

Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

September 3, 2017

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

“Don’t come any closer. Take off your sandals — the ground where you are standing is holy. I am the God who was worshiped by your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

(Exodus 3:5-6 from the Contemporary English Version)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) “Holy Ground” medley (insert)

Announcements

Prelude

*Call to Worship Psalm 105:1-6 (CEV)

*Hymn “Christ is our cornerstone” 43

*Opening Prayer

A Gospel Story Matthew 16:21-28 (CEV)

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Video “Children’s Disaster Services”
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

A prayer following a flood

Responsive Reading Romans 12:9-21 850

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

Hymn “God sent his Son” 345

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture Exodus 3:1-15 (CEV)

Message *“Take off your sandals”*

*Hymn “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah” 582

*Benediction

*Postlude

*Rise in body or in spirit

* * * * *

message to be posted at
www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-09-03.mp3

Call to Worship

- 1 - Please rise in body or spirit...
- 2 - *Praise the Lord and pray in his name!*
- 1 - *Tell everyone what he has done.*
- 2 - *Sing praises to the Lord!*
- 1 - *Tell about his miracles.*
- 2 - *Celebrate and worship his holy name with all your heart.*
- 1 - *Trust the Lord and his mighty power.*
- 2 - *Remember his miracles and all his wonders and his fair decisions.*
- 1 - *You belong to the family of Abraham, his servant;*
- 2 - *you are his chosen ones, the descendants of Jacob.*

Psalm 105:1-6
from the *Contemporary English Version*®
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Hymn #43

“Christ is our cornerstone”

Opening Prayer

Holy God, make your presence known to us today. We come to you as we are, called to be saints, holy ones, but so often less than our calling. Help us this hour to let go of those sins to which we cling. Help us to know that our self-worth does not depend so much on our ability to hold on to our lives, as on your power to release ourselves into your hands.

Holy God, make your presence known to us today. We come to you with our vision so often clouded by our sin. Clear away the mist, through Jesus, that we can catch a glimpse, now, of your presence here. Help us to behold you as you are, not as we would like you to be. In Him, through whom we become holy, on the wings of the Spirit, we pray to you, our Father. Amen.

by plh
rockhay.org/worship/prayers-etc/opening.htm#c-2

A Gospel Story
Matthew 16:21-28

If you were here last Sunday, do you recall the gospel story we read? It comes right before today's story from Matthew. In it, Jesus asked his disciples what they had heard from the crowds. His question: "who do they think I am?" He then flipped it and asked, "who do you think I am?" In his best moment before Jesus died and rose, Peter responded, "You are the Messiah, the Son of God." In almost the next breath comes one of Peter's worst moments. In the gospel of Mark, it happens immediately after. Matthew puts a bit more space between Peter's highest confession and his complete misunderstanding of the gospel. But it's still there. Listen

(pause)

1 - *²¹ From then on, Jesus began telling his disciples what would happen to him. He said,*

2 - *"I must go to Jerusalem. There the nation's leaders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law of Moses will make me suffer terribly. I will be killed, but three days later I will rise to life."*

1 - *²² Peter took Jesus aside and told him to stop talking like that. He said,*

2 - *"God would never let this happen to you, Lord!"*

(pause)

1 - *²³ Jesus turned to Peter and said,*

2 - *"Satan, get away from me! You're in my way because you think like everyone else and not like God."*

1 - *²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples:*

2 - *If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross and follow me. ²⁵ If you want to save your life, you will destroy it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find it. ²⁶ What will you gain, if you own the whole world but destroy yourself? What would you give to get back your soul?*

²⁷ The Son of Man will soon come in the glory of his Father and with his angels to reward all people for what they have done. ²⁸ I promise you that some of those standing here will not die before they see the Son of Man coming with his kingdom.

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Returning our Tithes and Offerings

(Meghan:)

Like the disciple Peter, we may think we know all the answers. Then reality hits, and Jesus comes to us amid our questions. Questions like: why a storm floods a land. Last month, I had the privilege of helping someone rebuild her home in South Carolina a few years after a hurricane damaged it. By the way, the need will continue long after this week for the folks in Texas. Maybe you will join me in helping someone rebuild there. Be listening for the call.

As we were gathered here last Sunday, twelve volunteers with our Brethren *Children's Disaster Services* answered their call and traveled to Texas to serve children and families in area Red Cross shelters. Twelve more have since joined them. In a way, we are there with these caregivers. Also, *Gift of the heart kits*, some of which we prepared, are on their way. More, however, are needed... Lastly, money we raised through our district's *Disaster Response Auction* is being put to use as I speak. If you wish to send more right now, the quickest way is through our denominational website (www.brethren.org).

As you return your tithes and offerings for the ministries of this congregation, I invite you to see what the volunteers with our *Children's Disaster Services* do. Afterward, Jean will lead us in a prayer.

Ushers, come and assist our giving.

Offertory Video

"Children's Disaster Services"

<https://vimeo.com/146788926>

A prayer following a flood

(may be amended as prayed)

As members of a caring community, our Church of the Brethren is offering our prayers, Creator God, for the thousands of people affected by Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana. May you comfort those who mourn, those who are injured, and those who have lost their homes. May you protect them from despair, disease, and further destruction. We beseech you for strength and safety for all the workers and volunteers giving aid to others.

