

# Gettysburg United Methodist Church

December 23 and 30, 2020

## *Psalm 77:11-20*

(NRSV)

- 11 *I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord;  
I will remember your wonders of old.*
- 12 *I will meditate on all your work,  
and muse on your mighty deeds.*
- 13 *Your way, O God, is holy.  
What god is so great as our God?*
- 14 *You are the God who works wonders;  
you have displayed your might among the  
peoples.*
- 15 *With your strong arm you redeemed your  
people,  
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah*
- 16 *When the waters saw you, O God,  
when the waters saw you, they were afraid;  
the very deep trembled.*
- 17 *The clouds poured out water;  
the skies thundered;  
your arrows flashed on every side.*
- 18 *The crash of your thunder was in the whirl  
wind;  
your lightnings lit up the world;  
the earth trembled and shook.*
- 19 *Your way was through the sea,  
your path, through the mighty waters;  
yet your footprints were unseen.*
- 20 *You led your people like a flock  
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*



## Meditation

Read Psalm 46

In my first parish, one of the churches held a Watchnight Service every year on December 31. They met in the Sanctuary at 11:00 p.m. for worship which included prayer and communion. At midnight they went downstairs to the Fellowship Hall for a meal of pork, sauerkraut, and mashed potatoes. They believed that if you started the year with pork and sauerkraut, you would have good luck throughout the year.

I wonder—did they followed that custom on New Year's Eve last year? If they did, it certainly didn't work very well! This year has been filled with major concerns and major disasters. We've been battling a pandemic unlike anything we've seen since 1918. We've faced ongoing concerns for racial justice in our nation, as well as concerns about violence. We've had a tumultuous election season that has been unlike any other in our history. There were a record number of named hurricanes this year, and record-setting wildfires on the west coast. If we could get a do-over for 2020, we would make a lot of changes!

This year has placed all of us under ongoing stress. Tempers have frayed, patience has worn thin, we experienced conflict and disagreement everywhere. The end of the year is a good time to pause, take a deep breath, and reconnect with God. Spend some time in his presence. Take all of your worries and concerns, and give them to God. Relax, let go, and let God take over. His love is bigger than anything we face in life.

Think about your relationships. When we're

Due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays, there will be no mailing next week. Weekly mailings will resume the first week of 2021.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

# Let go . . .

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stressed we don't handle them as well as we would otherwise. If you've had some difficult relationships this year, give them to the Lord. Seek God's counsel. Be ready to forgive or ask forgiveness as God leads. Take time to try to mend anything that may be broken. Remember Jesus' love for all of us at the cross.

Stress affects your body as well as your emotions. Look out for yourself. Take a walk in the snow. Take time to relax and do nothing but enjoy the beauty of God's creation. Don't let stress tempt you into poor nutritional choices. Listen to relaxing music. Keep active in healthy ways.

Remember that we can't always handle stress on our own. Talk things over with a close friend. Don't hesitate to seek counseling if you feel even a little overwhelmed. God often works through others, especially through people who have a gift for counseling.

As bad as 2020 has been, think of all the good things that came out of the year. The pandemic inspired heroic care and compassion from health care workers and many others on the front lines. A vaccine was developed in record time. There have been tremendous acts of charity (including over \$9,000 for grocery cards donated by GUMC) to help people in need. We've become aware of racial and economic inequalities and concerns that challenge us to work hard for deep change. We've reached out in compassion to those who have suffered loss. We've grown in faith as we've learned to walk with God through dark valleys and deep waters. God is always there, and his light overcomes the darkness.

What about 2021? We don't know what the future holds. It has to be better than 2020, doesn't it? But if it's your custom to start the year with pork and sauerkraut, you may want to have an extra helping this year!

Take time to pray, take time to listen to God's Spirit, above all take time to love. And remember these words from Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God."

—Pastor Rick

## Prayer

Lord God, we thank you for the year gone past. In the midst of darkness, we clung to your light. In the midst of troubles, you walked by our side. In times of trial and uncertainty, you gave us hope for the future.

Be with us in the year to come. Grant us the peace and joy of your Holy Spirit. Help us to rely even more upon you. Strengthen the bonds of love that join us with family and friends. Make us channels of your peace and love in the lives of others.

We continue to pray for people in their time of need. We pray for healing, for strength, for peace and comfort, and for your grace. Lead us as a nation through difficult times. Grant us the gift of hope, that we may trust you in all things.

