light that is not a distant sparkle in the night sky, and makes a connection

between the time before the very first day and today. And that connection is “the “Word made flesh,” Jesus, who is the “light of the world.” We are called not to just stare at the night sky and ponder the light of distant stars. Into our everyday lives, we are called to carry the Light of Christ, who is not far, far away. He is very near, and within us.

Before we view a video telling about this conference, it’s important that we read together this scripture upon which those four days of gathering in Greensboro, NC were based. Please join in this Gospel Word:

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

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# Benediction

As you Carry the Light,  
may God bless you,  
and keep you.

May His face shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you,  
and give you peace.

Amen