

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

July 23, 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

*Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place - and I did not know it!"* (Genesis 28:16)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am)                      "What is this place"                      1

Announcements

Prelude

\*Call to Worship

*One: We gather to worship with expectations:*

*God revealed in new and astonishing ways.*

**All: God comes to us in real time.**

**God comes to us in dreams.**

*One: Sometimes God's presence is hard to take in—  
difficult to believe.*

**All: O God, we long to believe. Help our unbelief!**

One: God is present here. God is working in our midst.

**All: Then our mouths are filled with laughter,  
Our tongues shout out with joy!**

\*Hymn                      "I sing the mighty power of God"                      46

\*Opening Prayer

Scripture                      Genesis 28:10-19a                      (from *The Message*)

Song                      "We are climbing Jacob's ladder"                      (see insert)

Message                      "*Even when not aware*"

Hymn                      "Blessed assurance"                      332

Scripture                      Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

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

Directed Prayer

Prayer Song                      "Our Father who art in heaven"                      351

Scripture                      Romans 8:12-25                      (from *The Message*)

Responding with our Tithes and Offerings                      Grace Miller

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

\*Song                      "Shine, Jesus, shine"                      (see insert)

\*Responsive Benediction                      764

\*Postlude

\*Rise in body or in spirit

\* \* \* \* \*

message to be posted at  
[www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-07-23.mp3](http://www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-07-23.mp3)

# Call to Worship

Please rise

One:

We gather to worship with expectations:  
God revealed in new and astonishing ways.

**All:**

**God comes to us in real time.  
God comes to us in dreams.**

One:

Sometimes God's presence is hard to take in—  
difficult to believe.

**All:**

**O God, we long to believe. Help our unbelief!**

One:

God is present here. God is working in our midst.

**All:**

**Then our mouths are filled with laughter,  
Our tongues shout out with joy!**

Please stay standing and let us join our voices  
in hymn # 46: "I sing the mighty power of God."

This Call is based on Psalm 126  
by Rev. Penny L. Lowes  
newly elected assistant moderator of  
the 32nd General Synod of  
the United Church of Christ in 2019  
she is a recently-retired pastor from Michigan

# Opening Prayer

Lord, today we recall your faithfulness.  
Thank you that you walk with us every day,  
that you are with us in each moment.  
Thank you that your promises are true  
and your goodness never fails us.

In this moment we come to you  
and we lay our lives before you.  
May we worship and adore you  
with every fiber of our being.  
May everything within us cry  
"Holy is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was and is and is to come".  
And so today we join with all those  
who worship and confess you as Lord,  
from generations past and present,  
and with all the angels that sing in heaven  
of your greatness and beauty.

Lord we adore you.

Lord we love you.

Lord you are so precious to us.

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This prayer is inspired by the prophet Isaiah's vision  
of worshiping angels recorded in Isaiah 6:3  
and witnessed again by the writer of Revelation.

# Genesis 28:10-19a

(As a transition from the Opening Prayer,  
the organist softly plays “Jacob’s Ladder” once through,  
M moves from lectern to pew)

P - *Jacob left Beersheba and went to Haran.*

[As the above is read, B gets up from his seat, mid-way back, and walks down the aisle and up the steps. As the following is read, she takes a rolled up bed-mat (beach towel?) and spreads it on the ground horizontal to the pews, then looks for and finds a stone and places it on the mat as a pillow. Then she lies down to sleep.]

P - *He came to a certain place and camped for the night since the sun had set. He took one of the stones there, set it under his head and lay down to sleep. And he dreamed: A stairway was set on the ground and it reached all the way to the sky; angels of God were going up and going down on it. Then GOD was right before him, saying,*

M - *“I am GOD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. I’m giving the ground on which you are sleeping to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will be as the dust of the Earth; they’ll stretch from west to east and from north to south. All the families of the Earth will bless themselves in you and your descendants. Yes. I’ll stay with you, I’ll protect you wherever you go, and I’ll bring you back to this very ground. I’ll stick with you until I’ve done everything I promised you.”*

P - Jacob woke up from his sleep.

[ B opens her eyes and props herself up on an elbow facing the congregation, still lying down.]

P - He said,

M - *“GOD is in this place - truly. And I didn’t even know it!”*

P - He was terrified. He whispered in awe,

M - *“Incredible. Wonderful. Holy. This is God’s House. This is the Gate of Heaven.”*

P - *Jacob was up first thing in the morning.*

[ B rises and rolls up her bed-mat. Then, as the following is read, she takes her stone pillow and stands it up, pretends to pour oil on it. Then she returns to her seat.]

1 - *He took the stone he had used for his pillow and stood it up as a memorial pillar and poured oil over it. He christened the place Bethel (God’s House).*

scripture text is from *The Message*  
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(organ begins with intro, and then Meghan leads “Jacob’s ladder”)

# Jacob's Ladder

*Jacob's Ladder* 8.8.8.5.

Words: African-American spiritual

Music: African-American spiritual, arr. Horace Clarence Boyer, © 1992

1. We are climb - ing Ja - cob's lad - der,  
2. Ev - ery round goes high - er, high - er,  
3. Sin - ner do you love your Je - sus?  
4. If you love him, why not serve him?

We are climb - ing Ja - cob's lad - der,  
Ev - ery round goes high - er, high - er,  
Sin - ner do you love your Je - sus?  
If you love him, why not serve him?

We are climb - ing Ja - cob's lad - der,  
Ev - ery round goes high - er, high - er,  
Sin - ner do you love your Je - sus?  
If you love him, why not serve him?

