

Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

May 7, 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

Fourth Sunday of Easter

“The believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers.” (Acts 2:42 CEB)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) “Christ who left his home in glory” 283

Announcements

Prelude with Video (Psalm 23 in sign language)

*Call to Worship

Shepherding God, lead us through the valley of the shadow.

Lead us into the way of life.

Shepherding God, guide us away from greed and envy.

Lead us into peace and justice.

Shepherding God, lead us to the table You have set.

Lead us to the table of forgiveness and grace.

Shepherding God, You are the gate.

Lead us to You; lead us into eternity. Amen.

*Hymn “Christ who left his home in glory” 283

*Opening Prayer

Scripture John 10:1-10

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

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

Scripture Psalm 23 by memory?

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

Hymn “Savior, like a shepherd lead us” 355

Prayer of God’s people 722

Scripture Acts 2:42-47

Response “Day by day” (insert)

Message *“Steadfastly continuing ... day by day”*

*Hymn “Be thou my vision” 545

*Benediction

*Postlude

*Rise in body or in spirit

* * * * *

message to be posted at
www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-05-07.mp3

Call to Worship

Please rise in body or spirit, for the Call to Worship,
which is both in your bulletin and on the screen...

One:

Shepherding God, lead us through
the valley of the shadow.

All:

Lead us into the way of life.

One:

Shepherding God, guide us away from greed and envy.

All:

Lead us into peace and justice.

One:

Shepherding God, lead us to the table You have set.

All:

Lead us to the table of forgiveness and grace.

One:

Shepherding God, You are the gate.

All:

Lead us to You; lead us into eternity. Amen.

by Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell
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Opening Prayer

Pray with me...

Step by step your people walk the “glory!” trail,

O Shepherding God.

The Easter song rings out yet again.

The resurrection story unfolds,
and “hallelujah!” seems to arise

from the very cracks

in the ground beneath our feet.

Oh, to love you with heart, soul, and mind –
such that our ‘proclamation’ this hour

passes through these walking shoe

to our lips:

“Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory, hallelujah!”

May your Holy Spirit be our strength for the journey,

your Son the One we follow,

your kingdom be our goal,

your people our companions along the way.

Open our eyes this hour, Lord God,

that we might see you

walking with us. Amen.

(adapted from 4/17/05)

Remain standing, and join your voice in singing,

“Christ who left his home in glory,” #283

Please be seated.

John 10:1-10

Our gospel scripture this morning is from the tenth chapter of John, verses one to ten. The Sunday School class which meets in the library focused upon these words last week. From what I heard, they learned much from Lucille Groves, who grew up on a farm in western Maryland raising sheep... As you listen to Jesus, imagine....

¹ "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers."

⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷ So again Jesus said to them,

"Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

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Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Fellow sheep of God's pasture, we set aside time to return a portion of what we have received. Before the ushers come forward to lead us, would you pray with me?

Good Shepherd of the Sheep,
you have opened the door to new life for us
through your dedication and your sacrifice.
May we reflect your love for us
by opening the doors of our hearts
to you and your church
in the act of giving
our tithes and offerings. AMEN

Ushers?

prayer written by the Rev. Marilyn Kennedy Levine, pastor,
New Town United Church of Christ and
Parshall Memorial Congregational Church
on the Fort Berthold Reservation at Lake Sakakawea
in northwest North Dakota.

Offertory

Psalm 23

Perhaps the most familiar scripture in the Bible is the 23rd Psalm. Because of this, let's see how much of it we have memorized. If you have not yet committed it to memory, we challenge you to do so, for it often is very helpful in times of distress. Many have faced into the anxiety of an impending surgery, or other difficult experiences, but pulling portions of this Psalm, or other memorized scriptures, from the heart, and speaking them over and over inwardly.

Just now, let's try saying it out loud, together. After we have spoken a line, or as we speak, it will appear on the screen. Don't be thrown off if you have not memorized it in the same translation as others.... Let's draw on the well of our faith together...

