

Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

May 29, 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

Second Sunday of Pentecost

*“So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus,
that we might be made right with God because we trusted in
Christ. It is not because we followed the law, because no one
can be made right with God by following the law.”*

(Galatians 2:16b, New Century Version)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) “Psalm 96” (insert)

Announcements

Prelude “Gloria in Excelsis” Polish carol

*Call to Worship Galatians 1:3-5

*Hymn “Psalm 96” (insert)

*Opening Prayer

Gospel in action Luke 7:1-10

Response (vs. 1 & 4) “Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus” 340

Affirming our faith 714

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory “Andante” Grieg
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

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

Hymn “Breathe on me, breath of God” 356

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture Galatians 1:1-12

Message

*Hymn “There’s a wideness in God’s mercy” 145

*Benediction

*Postlude “Postlude in C” Rinck

* Rise in body or in spirit

* * * * *

Today’s sermon and service will be posted on www.lgvcob.org
and our church’s *facebook* page.

Call to Worship

Please rise in body or spirit and be led into worship by the following blessing with which the apostle Paul opened his letter to the Galatians:

*“Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ,
who gave himself for our sins
to set us free from the present evil age,
according to the will of our God and Father,
to whom be the glory forever and ever.
Amen.”*

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Psalm 96

words and music by
Richard Hays



1. O sing to the Lord a new song. Sing to the Lord O all the earth.
2. He is to be feared above all gods. All other gods are idols, A -
3. O let the heavens be glad. Let the sea roar and all that fills it,
4. (repeat verse 1)



Sing to the Lord, O bless His Name Tell of His sal - va - tion.
scribe to the Lord all glo - ry and strength. Bring your of - fer - ing, come to Him.
let the field ex - ult, in Him and all that is with - in it.



From day to day de - clare His glo - ry a - bove all na - tions.
Hon - or and ma - jes - ty are be - fore Him; strength and beau - ty are in His name.
Then shall the trees of the wood all sing for joy be - fore the Lord,



His mar - vel - ous works be - fore all peo - ples. For great is the Lord, O
O wor - ship the Lord in ho - ly ar - ray, and trem - ble be - fore Him
be - cause He comes to judge the earth. And He will judge with



great is the Lord and great - ly to be praise - ed.
all the earth. Say to the world that the Lord reigns.
right - eous - ness, and the peo - ples with His truth.

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The writer/composer of the above, Richard Hays, teaches New Testament at *Duke Divinity School*, where he served as Dean from 2010-2015. Internationally recognized for his work on the letters of Paul and on New Testament ethics, he is currently in treatment for pancreatic cancer. Pray for him.

Opening Prayer

Pray with me.

*“O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you
in heaven above or on earth beneath,
keeping covenant and steadfast love
for your servants
who walk before you with all their heart.”**

May your Holy Spirit blow through this assembly,
with every head and heart aflame
and open to your good news,
such that each one individually,
and all of us together
become your sanctuary.

May the words we speak outwardly,
and our thoughts within,
be pleasing to you,
who are our Rock and Redeemer.

This we pray in the name of the One
whom you sent to befriend and save us,
right where we are. Amen

Please be seated.

*1 Kings 23 from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible*,
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Gospel in action

Prepare three scrolls with the following, to be handed out to volunteers:

Elder: “He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.”

Friend: “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.”

Jesus: “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.”

Note: 3 of the volunteers recruited below will begin standing in the raised area up front (place them there as you recruit them). Only Jesus will be in a different location.

Pastor: Our gospel story this morning is from Luke 7:1-10. To help tell this story, we’ll need 4 volunteers. Only one of them gets to only stand and look good. The rest will have parts to read.

Let’s start with someone who can stand up straight and have an aura of authority (but not have to read). You are an officer in the Roman army. You command 100 soldiers, your unit called a “century.” Therefore, your title is “Centurion.” You are based in the town of *Capernaum*, on the north coast of the sea of Galilee in Israel. Unlike many officers in this foreign occupying army, you are involved in the community there. You keep the peace by getting to know the people and caring for them.

Next, we need someone to be an elder in the Jewish synagogue in Capernaum. You are a leader in your congregation. You have interacted with this Roman officer, and found him to be a good man. He has contributed a lot of money to your synagogue. You have also heard good things about Jesus. A number of his disciples were fishermen in your town before Jesus called them. They may have been members of your synagogue. It's possible that you were among the crowds listening to Jesus beside the sea. At the appropriate time in our story, you will approach Jesus and say this (*hand over the scroll*).

A third volunteer is needed to be a friend of the Centurion. You are probably not a Roman soldier yourself, but a resident of Capernaum. At the appropriate point in our story, you will go and bring this message (*hand over the scroll*) to Jesus, sent by your friend, the Centurion, to speak his words. He was sensitive enough to know that, being a non-Jew, a foreigner and an officer in the occupying army, it might have been intimidating, and maybe offensive to some, for him to come himself. You are his emissary.

Finally, I need someone to portray Jesus. Believe it or not, in this story you will have the fewest words to speak (*hand over the scroll*), which you will speak to everyone here at the end of this episode. You will start halfway back the center aisle, first approached by the Jewish elder, with whom you will walk half the distance

to the front, where the Centurion's friend will come and meet you.

Lydia (*today's worship leader*) will serve as narrator, and I will try to direct you without intruding myself too much into this gospel story. Are you ready? Let's begin.

