

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

February 10, 2021

Psalm 51:1-17

(NRSV)

To the leader. A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.*
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.*
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.*
- 4 Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.*
- 5 Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.*
- 6 You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret
heart.*
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.*
- 9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.*
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.*
- 11 Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy Spirit from me.*
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.*

- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.*
- 14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your
deliverance.*
- 15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.*
- 16 For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would
not be pleased.*
- 17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken
spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will
not despise.*

Meditation

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

Lent is a season of forty days that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on the Saturday before Easter. Forty days reflects the forty years that Israel spent in the wilderness, the forty days that Elijah journeyed in the desert, and the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness when he was tempted by Satan. If you count the number of days between Ash Wednesday and the Saturday before Easter however, you find that there are forty-six days. That's because Sundays are not included in Lent. Lent is a season of fasting and penitence. Since every Sunday celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, Sundays are feast days and not included in the season.

The word 'Lent' comes from the Old English 'lencten', which means springtime. It refers not only to the time of the year when Lent occurs, but also to the purpose of Lent. Lent is to be springtime for our souls—a time of renewal and growth. Lent focuses on two complementary truths—the truth of our hu-

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Die to self.

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man condition, and the truth of God's grace.

Our human condition is flawed at best. Scripture reminds us that we are all sinners (Rom. 3:23). We have turned away from God (Is. 53:6) and have separated ourselves from his love. We try to put ourselves in God's place. We worship the creation rather than the creator. We do things that hurt ourselves and others, and we fail to do things that help others. We don't live up to our God-given potential. Lent is a time of self-examination when we see ourselves as we really are—both the good and the not-so-good.

Our human condition is mortal. There is "a time to be born, and a time to die." (Eccl. 3:2) We try to ignore the reality of death, but "there is nothing certain but death and taxes". The ashes of Ash Wednesday remind us of our mortality ("earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust"), and also remind us that we are spiritually dead apart from God. God is the source of life in the fullness of its joy and abundance. To be separated from God is to be separated from life; our sin separates us from God. Lent is a time to remember our mortality as we ponder the true life that only God can give.

God's grace, however, is far greater than our sin and greater even than death itself. Grace is God's unearned favor and love toward us. By the grace of the cross God forgives our sin and reconciles us to himself. By grace God gives us power to resist temptation and become more like Christ. By grace we learn to die to self and live in Christ. Grace makes us more loving and forgiving. Grace shows us the needs of others and equips us to meet their needs. Grace empowers us to transform society. Grace frees us to live in the full joy of Jesus Christ. Lent keeps us focused on our need for grace.

By his grace, God gives us eternal and abundant life. Lent looks beyond the cross to the empty tomb. Historically, Lent was a time for new converts to prepare for baptism on Easter Sunday. It is a time of preparation for Easter, not for Good Friday. God gives us new life in Christ—life that is abundant and

fulfilling, life that is replete with love and peace. Grace assures us of the reality of life eternal. We know that we shall live because Jesus lives. Lent looks forward to Jesus' victory over death as he gives us abundant and eternal life.

All of this comes as we receive God's grace by faith in Jesus Christ. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." (Eph. 2:8) Lent truly is the spring-time of our souls. Just as the death of winter yields the new life of spring, so our faith in him yields new life in Christ.

May you keep a holy Lent this year. Learn to die to self as you find new life in Christ. Seek a closer walk with Jesus, a deeper love for others, and a greater concern for our world. Be fully alive in the grace of Jesus Christ.

— Pastor Rick

Prayer

Most loving God, grant us grace to see ourselves as we really are. We are thankful that we are made in your image even as we confess our sins against you and against others. Forgive us through the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ. Cleanse us of all unrighteousness and put a new and right spirit within us. Teach us daily to die to self and live in Christ.

We pray for the needs of our world. We continue to pray for the homeless and the hungry, for the unemployed, for the oppressed, and for all who suffer. Be their strength as you use us to reach out to them. We pray for the sick and the mourning, especially the many affected by COVID. Bring healing and comfort to all who need you this day.

We pray for America as we journey through difficult times as a nation. Be with those who serve our com-

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Live in Christ.

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munity and our nation; bless them and their families. Bless our leaders and encourage them to seek your will.

Walk with us every day, that we may become more like Christ our Lord, for it is through him that we pray. Amen.

In-Person Worship Suspension Continues

Due to the continued high COVID rates in Adams County, Church Council voted unanimously to continue the suspension of in-person worship through the end of February. Church Council will re-evaluate this decision on February 22.

Online Worship Services continue to be available weekly on Facebook.

Sermon by Phone is now available at 717-200-2956

“Sermon by Phone”

717-200-2956

Thanks to a special donation, we have enrolled in Sermon by Phone. This service enables you to hear the most recent GUMC sermon by making a simple phone call. Just call 717-200-2956 and you will hear Pastor Rick’s sermon for the week. This sermon is always different from the Meditation included in this weekly mailing. We hope that this service will be especially helpful for those who are unable to access the weekly service via Facebook. Any comments or feedback you have would be appreciated.

Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week’s list (as of 2/9/2021) is:

Joyce Dye
Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt’s brother
Susan Pester
Jean Green

Family and friends of Bob Reed

Family and friends of Don Fortnum

Family and friends of Rev. Jay Zimmerman;

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 Schai-ble, Betty Schulteis, June Spencer, Virginia White

Zoom Fellowship Time

We hold a weekly Zoom Fellowship Time every Sunday 10:00 a.m. Each week we end with a brief time of prayer.

If you’re interested in joining us, please contact Pastor Rick (pastor@gettysburgumc.org) for a Zoom link and information.

HYMN

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

Claudia I. Hernaman, USA Folk Melody (arr. Annabel Morris Buchanan)

Verse 1

Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with thee to mourn our sins
And close by thee to stay.

Verse 2

As thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the victory win,
O give us strength in thee to fight,
In thee to conquer sin.

Verse 3

As thou didst hunger bear, and thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and chiefly live
By thy most holy word.

Verse 4

And through these days of penitence,
And through thy passiontide,
Yea, evermore in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.

Verse 5

Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering over past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last.

CCLI Song # 2312509

Annabel Morris Buchanan | Charles H. Webb | Claudia Frances Ibotson Hernaman

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Claudia Ibotson Hernaman was born in Addlestone, Surrey, England in 1838, and died in Brussels in 1898. Her father was a clergyman in the Church of England. She married a minister/inspector of schools, and had a life-long interest in religious education. Many of the hymns she wrote were intended for children. Annabel Morris Buchanan was born in 1888 in Groesbeck, TX, and died in 1983. She was an expert musicologist who specialized in studies of American folk music.

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days is one of the few hymns that focuses specifically on the Lenten season. It reflects Jesus' struggle with temptation in Matt. 4:1-11 and Lk. 4:1-13. The hymn speaks to our temptations and the victory we find through Christ. The tune may be traced to *The Christian Harp* (1832, 1836). The version in our hymnal is based on Buchanan's memory of her grandmother singing it to her when she was a child. It is found as no. 269 in our hymnal.

Ash Wednesday Service

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be held on Facebook on February 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. You may prepare your own ashes for use at home, or you may pick up a small Ziploc bag of ashes in the church lobby after February 10. (Office hours are M, W, & Th from 8:30 to 3:30.) If you aren't able to pick them up at the church, please call the church office at (717) 334-3032 and a volunteer will deliver them to you.

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.

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