We place ourselves and our future in your hands. May we walk with you day by day as we lead lives of service to others. Renew us in the power of your Holy Spirit, for we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



In this mailing you'll find a flyer about a special Christmas offering—Building the Beloved Community. Funds will go toward one of our conference's most important priorities of dismantling racism in our communities and in our churches. This fund will help our clergy, laity, our churches, and our community embody the beloved community as we confront and work for racial justice.

Contributions for this fund may be sent to the church or placed in the offering. They should be marked for "Building the Beloved Community Fund BBCF (9300)".

## Announcements”

Offering envelopes for 2021 are now available. Rather than mail your offering envelopes to you, we ask that you pick them up at the church, if possible. They are located on tables in the Multi-Purpose Room, and are spaced far enough apart for safe handling due to COVID concerns. Envelopes that are not picked up will be mailed. Please pick them up at your convenience. Thank you!

From the Church Treasurer: IRS regulations require that donations postmarked or received on or before Dec. 31 be credited to 2020. Donations that are postmarked or received Jan. 1 or later will be credited to 2021.

We are seeking some volunteers to help in the church office as our secretary recovers from shoulder surgery. Could you give 1 to 1.5 hours to stuff envelopes and prepare our weekly mailing? We usually meet at 12:30 Wednesday afternoon. If you are able to help please contact Mary Truscott at [uxcel@hotmail.com](mailto:uxcel@hotmail.com).

We greatly appreciate your continued faithful donations to GUMC during this time of change and crisis. Your faithfulness has enabled us to continue to pay all of our expenses, and we are very grateful for your continued generosity.

## In-Person Worship Suspended

Due to the great increase of COVID rates in Adams County, Church Council voted to temporarily suspend in-person worship for a period of 4 weeks beginning after the Christmas Eve Services. (There will be no in-person worship on Dec. 27 and following Sundays, but we will meet in person on Christmas Eve.) Church Council will re-evaluate this decision toward the end of January.

Online Worship Services will continue to be available weekly on Facebook.

## Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week's list (as of 12/22/2020) is:

Joyce Dye  
Rodney Truscott  
Dale Shade—recovering from surgery  
Penny Daugherty  
Scott Bowers  
Imogene Hunt's brother  
Raymond Koenig  
Hope Powell  
Cathy Libera

Members in Assisted Living / Skilled Care Homes:

Edith Bulman (SpiriTust Lutheran, York);  
Shirley Hammond (Morning Glory, Littlestown); Missy Legay (Moul Home, York); Bob Reed (Lorien, Mt Airy, MD); 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 Schai-ble, Betty Schulteis, June Spencer, Virginia White

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## Serenity Prayer

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. Amen.*

# HYMN

## *We Three Kings*

*John H. Hopkins, Jr.*

1 We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign. [Refrain]

John H. Hopkins, Jr., was born in Pittsburgh in 1820. He was the son of an Episcopal Bishop, and was an accomplished theologian, musician, artist, and teacher. He served as rector of Episcopal churches in Plattsburg, NY and Williamsport, PA. He died in 1891. He wrote both text and music for *We Three Kings*.

*We Three Kings* was written in 1857, and published in 1863. The second, third, and fourth verses were originally sung as solos (a different soloist for each King—traditionally named Gaspard, Melchior, and Balthazar), with everyone joining in the chorus. The hymn is unique in that it modulates from a minor key to the relative major key in the chorus. The carol is found in our hymnal as No. 254

3 Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worshiping God on high. [Refrain]

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]

5 Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
sounds through the earth and skies. [Refrain]

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## Crisis Hotlines and Helplines

During these trying times, it's good to be aware of some of the positive resources available in our community. Many people are under extraordinary stress because of the ongoing situation. Please feel free to share this information with others as you feel appropriate.

CONTACT Helpline: (800) 932-4616

Wellspan Behavioral Health Helpline (Philhaven):  
(800) 932-0359

TrueNorth Crisis Line: (866) 325-0339

Substance Abuse Hotline: (800) 662-4357

Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-7233

Adams-Hanover Crisis Information Referral Hotline:  
(717) 632-4900

## Altar Flowers

The altar flowers for Sunday, December 27 are presented by Larry and Betsy Speer in memory of Lois Mae Ferrence and Bud Crews.

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