

Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

September 24, 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

“...live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ ... standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and (be) in no way intimidated...” (Philippians 1:27-28)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) “Unto thy temple, Lord...” 4

Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship Psalm 145:1-9

*Hymn “Great is the Lord” 87

*Opening Prayer

A story from the Prophets Jonah 3:10 - 4:11

Unison Confession

O Lord, we count on your mercy, yet expect you to punish the wicked. We serve you in faith, but when others don't, we forget the joy of doing your work. We pout in our prosperity when you distribute your generosity so “unjustly.” Forgive us, Lord, for the sins we know in our hearts. Save us, Lord, from the sins we hide. *(pause for reflection and self-examination)*

Assurance of God's forgiveness

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

Hymn “Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us” 352

Prayer

A story from the Gospel Matthew 20:1-16

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory “Chanson” Nancy Faber
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

A good word from Paul Philippians 1:21-30

Message “*In no way intimidated*”

*Hymn “My life flows on” 580

*Benediction

*Postlude

*Rise in body or in spirit

* * * * *

message to be posted at
www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-09-24.mp3

Call to Worship

Psalm 145:1-9, adapted
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M - *I will lift you up high, my God, the true king.*

P - *I will bless your name forever and always.*

M - *I will bless you every day.*

P - *I will praise your name forever and always.*

M - *The Lord is great and so worthy of praise!*

P - *God's greatness can't be grasped.*

M - *One generation will praise your works to the next one, proclaiming your mighty acts.*

P - *They will talk all about the glorious splendor of your majesty;*

M - *I will contemplate your wondrous works.*

P - *They will speak of the power of your awesome deeds;*

M - *I will declare your great accomplishments.*

P - *They will rave in celebration of your abundant goodness;*

M - *they will shout joyfully about your righteousness:*

(P comes down steps as M reads the above, then:)

P - *The Lord is merciful and compassionate, very patient, and full of faithful love.*

(M comes down steps as P reads the above, then:)

M - *The Lord is good to everyone and everything; God's compassion extends, to all his handiwork!*

(P prepares to play guitar as M reads, pauses, then:)

P - Rise now and sing of how "Great is the Lord," #87.

←(for the Call: M is at lectern, P is at pulpit)

Hymn #87

"Great is the Lord"

Opening Prayer

M - Gather us, O God, into the household of grace, the fold of your love. We recognize your holy presence, and are turned toward a new day by the rising of the light of Christ. Help us to face this day, and all of our days, with the hope and promise made full for us in the person of Jesus Christ, as we unite ourselves with him once more and receive his heavenly food; for these and all of our prayers we lift to you in his name. Amen

Created/adapted by Rev. David Chafin
Deputy Regional Minister and Vice President
of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia
from his blog: *Life in Liturgy*

Please be seated.

A story from the Prophets
Jonah 3:10 – 4:11

(Readers 1 & 2 speak from up front. Reader 3 speaks from the back or balcony, with a mic)

- 1 - In case you haven't noticed, when we worship, we often follow up moments of praise with a time of confession.
- 2 - We do so to get things straight, since it's so easy to get it all upside down.
- 1 - Take Jonah, for instance. This Hebrew prophet of God knew right from wrong.
- 2 - He also knew, however, that God doesn't always punish the wicked – give them what they deserve, no matter what.
- 1 - The Lord has a tendency to forgive, and Jonah didn't want to.
- 2 - When God called him to preach repentance to the evil city of Ninevah, Jonah walked in the opposite direction.
- 1 - “Why bother,” he thought, “God's going to forgive them anyway.”
- 2 - Well, maybe you know the story of how, in running away from the job God wanted him to do, Jonah was swallowed by a big fish.
- 1 - That's a tale/tail (*pause and smirk*) for another day.
- 2 – (*groan*) Anyway, Jonah got turned around and preached to the Ninevites that they needed to stop sinning and start living as God created them to be.

