

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

April 21, 2021

Psalm 8

(NRSV)

To the leader: according to The Gittith.

A Psalm of David.

- 1 O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the
earth!
- You have set your glory above the heavens.
- 2 Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of
your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.
- 3 When I look at your heavens, the work of
your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have
established;
- 4 what are human beings that you are
mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
- 5 Yet you have made them a little lower
than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor.
- 6 You have given them dominion over the
works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
- 7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
- 8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the
seas.
- 9 O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the
earth!



Meditation

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

In several places in the New Testament the Apostle Paul uses running a race as a metaphor for the Christian life. He challenges us to run as well as we can, and make every effort to finish the race. Although I'm not a runner myself (I love walking but I've never been thrilled about running), I can see the value of Paul's analogy. What does it take to run a good race, and what does that tell us about how to live a Christian life?

Constant practice is essential for any runner. I've known people who run every day, either first thing in the morning or after work in the afternoon. They say they can feel a difference if they miss only two or three days. Our faith is something we practice daily. We have our daily time of devotions, but even more we find that our faith is exercised every day. Perhaps we face a decision that faith helps us to make. Maybe we have a chance to express our Christian love to someone in need. Perhaps there's a difficult situation where we need God's guidance and strength. Whenever we touch base with God we're running the race of faith.

Running requires self-discipline and self-motivation. I imagine that there are many days when runners can't wait to run—they look forward to enjoying the experience. But I also imagine that there are days when the last thing they want to do is to run—they

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Run the race . . .

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have to force themselves to run in spite of their lack of immediate motivation. It is that way with our faith as well. On most days it's a joy to follow Jesus—a joy to sense his presence, to do his will, to touch the lives of others with his love. But there are those days when it becomes a duty—when he calls us to do something we don't want to do, or perhaps when we lack motivation. There are those days when our sense of obedient self-discipline requires us to follow Jesus, regardless of our feelings.

Winning a race depends on good nutrition. A well-balanced diet enables us to perform at our best. We need a well-balanced spiritual diet as well. Our spiritual food consists of a healthy mixture of personal devotions, corporate worship (including receiving Communion on a regular basis), serving others, giving generously, working for a better world, fellowship, and studying scripture together. Sometimes we need to enhance our diet with special times of fasting or with extraordinary service.

A good coach is essential. Good coaches are masters of motivation and masters of technique. They can help us find the best running shoes, and show us how best to make use of our skills. They know how to motivate us to develop our self-discipline. We have many coaches for our spiritual race as well—other Christians, small groups, pastors, family, and above all the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us, directs us, and inspires us. He makes us more like Christ, sometimes using others to change our lives, sometimes touching our hearts directly.

Finally, to win the race we have to know where the finish line is. Good runners know how far they've come and how far they have to go. They pace themselves and strategize accordingly. The goal we have is not a finish line, however. God's goal for us is to love God with all our being, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to make disciples of all people. As we run the race of faith, these are our aims. If we lose sight of the goal, we'll wander off the track and take ourselves out of the race. But if we keep our eyes on God and God's purpose, we will have an impact on the lives of others, and on the world we live in.

How are you running your race of faith? Take some time to seek the wisdom of God's Holy Spirit. Listen for his voice, let him be your coach. "Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 2:1c-2)



Prayer

Most gracious God, may your Spirit lead us and guide us every day. Keep us focused on your goal for us as we grow in faith in you and in love for others. Equip us to run the race that is set before us. Make us eager to do your will as we love others in your name.

Pour out your healing love on the brokenness of this world. Make whole those whose lives are broken by sickness, by isolation, by grief and loss, and by injustice and oppression. Grant us the hope of your presence. Transform our lives and the lives of others with the loving touch of your Holy Spirit.

Forgive us, Lord, for the times we stumble and fall. Cleanse us of all unrighteousness, and restore in us the power of your Spirit. May our joy be full as we lift up the light of your presence in the darkness of our world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

. . . that is set before you.

