

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

January 20, 2021

Psalm 3

(NRSV)

*A Psalm of David,
when he fled from his son Absalom.*

- 1 O Lord, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me;
- 2 many are saying to me,
“There is no help for you in God.” *Selah*
- 3 But you, O Lord, are a shield around me,
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.
- 4 I cry aloud to the Lord,
and he answers me from his holy hill. *Selah*
- 5 I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.
- 6 I am not afraid of ten thousands of people
who have set themselves against me all
around.
- 7 Rise up, O Lord!
Deliver me, O my God!
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
you break the teeth of the wicked.
- 8 Deliverance belongs to the Lord;
may your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

Meditation

Read 2 Samuel 18:31-33 or Matthew 11:25-30

Sometimes life seems to be too much for us. We're overwhelmed by circumstances beyond our control or we carry burdens we can no longer bear; life seems to be falling apart.

That's where King David found himself in 2 Samuel chapters 15-19. His son, Absalom, rebelled against

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In Remembrance

Rev. Jay Zimmerman

It is with deep sadness that we mourn the passing of Rev. Jay Zimmerman on January 13, 2021. Pastor Jay served Gettysburg UMC for 14 years with great faithfulness, energy, and love. He powerfully touched the lives of many in our church and community with God's grace, and was a blessing to everyone who knew him. He had a major impact on the community of Gettysburg, always working to better our community and the lives of its people. He was constantly doing the work of God, sharing God's love for all with tremendous power and dedication. His light will be greatly missed in our community, and his presence will be greatly missed in our lives.

We remember the words of St. Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7-8: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” Pastor Jay fought the good fight to spread God's love and justice in our world; he was always faithful to God and to all of us. Now he has finished the race, and has received the crown of righteousness as Jesus welcomes him into heaven with the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

God is our strength . . .

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him and David barely escaped with his life. David raised an army to oppose Absalom, and God gave him the victory. But in the course of the battle Absalom was killed. David was overwhelmed with grief. He had regained his throne at the cost of his son. Even though his son had rebelled against him, David still mourned his loss.

How did David deal with his grief, indeed with this whole difficult situation? David wasn't afraid to express his feelings and uncertainties to others. When Absalom rebelled, David sought help and counsel from his trusted advisors. He relied on their wisdom, drew on their strength, and worked with them to regain his throne. When Absalom finally was killed, David openly expressed his grief. In the same way, when we face difficulties it's good to seek the wisdom and strength of others. We need to talk about situations as we work through our feelings and concerns. We draw strength and wisdom from friends and family as we share our concerns with them. If we've suffered loss it's good to share memories and stories and to express our feelings. There are those times when we need others to weep with us as well as laugh with us.

David found strength in his faith in God. Even though the passage in 2 Samuel 18 doesn't specifically mention prayer, we know David turned to the Lord. Psalm 3 is ascribed to him at the time that he fled from his son, Absalom. In Psalm 3 he shared his honest doubts with God, and declared his faith that God was his strength and his deliverer. When we face times of difficulty or times of loss, we turn to the Lord to be our strength and our deliverer. There's nothing wrong with sharing our own deepest concerns and doubts with God. In Matt. 11:28 Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." When we turn to Christ and give him our burdens, our cares, and our sorrows, he is able to take them upon himself, and provide rest for our souls. The Lord is our strength and our song.

Finally, David was able to move on with the help of others. David's situation was unique in that he was king, and was responsible for the morale of his army. Joab, who was the leader of his army, reminded him that he had to move beyond his grief for their sake. Although our situation is not the same, there is a time for all of us to begin to work to resolve a difficult situation or to begin to move beyond our grief. It may not be easy, but in the long term it is a better choice for ourselves and others. We may move on in our own time and in our own way, but it is essential that we move on.

When you feel overwhelmed by circumstances or grief, remember David. Don't hesitate to share your concerns and sorrows with others. Hold on to good memories. Take time to seek the Lord and cast your cares upon him. Seek his wisdom and the guidance of friends as you begin to move on. Sometimes God leads us into dark valleys, but he always brings us through.

Prayer

Most loving God, remind us to turn to you in times of hardship and grief. Guide us through any difficulties that we face, surround us with wise and caring family and friends, and enable us freely to share our hearts with you and with others. May your Son Jesus be our Good Shepherd every day as we seek to serve and follow you.

Help us, Lord, to bear one another's burdens. Fill us with your Holy Spirit as we reach out to others in their times of need. May we be mindful of the physical needs of others, and sensitive to their emotional and spiritual concerns. Shine your light through us into the lives of those around us.

Bless America, especially in this time of transition. Bless all those who work to keep us safe and pre-

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serve our freedom. Bless the people of our nation that together we may seek your guidance and wisdom. May America be a continued blessing to the world.

Watch over us as we go about our daily lives. Keep us and those we love safe in the shelter of your arms; for this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Ruth's Harvest Schedule

January Date Changed!

Thank you to all who helped fill backpacks for Ruth's Harvest in 2020. Your efforts helped in the process of getting much needed nutritional weekend meals to area food insecure school children. There has been a date change in the volunteer list for 2021. Our team's date has been changed from Wednesday, January 27 to Thursday, January 28. 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 January 28 at 4:30 PM at Lincoln Elementary, please contact Julie McGeary, 717-398-2740 for details.

Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week's list (as of 1/19/2021) is:

Family and friends of Rev. Jay Zimmerman;
Joyce Dye
Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt's brother
Don Fortnum (now at Genesis)
Susan Pester

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

Zoom Fellowship Time

Some people have expressed a desire for a fellowship time when they could gather with church friends on Zoom to see each other "face to face" and catch up on how people are doing. We are holding a weekly Zoom Fellowship Time every Sunday in January (starting with 1/10/21) at 10:00 a.m. At the end of January we'll decide whether we continue or not. Each week we'll end with a brief time of prayer.

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

HYMN

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Joseph M. Scriven, Charles C. Converse

1. What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.

2. Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Savior, still our refuge;
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In his arms he'll take and shield thee;
thou wilt find a solace there.

Joseph M. Scriven endured many hardships during his life. Born in Ireland in 1819, he emigrated to Canada when he was 25. He was a schoolteacher in Woodstock and Brantford, Ontario, but was eventually unable to work due to health issues which included depression. His fiancé drowned just before their wedding date in 1844. When he again planned to marry his second bride-to-be died after a brief illness. During his life he was a faithful member of the Plymouth Brethren, and his deep faith led him often to help others as he tried to model his life after the Sermon on the Mount. Scriven died in 1886. Charles Converse (1832-1918) was born in Massachusetts and studied music at the University of Leipzig, Germany. He practiced law for many years in Erie, PA, where he composed hymn tunes and other works. His last years were spent in Highwood, NJ.

It's said that Scriven wrote the words for *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* to send to his mother back in Ireland. It was intended to be a comfort for her during a time of illness. Converse wrote the tune for this text in 1868. The hymn expresses eloquently the support Scriven found from Jesus in his life, and the blessings we find when we take things to the Lord in prayer. It is found as No. 526 in our hymnal.

In-Person Worship Suspended

Due to the great increase of COVID rates in Adams County, Church Council voted to temporarily suspend in-person worship. Church Council will re-evaluate this decision at the end of January.

Online Worship Services continue to be available weekly on Facebook.

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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