1 - Just as Jonah feared, the people listened and changed, and God did what God does.

2 - Let's hear the rest of the story...

- 1 - ¹⁰ *When God saw that the people had stopped doing evil things, he had pity and did not destroy them as he had planned....* ^{4:1} *Jonah was really upset and angry.* ² *So he prayed:*
- 2 - *Our LORD, I knew from the very beginning that you wouldn't destroy Nineveh. That's why I left my own country and headed for Spain. You are a kind and merciful God, and you are very patient. You always show love, and you don't like to punish anyone, not even foreigners.* ³ *Now let me die! I'd be better off dead.*
- 1 - ⁴ *The LORD replied,*
- 3 - *“What right do you have to be angry?”*
- 1 - ⁵ *Jonah then left through the east gate of the city and made a shelter to protect himself from the sun. He sat under the shelter, waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh.*
⁶ *The LORD made a vine grow up to shade Jonah's head and protect him from the sun. Jonah was very happy to have the vine,* ⁷ *but early the next morning the LORD sent a worm to chew on the vine, and the vine dried up.* ⁸ *During the day the LORD sent a scorching wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head, making him feel faint. Jonah was ready to die, and he shouted,*

2 - (shout) *“I wish I were dead!”*

1 - ⁹ *But the LORD asked,*

3 - *“Jonah, do you have the right to be angry about the vine?”*

2 - *“Yes, I do, and I’m angry enough to die.”*

1 - ¹⁰ *But the LORD said:*

3 - *You are concerned about a vine that you did not plant or take care of, a vine that grew up in one night and died the next. ¹¹ In that city of Nineveh there are more than a hundred twenty thousand people who cannot tell right from wrong, and many cattle are also there. Don’t you think I should be concerned about that big city?*

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Unison Confession

One:

Thank God that we are not God. With Jonah, let us seek to put aside anger and arrogance and, instead, have confidence in the Lord... Shall we join in our unison confession?

All:

O Lord, we count on your mercy, yet expect you to punish the wicked. We serve you in faith, but when others don’t, we forget the joy of doing your work. We pout in our prosperity when you distribute your generosity so “unjustly.” Forgive us, Lord, for the sins we know in our hearts. Save us, Lord, from the sins we hide.

(pause for reflection and self-examination)

Assurance of God’s forgiveness

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Jesus Christ, the only son of our Heavenly Father, comes so that we might know God’s mercy. He suffered and died paying the wages of our sin. Our sins are forgiven. We have been graciously granted the privilege of believing in Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit we may live our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. In the name of Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen?

by Bill Wessner, interim pastor
Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, Rohnert Park, CA

Prayer

P - This past week not only marked the beginning of Autumn (Friday), it also included the *International Day of Peace* (Thursday). Would you join us in a prayer written for this day by a young American Baptist minister, who pastors a church in Washington State. She also blogs weekly on the lectionary, writing worship resources such as this, and reflecting on ministry and motherhood, and on everyday life... Let us pray.

M - God of Peace, may we live with peace in our hearts

P - May we live with peace in our homes

M - May we be bearers of peace to our neighborhood
and community.

P - May we be builders of peace in our nation.

M - May we seek peace and pursue it
in all we say and do.

P - We pray for peace in every nation,

M - In every city and village,

P - In every neighborhood.

M - May we begin by living in peace with each other,

P - May we covenant that, as far as it depends on us

M - May we live in peace.

P - Prince of Peace, we cannot pray for peace
without justice

M - We cannot pray for peace without mercy

P - We cannot pray for peace without love.

M - May we seek justice that restores;

P - May we seek justice for the oppressed,
for all who are on the margins.

M - May we grant mercy as You have given us mercy,

P - May we forgive as we have been forgiven,

M - May we see each other's humanity;

P - May we see the face of Christ in each other.

M - May we love our neighbor as ourselves.

P - May we love others as Christ loves us.

M - May we welcome strangers as friends.