As believers in neighborly love, we pray that our giving may be generous, swift, and beneficial. We ask for wisdom in relief and recovery efforts, that compassion and practical help lift the spirits and hope of those whose homes, workplaces and schools are so deeply affected. Loving Lord, we ask for protection of the emergency workers and engineers who labor to save the dams and dikes and roadways and begin the huge recovery efforts.

We offer our prayers for the Children's Disaster Services (CDS) volunteers who are serving the displaced families affected by the hurricane. We think of the first twelve volunteers in San Antonio, Texas, rerouted when the Houston airport was closed. We ask for traveling mercies as additional volunteers travel to Texas to join our Brethren teams.

God you see suffering throughout our world. While our Texas disaster absorbs news, Bangladesh is under water in the most serious in floods in decades. Nearly a million homes are partially or totally destroyed and up to a third of its terrain -- much of it farmland -- left submerged. Crops and buildings are also monsoon damaged in India and Nepal. We extend our hearts and prayers to the millions of people experiencing weeks of severe flooding in south Asia with disease, loss of work, and food insecurity plaguing these regions where 41 million people are affected.

Together we implore you, God, to ease the flooding. We ask the Holy Spirit for comfort and healing. We reach out in prayer and with our donations for survival and recovery, just as Jesus healed the broken hearted and the early Christians reached out to share their fortunes with others. Today we pray for generosity and wisdom in discerning how we and our Faith communities can respond to these tragedies in the coming months.

written and prayed by Jean Sack, ©2017

Responsive Reading

Romans 12:9-21

On the screen, as well as in your hymnal (#850), is Romans 12:9-21, which we will read together, responsively. Let's open ourselves to hear God speak through these words of encouragement and challenge from the apostle Paul.

Leader:

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

People:

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Leader:

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

People:

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Leader:

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

People:

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Leader:

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

People:

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

Leader:

If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

People:

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

Leader:

No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads."

All:

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

scripture text from the *New Revised Standard Version*,
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Sharing a joy, a concern,
a word of testimony or praise

Hymn #345

“God sent his Son”

Pastoral Prayer

God of love, by your mercy we present our whole lives to you as a living sacrifice, seeking not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewal of our mindfulness, so that we may discern what is your delight, what is good and life-giving and whole.

Therefore let our love be genuine. May we turn from what is evil, and hold fast to what is good; may we love one another with mutual affection and outdo one another in honoring others. May we not lag in zeal, but be ardent in spirit, serving you. By your grace may we rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. Help us by your Spirit to contribute to the needs of the saints and extend hospitality to strangers.

We bless those who persecute us; we bless and do not curse them. We rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. We desire to live in harmony with one another; we seek not to be above others but to associate with the lowly, not claiming to be wiser than we are. We will not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. By your grace, we will live peaceably with all. We take no part in vengeance: if our enemies are hungry, we will feed them; if they are thirsty, we will give them something to drink. We will not be overcome by evil, but by your grace we shall overcome evil with good.

This is our spiritual worship, and our faith. For this we give you thanks, and we ask your blessing. Amen.

by Steve Garnaas-Holmes,
a United Methodist pastor in Massachusetts
from Unfolding Light © 2011.

Exodus 3:1-15

¹ One day, Moses was taking care of the sheep and goats of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, and Moses decided to lead them across the desert to Sinai, the holy mountain. ² There an angel of the LORD appeared to him from a burning bush. Moses saw that the bush was on fire, but it was not burning up.

³ ***“This is strange!”*** he said to himself.
“I’ll go over and see why the bush isn’t burning up.”

⁴ When the LORD saw Moses coming near the bush, he called him by name, and Moses answered,

“Here I am.”

⁵ God replied,
***“Don’t come any closer.
Take off your sandals—
the ground where you are standing is holy.***

⁶ ***I am the God who was worshiped by your ancestors
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”***

Moses was afraid to look at God, and so he hid his face.

⁷ The LORD said:

***“I have seen how my people
are suffering as slaves in Egypt,
and I have heard them beg for my help
because of the way they are being mistreated.
I feel sorry for them, ⁸ and I have come down
to rescue them from the Egyptians.***

***I will bring my people out of Egypt
into a country where there is good land,***

rich with milk and honey.

***I will give them the land where the Canaanites, Hittites,
Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live.***

⁹ ***My people have begged for my help,
and I have seen how cruel the Egyptians are to them.***

¹⁰ ***Now go to the king!***

I am sending you to lead my people out of his country.”

¹¹ But Moses said,

***“Who am I to go to the king
and lead your people out of Egypt?”***

¹² God replied,

***“I will be with you.
And you will know that I am the one who sent you,
when you worship me on this mountain
after you have led my people out of Egypt.”***

¹³ Moses answered,

***“I will tell the people of Israel
that the God their ancestors worshiped
has sent me to them.
But what should I say,
if they ask me your name?”***

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ God said to Moses:

***“I am the eternal God.
So tell them that the LORD,
whose name is ‘I Am,’
has sent you.
This is my name forever,
and it is the name that people
must use from now on.”***

Benediction

Message

“Take off your sandals”

With sandals on,
we head out into the world.
As you go, however,
be aware that God is near.
Holy ground is all around us,
if only we have eyes to see,
ears to hear,
and the soles of our feet to feel.
Walk as if you wear no sandals.

May God bless your journey.
May Jesus guide as you follow his footsteps.
May the Spirit help you to walk.
Amen.

Hymn #582

“Guide me, O thou great Jehovah”

Postlude