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want;

² he makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters;

³ he restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through
the valley of the shadow of death,

I fear no evil; for thou art with me;

thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;

thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

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(postscript to Psalm 23 reading)

An actor once told of an experience honoring an old priest from the village where he was born. During the course of the evening he was asked to recite the 23rd Psalm. When he completed the recitation, the audience applauded in recognition of his eloquent expression of this beautiful passage from the Bible. Then the actor asked the old priest who was being honored at the occasion to stand and recite the 23rd Psalm. When the old priest finished, there was no applause but a reverent hush fell over the entire audience until the actor said respectfully: "I know the 23rd Psalm, but he knows the shepherd."

Let us enter into this time of sharing as those who seek to more fully know the Shepherd, and to trust in his rod and staff, as we lift up those in need of shepherding (including ourselves). May we also share about the "table times" this past week when we experienced God's joy.

Sharing a joy, a concern,
a word of testimony or praise

Savior, like a shepherd lead us 355

BRADBURY 87. 87. 87 extended

1 Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us, much we need thy ten-der care.
2 We are thine, do thou be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way.
3 Ear - ly let us seek thy fa - vor, ear-ly let us do thy will.

In thy pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use thy folds pre - pare.
Keep thy flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
Bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with thy love our spir - its fill.

Bless - ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! thou hast bought us, thine we are.
Bless - ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! hear, O hear us, when we pray.
Bless - ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! thou hast loved us, love us still.

Bless-ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! thou hast bought us, thine we are.
Bless-ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! hear, O hear us, when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus! Bless-ed Je - sus! thou hast loved us, love us still.

Prayer of God's people

In our hymnal is an intercessory prayer, which makes space within it for moments of silence. When I pause, you are invited to offer your own silent prayers for those I mention, with words in your mind – if that is how you pray; or with the stirrings of your heart or the imagination of your mind, as the Holy Spirit leads, as you bring these persons to the Good Shepherd. We will bring this time to a close by joining our voices in a unison prayer, which will be projected upon the screen. You may also find it in the back of your hymnal, #722.

Now, let us pray....

Leader:

Merciful God,
your love for us makes us bold to join our prayers
with all who need your help.
We bring our prayers to you:

For those who suffer pain;

(A time for silent intercessory prayer)

For those who struggle with limits of body and soul;

(A time for silent intercessory prayer)

For those who are satisfied with less than the life
for which they were created;

(A time for silent intercessory prayer)

For those who know their guilt and their need
but do not know of Jesus;

(A time for silent intercessory prayer)

For those who know that they must shortly die
and for those who cannot wait to die.

(A time for silent intercessory prayer)

(any others?)

We now lift up our voices in unison...

(forward slide)

ALL:

Come, Redeeming God,

***take all these sufferings upon yourself
and transform them.***

***Be merciful also to us, who offer these prayers,
so that we might enter the sufferings of others
and become agents of your healing love,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN***

Hymnal #722, adapted from
Contemporary Prayers for Public Worship,
ed. Caryl Micklem, copyright © 1956 1967
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Acts 2:42-47

(Pete:)

In the second chapter of the book of Acts is found gospel storyteller Luke's account of the day of Pentecost. The chapter ends with a description of the early church. Here are God's Easter people, rising to new life in Christ. Listen and wonder, for here are the essentials for what we are called to do and to be...

(Meghan:)

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

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(Pete:)

Day by day

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are: "Day by day, day by day, day by day. Dear Lord, of thee three things I pray: to see thee more clearly, to love thee more dearly, to follow thee more nearly." The chords are D, Bm, G, and A. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

words by St. Richard of Chichester (1197-1253)
music ©2011 by Peter L Haynes

Message

"Steadfastly continuing ... day by day"

Hymn

(in honor/memory of Dr. Brad Sack)
"Be thou my vision" #545

Benediction

May the God of peace,
who brought back the great shepherd of the sheep,
our Lord Jesus,
from the dead by the blood of the eternal covenant,
equip you with every good thing to do his will,
by developing in us what pleases him
through Jesus Christ.
To him be the glory forever and always. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21
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Postlude