P - Spirit of Peace, descend upon us,
mold our hearts to be full of your love.

M - May we seek peace and pursue it.

P - May we strive for peace in all we do.

M - May we be peacemakers.

P - May we build up the reign of God on earth,
as it is in heaven.

M - May we bring peace in all we do.

P - May we speak peace in all we say.

M - May we be peace to each other.

P - In the name of our God who covenants with us
in the name of peace.

M - In the name of Christ who is the Prince of Peace.

P - In the name of the Spirit,
who breathes into us peace.

M - May we be peace.

P - Amen.

A story from the Gospel
Matthew 20:1-16

(After an ad lib preface, P will act out this parable of Jesus, recruiting helpers as M, pausing in appropriate places to allow for action, reads)

¹ As Jesus was telling what the kingdom of heaven would be like, he said:

Early one morning a man went out to hire some workers for his vineyard. (gather a few from the pews and bring them forward) ² After he had agreed to pay them the usual amount for a day's work, he sent them off to his vineyard.

³ About nine that morning, the man saw some other people standing in the market with nothing to do. (gather a few more from the pews) ⁴ He said he would pay them what was fair, if they would work in his vineyard. ⁵ So they went. (bring them forward)

At noon and again about three in the afternoon he returned to the market. And each time he made the same agreement with others who were loafing around with nothing to do. (gather a few more from the pews and bring them forward)

⁶ Finally, about five in the afternoon the man went back and found some others standing there. (gather a few more from the pews) He asked them, "Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?"

⁷ "Because no one has hired us," they answered. Then he told them to go work in his vineyard. (bring them forward)

⁸ That evening the owner of the vineyard told the man in charge of the workers to call them in and give them their money. He also told the man to begin with the ones who were hired last. ⁹ When the workers arrived, the ones who had been hired at five in the afternoon were given a full day's pay. (begin with the last hired, pay them and send them back to their seats, then the next to last, and then the ones before them)

¹⁰ The workers who had been hired first thought they would be given more than the others. (pay the first-comers the same) But when they were given the same, ¹¹ they began complaining to the owner of the vineyard. ¹² They said, (silently encourage them to have a hissy fit) "The ones who were hired last worked for only one hour. But you paid them the same that you did us. And we worked in the hot sun all day long!"

¹³ The owner answered one of them, (pantomime) "Friend, I didn't cheat you. I paid you exactly what we agreed on. ¹⁴ Take your money now and go! What business is it of yours if I want to pay them the same that I paid you? ¹⁵ Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Why should you be jealous, if I want to be generous?" (send them back to their seats)

¹⁶ Jesus then said, "So it is. Everyone who is now first will be last, and everyone who is last will be first."

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Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Pray with me.

God, our Heavenly King, we rejoice that you invite everyone to a place of purpose in your kingdom. Through Christ, your Son, you give us a vision of the world as your vineyard, where each person can contribute the gifts you have given. Free us from envy and comparing our circumstances to others. Give us strength by your Spirit to live joyfully as generous servants of your realm. We present your tithes and our offerings with thanks and praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

Rev. Rosanna Anderson
Associate Director of Stewardship Ministries
United Methodist Church

Ushers, come and guide our giving.

Offertory

A good word from Paul Philippians 1:21-30

²⁰ It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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Message

“In no way intimidated”

Hymn #580

“My life flows on”

Benediction

- P - Thank God that we aren't God,
M - and that our Lord is merciful as well as just.
P - Whether we have freely answered the call,
M - or done so grudgingly, like Jonah;
P - No matter when in our life we have stepped forth
M - *in faith* to work in God's fields;
P - Regardless of our past faults and failures,
M - like those of the apostle Paul,
P - God's Spirit rests upon us
M - and resides within us
P - and connects us to one another
M - and empowers us to move forward
from this place and time.
P - As you do so, don't be intimidated.
M - Go in peace, which the world can't give,
P - neither can it take it away.
M - Amen!

Postlude