Pil - grims of the cross.  
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Message

*“Even when not aware”*

followed by Hymn #332

**“Blessed assurance”**

# Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24

*(Mehan:)*

- <sup>1</sup> You have searched me, LORD,  
and you know me.
- <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- <sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.
- <sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue  
you, LORD, know it completely.
- <sup>5</sup> You hem me in behind and before,  
and you lay your hand upon me.
- <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

*(Beth:)*

- <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?
- <sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- <sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- <sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.
- <sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"
- <sup>12</sup> even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

*(Mehan:)*

- <sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

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

# Directed Prayer

Close your eyes ...  
Be still and know ...  
that you are known completely ...  
by the One who created you ...  
God knows your thoughts and prayers ...  
even before they are expressed ...

In the quiet of these moments, bring to mind one or two concerns about yourself - perhaps related to your health or finances or relationships... Imagine holding this problem or hindrance or question – whatever – in your hands in front of you. Don't seek to analyze or solve or answer it... Simply let it be... There in your hands... Now lift your hands holding this concern or these issues. Raise them to the One who knows you better than you know yourself... Make of them an offering ... to God. Release them into larger hands... While you are not letting go of responsibility (for you always have the ability to respond, to work on your problems), let go of the sense of them being a burden you cannot handle. With God, all things are possible...

Now, in the continuing quiet, bring to mind at least one person who was mentioned earlier. This may be someone you know, or someone you do not. It may be some people in general, or an issue raised. No matter. Imagine holding them, with their problem or hindrance or question – whatever – in your hands in front of you. Don't seek to analyze or solve or answer what this person or these people face. Simply let them be. There in your

hands... Now lift your hands holding them... Raise them to the One who knows them better than they know themselves. Give them ... to God. Release them into larger hands... While you are not letting go of responsibility for them (for you always have the ability to respond), let go *with them* of the burden they may not be able to handle. With God, all things are possible...

Now, with our Nigerian Brethren who have prayed in this way the prayer which Jesus taught, open your eyes and be ready to repeat what Meghan sings - phrase by phrase - when she directs you to sing it...

# Our Father who art in heaven 351

Irregular

Leader then All



Our Fa-ther who art in heav-en, hal-low-ed be thy name.



Thy king - dom come, thy will be done on



earth, as it is in heav-en. And give us this day our



dai-ly bread. For - give us our debts, as we for - give our



debt - ors. And lead us not in - to temp - ta - tion,



but de - li - ver us from e - vil, for thine is the king - dom and the



pow - er and the glo - ry for - ev - er - more, for -



ev - er - more. A - men. For - ev - er - more. A - men.

Text: based on Matthew 6

Music: Jabani P. Mambula

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## Romans 8:12-25

(Beth:)

12-14 So don't you see that we don't owe this old do-it-yourself life one red cent. There's nothing in it for us, nothing at all. The best thing to do is give it a decent burial and get on with your new life. God's Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go!

(Mehan:)

15-17 This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us—an unbelievable inheritance! We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him!

(Beth:)

18-21 That's why I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next. Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead. Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens.

(Mehan:)

22-25 All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's *within* us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

from *The Message*

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# Responding with our Tithes and Offerings

“*There are things to do and places to go!*” the apostle Paul wrote, according to *The Message* paraphrase we just heard. Of course, we could look at all the need around us and grow discouraged over all that should be done to make the world a better place. However, the resurrection life we have in Christ Jesus makes us “*adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike ‘What’s next, Papa?’*” It’s with deepening “*joyful anticipation*” that we respond.

Our summer service project involves putting together school kits to share with children through Church World Service. Our goal is to put together 100 of them. Check your bulletin for the items we still need. When we have all we need, we’ll put them together after church. In addition to buying all the ingredients, we also need to send \$2 per kit to help send them on their way. Consider adding a special offering for this as the plates are passed. Thanks to Mel and Lois Horst for leading this effort.

Let’s respond with joyful expectancy to the good news we have received, for God is at work in us, and beyond us.

Ushers, come and guide us in our offering.

## Offertory Video

(combines 2 *Church World Service* videos:)

[https://youtu.be/cHDAbPFVU\\_I](https://youtu.be/cHDAbPFVU_I)

and

<https://youtu.be/EdVma4B0L1w>

## Shine, Jesus, shine

1. Lord, the light of Your love is shin-ing, in the midst of the  
2. Lord, I come to Your awe-some pres-ence, from the sha-dows in-  
3. As we gaze on Your king-ly bright-ness so our fac-es dis-

dark-ness shin-ing; Je-sus, Light of the world, shine up-on us,  
to Your ra-diance; by the blood I may en-ter Your bright-ness;  
play your like-ness, ev-er chang-ing from glo-ry to glo-ry;

set us free by the truth You now bring us; Shine on me;  
search me, try me, con-sume all my dark-ness; Shine on me,  
mir-rored here may our lives tell your sto-ry; Shine on me,

Shine on me. Shine, Je-sus, shine; fill this land with the  
Shine on me.  
Shine on me.

Fa-ther's glo-ry. Blaze, Spir-it, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

Flow, riv-er, flow; Flood the na-tions with grace and mer-cy.

Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.

by Graham Kendrick, 8 1987 Make Way Music (Admin by Music Services)  
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# Responsive Benediction

Leader: Go in love,

**People: for love alone endures.**

Leader: Go in peace,

**People: for it is the gift of God.**

Leader: Go in safety,

**People: for we cannot go where God is not.**

Hymnal #764  
by Earle W. Fike  
from *Book of Worship*  
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