Lydia: Listen to the Word of God from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 7, verses 1-10. (*pause*)

¹ After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ² A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³ When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying,

(Elder goes to Jesus and says:)

Elder: "He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵ for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us."

(Jesus and Elder walk toward the front, wait till they stop)

Lydia: ⁶ And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him,

(Friend goes to Jesus and says:)

Friend: “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷ therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸ For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.”

Lydia: ⁹ When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said,

Jesus: “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.”

Lydia: ¹⁰ When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Pastor: The Good News according to Luke.

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Response

(vs. 1 & 4) “Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus” - #340

1. ‘Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
and to take him at his word,
just to rest upon his promise,
and to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him,
how I've proved him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust him more!
4. I'm so glad I learned to trust you,
precious Jesus, Savior, Friend,
and I know that you are with me,
will be with me to the end.
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him,
how I've proved him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust him more!

Affirming our faith

Lydia: Please turn in the back of your hymnal to #714, and with these words affirm what we know of the One who is at the center of the Gospel. Half of the lines are in regular print, those will be read by you who sit on the left side (your left) of the sanctuary. I will read with you. Those on the right side (your right), will speak the words in bold print. Together, we will affirm our faith. Let's begin.

(congregation:)

He was the Son of God.

He was the Son of Man.

He came down from heaven.

He was born in a stable.

Kings came to his cradle.

His first home was a cave.

He was born to be a king.

He was a child of Mary.

He was the greatest among rulers.

He was the least among servants.

He was loved and honored.

He was despised and rejected.

He was gentle and loving.

He made many enemies.

He counseled perfection.

He was a friend of sinners.

He was a joyful companion.

He was a man of sorrows.

He said, "Rejoice."

He said, "Repent."

"Love God with all your heart."

"Love your neighbor as yourself."

"Don't be anxious."

"Count the cost."

"Deny yourself."

"Ask and receive."

In him was life.

He died on a cross.

He was a historic person.

He lives today.

He was Jesus of Nazareth.

He is Christ the Lord.

Hymnal #714

adapted from *We Gather Together*, Kenneth I. Morse,

©1979 Brethren Press.

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Please pray with me.

Thank you, O God, for your Son and our Savior. You have blessed us not only by his example in this morning's gospel story, but also by the character of a nameless Roman officer. You have reminded us of your call to love our neighbors as ourselves. Help us, God, to exhibit the characteristics of gentleness, joy, generosity, and self-control. Bless this offering which supports those various ministries that enable people to live by the Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Will the ushers now come forward and guide our giving?

adapted from a prayer by David Bell.
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Galatians 1:1-12

Pastor: We began worship this day with the blessing with which the apostle Paul began his letter to the Galatians. As we revisit this chapter, it might be helpful to remember a few things, otherwise Paul might come off sounding like a grumpy old man. He is justifiably angry in this letter, for it must have seemed to him that his earlier work among the churches of the Galatia region was being undone. Preachers who claimed to represent the church back in Israel were telling people that in order to follow Jesus you first needed to do everything that was required of a Jew, starting with circumcision.

You might recall that Paul once felt the same way. As a trained teacher of the Law of Moses, a Pharisee, he saw this Jesus movement as a threat to God because it was running too fast and loose with tradition. And then he ran into the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. Blinded at first by the light, he began the at-times painful process of reorienting from Law to Grace; from Life as an obligation, to Life as a gift; from having to do all sorts of stuff in order to be accepted by God, to living by faith, trusting that God in Christ loves you as you are and will lead you forward into a new creation. This became his good news, his gospel. Paul took as his mission reaching out to Gentiles. He could have taught them, as a Pharisee, all the steps non-Jews needed to take in order to become, first, good Jews, and then, second, followers of Jesus. But he didn't. We are saved by faith, he preached, Jew and Gentile alike.

The anger we hear in the following passage flows out of this. He would later in this letter call the apostle Peter to task for back-pedaling on this issue, for forgetting his own corrective encounter when God spoke to him (Peter) in a dream about not calling anything or anyone unclean whom God has called clean, and how that dream led him (Peter) to visit another Roman Centurion by the name of Cornelius. The Holy Spirit blew through those Gentiles in Caesaria before they were even baptized, and they weren't circumcised at all (Acts 10). The church had a big meeting about this afterward in Jerusalem, which changed the course of the Jesus movement (Acts 11). Once outside the covenant, Gentiles were now included. And Paul was not going to let anyone forget it, nor allow anyone to push God's people back into being enslaved by the Law.

That's some background behind the beginning of this letter to the Galatians. It might be helpful to remember, amid the anger behind these words, that only a few chapters later, Paul also wrote of *forebearance* and *gentleness* being among the fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23), but here he is clearly ticked, and rightfully so. With all this in mind, let's listen to what he has to say.

Pastor: ¹ *Paul an apostle—sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—* ² *and all the members of God's family who are with me,*
To the churches of Galatia:

Lydia: ³ *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,* ⁴ *who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,* ⁵ *to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Pastor: ⁶ *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—*

Lydia: ⁷ *not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.*

Pastor: ⁸ *But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!*

Lydia: ⁹ *As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!*

Pastor: ¹⁰ *Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

Lydia: ¹¹ *For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin;* ¹² *for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Benediction

We end our worship this morning
in the way in which we began –
with a blessing.

Listen, and be led forth,
by the words of the apostle Paul
at the end of his letter to the Galatians:

“May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with your spirit, brothers and sisters.
Amen.”

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