Ruth's Harvest

Thank you to all who have previously helped fill backpacks for Ruth's Harvest. Your efforts helped in the process of getting much needed nutritional weekend meals to area food insecure school children. Our team's next date to volunteer is **Wednesday April 28 at 4:30 PM at Lincoln Elementary.** Face masks are worn and social distancing is maintained in the pantry. The pantry is accessed directly through an outside entrance. If you are willing to help on Wednesday April 28, please contact Julie McGeary, 717-398-2740 for details.

"Spring of Promise" Worship Services

The United Methodist Churches of Upper Adams and Gettysburg are holding Wednesday evening outdoor services from April 14 through May 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Oakside Community Park Amphitheater, 2880 Table Rock Rd., Biglerville.

This week (April 28) Pastor Rick Smith will preach on "Those Who Come to Me Shall Not Hunger".

The weekly offering will be divided among area fire companies.

Jesus never promised us a life without suffering, but he did promise that it is possible to experience peace in all circumstances. In this Spring Series of Worship, we'll discover that we can always rely on the Promises of Jesus.

Thank You!

Joyce Dye would like to thank everyone who called her and sent her cards for her ninetieth birthday. It was much appreciated!

Weekly Prayer Concerns

To add someone to this prayer list, please call the church office.

This week's list (as of 4/13/2021) is:

Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt's brother
Florence Davis
Mary Fleming
Ben Fisher
Don Richmond
Jackie Rudisill
Rev. Meredith Ball

Members in Assisted Living / Skilled Care Homes:

Edith Bulman (SpiriTust Lutheran, York);
Shirley Hammond (Morning Glory, Littlestown);
Missy Legay (Moul Home, York);
Peggy Reynolds (Quincy-cottage, Waynesboro);
Gloria Swingler (Country Meadows-apartment, Mechanicsburg)

Members with Limited Mobility:

Butch Carter, Betty Cook, Joyce Dye, Barbara Evans, Pearl Keckler, Raymond Koenig, Chuck Lutz, Ruth Anna Polley, Wilma Schable, Betty Schulteis, June Spencer

Announcements

We will not be holding the spring yard sale this year due to continuing COVID concerns.

The Missions Committee is collecting gently used shoes for donation to Mission Central. If you have shoes that you can donate, please place them in the box in the church lobby. Thank you for your generosity.

HYMN

Take My Life, and Let It Be

Frances R. Havergal, Louis J. F. Herold (arr. George Kingsley)

1. Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

2. Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

3. Take my will, and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Frances R. Havergal was born in Astley, England, in 1836, and died in 1879. She was the youngest child of William H. Havergal, who was a noted hymnologist and pastor. She battled poor health throughout her life, yet was able to master several modern languages as well as Greek and Hebrew. She wrote numerous poems and also composed a few hymn tunes. Louis J. F. Hérold (1791-1833) was born in Paris and studied at the Paris Conservatory, where he won the first prize in piano. He is best known for composing operas and piano music.

Written in 1874, the text of *Take My Life and Let It Be* (399 in our hymnal) was based on an incident in the author's life. When visiting the house of a friend, ten persons were converted to Christ or reaffirmed their faith through her ministry. When she was leaving, the phrase "Ever, only, all for Thee" came to her mind and led to the writing of the hymn. The tune was published in 1839. The 1957 hymnal of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (one of our predecessor denominations) used a different tune for this text. Chris Tomlin and Louie Giglio modified that tune for a contemporary Christian setting of the hymn, adding "Here am I, all of me, take my life, it's all for thee" as a chorus.

Altar Flowers

The altar flowers for April 25 are presented by Sandy Riley and dedicated to the glory of God and in gratitude that our Church is able to hold worship services.



We greatly appreciate your continued faithful donations to GUMC during this time of continuing change. Your faithful giving is greatly appreciated, and we are very grateful for your continued generosity.

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