

Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

April 17, 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

Fourth Sunday of Easter

*Down the road a way in Joppa there was a disciple
named Tabitha, "Gazelle" in our language. She was well-
known for doing good and helping out.
(Acts 9:36 from The Message)*

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) "Gentle Shepherd, come" 352

Announcements

Prelude

*Call to Worship *(back of bulletin)*

*Hymn "All hail the power of Jesus' name" 106

*Opening Prayer Jean Sack

Scripture Revelation 7:9-17

Responsive Affirmation of Faith 711

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

Hymn "The Lord's my shepherd" 578

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture John 10:22-30

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

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

Scripture Acts 9:32-43

Message *"As Graceful as a Gazelle"*

*Hymn "Savior, like a shepherd lead us" 355

*Benediction

*Postlude

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

Call to Worship

One: Within these walls is a great multitude.

All: *Beyond these walls is a greater multitude of every nation and tongue.*

One: We join with these believers in praising the God of our salvation.

All: **Glory to God and to the Lamb!**

One: “La alabanza, la gloria, y la sabiduria. . .” *(Spanish)*

All: *“Blessing and glory and wisdom..*

One: “Da godiya, da girma, da iko, da karfi. . .” *(Hausa)*

All: *“And thanksgiving and honor and power and might...”*

One: “Tout sa pun Bondye nou an pou tout tan. Amen!”
(Haitian Creole)

All: **“Be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”**

One: Though we have walked through great ordeals,

All: **The Lamb will protect us and guide us all toward springs of living water.**

Remain standing, and let us sing:
“All hail the power of Jesus’ name”
#106 in your hymnal.

Opening Prayer

Holy is the Lamb who is worthy of our praise. Bind this gathering of believers with the multitudes that lift their voices this day. Loosen our desire to control salvation, and bind our wandering hearts to the Holy One. We humbly pray with adoration and delight, amen.

both *Call* and *prayer* are by Tim Hollenberg-Duffey, co-pastor
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Revelation 7:9-17

The words we just read in our Call to Worship were drawn from the seventh chapter of the book of Revelation, what one commentator calls, “The last word on evil.” When the multitude of God’s people from every time and every place in the end face into evil (these chapters reveal), they respond by **singing**. In the end, evil is not explained, **it is surrounded**. “*Greater is he that is in you than he who is in the world*” (1 John 4:4). Endure, this scripture proclaims, for you are already triumphant over it. Songs of faith encircle evil and put it in its place. “Any evil, no matter how fearsome, is exposed as weak and pedantic before such songs.”* ... Let’s listen to a portion of those two chapters in the last book of the Bible.

⁹ After this I (John) looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

*“Salvation belongs to our God
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!”*

¹¹ And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² singing,

*“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”*

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” ¹⁴ I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

*¹⁵ For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne
will shelter them.*

¹⁶ They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat;

*¹⁷ for the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

* Eugene Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination*, ©1988, Harper & Row, p. 84

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Responsive Affirmation of Faith

Hymnal #711

Leader: Jesus taught us to speak of hope
as the coming of God's kingdom.

***ALL: We believe that God is at work in our world
turning hopeless and evil situations
into good.***

***We believe that goodness and justice
will triumph in the end
and that tyranny and oppression
cannot last forever.***

***One day all tears will be wiped away;
the lamb will lie down with the lion,
and justice will roll down
like a mighty stream.***

Leader: True peace and true reconciliation
are not only desired,
they are assured and guaranteed in Christ.

***ALL: This is our faith.
This is our hope.***

Hymnal, #711, South African creed, 20th c.,
Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace,
Toronto, Ontario, CANADA

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John 10:22-30

In this Easter season, the fourth Sunday is often referred to as “*Good Shepherd Sunday*.” Before we prayed just now, we sang the twenty third psalm, which lifts up the image of God as our Shepherd. This Good Shepherd leads us through difficult times, and provides for our needs. This Good Shepherd brings us to green pastures and still waters, where a feast awaits and wounds are tended, even as predators watch. They are unable to devour us in the presence of this Good Shepherd. Here we will dwell.

In our gospel lesson for this day, Jesus takes up the Shepherd staff. Listen.

²² At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me; ²⁶ but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one.”

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

(worship leader comes up with her own invitation)

Benediction

Go now, follow the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Don't be afraid.

Even when you walk through a dark valley,
lift up your voice in song.

God is by your side.

Devote yourselves

to the works of God,
to words of mercy,
to good deeds and
to acts of love.

And may God wipe every tear from your eyes;

May Christ Jesus be your shepherd and all that you need;

And may the Holy Spirit tend you

with goodness and love,

so that you might be

as Graceful as a Gazelle.

Amen!