

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

January 27, 2021

Psalm 89:1-18

(NRSV)

A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

- 1 *I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord,
forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your
faithfulness to all generations.*
- 2 *I declare that your steadfast love is established
forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.*
- 3 *You said, "I have made a covenant with my
chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:
4 'I will establish your descendants forever,
and build your throne for all generations.' "*
Selah
- 5 *Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy
ones.*
- 6 *For who in the skies can be compared to
the Lord?
Who among the heavenly beings is like
the Lord,
7 a God feared in the council of the holy ones,
great and awesome above all that are around
him?*
- 8 *O Lord God of hosts,
who is as mighty as you, O Lord?
Your faithfulness surrounds you.*
- 9 *You rule the raging of the sea;
when its waves rise, you still them.*
- 10 *You crushed Rahab like a carcass;
you scattered your enemies with your mighty
arm.*
- 11 *The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours;*

- the world and all that is in it—you have
founded them.*
- 12 *The north and the south—you created them;
Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your
name.*
- 13 *You have a mighty arm;
strong is your hand, high your right hand.*
- 14 *Righteousness and justice are the foundation
of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.*
- 15 *Happy are the people who know the festal
shout,
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your
countenance;*
- 16 *they exult in your name all day long,
and extol your righteousness.*
- 17 *For you are the glory of their strength;
by your favor our horn is exalted.*
- 18 *For our shield belongs to the Lord,*

Meditation

Read Mark 1:14-45

Immediately after he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus began his ministry in Galilee, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe the gospel." (Mark 1:15)

What does Jesus mean by the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God exists wherever God's reign and rule prevail, wherever the King is recognized. The kingdom exists whenever Jesus is near; the kingdom is present wherever Jesus is loved, honored, and obeyed as Lord and Savior. One way to understand what God's kingdom is like is to consider what happens wherever Jesus is present. His actions in the passages following Mark 1:15 help us to understand

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Thy kingdom come

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the meaning of the kingdom.

In Mark 1:16-20, Jesus calls his first disciples. They leave everything behind to follow him. Jesus calls us to be part of his kingdom, yet gives us a choice. We can choose to leave other things behind and follow Jesus, or we can choose to ignore his call and continue to live outside of his kingdom. God's kingdom is a place where people choose to be.

Jesus casts an evil spirit out of a man, making him well and whole in Mark 1:21-28. God's kingdom exists in opposition to the evils of this world. Jesus calls us to work against all of the causes and effects of evil. He calls us to feed the hungry and help the homeless. He equips us to address the root causes of things that destroy peoples' lives. He expects us to work to eradicate racism and all other kinds of prejudice. The kingdom is a place where the light of God's love overcomes the darkness of evil.

In Mark 1:29-34, Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law as well as many other people. We pray for healing for others, and seek healing and wholeness for ourselves. Jesus heals in many ways, touching the brokenness of wounded souls and spirits as well as physical bodies. There is healing of emotions, healing of memories, and healing of relationships. The kingdom is a place of healing at many levels and in many ways.

In Mark 1:35-39, Jesus spends time alone in prayer before going to preach to the villages and towns of Galilee. In the kingdom, we live and grow in our relationship with God, and extend our relationships with others. We spend time in God's presence through prayer, worship, Bible study, and other channels of God's grace. We reach out in love to those around us, and join together in fellowship and service. God's kingdom is a place to build relationships with God and with others.

Jesus heals a leper in Mark 1:40-45. Lepers were the ultimate outcasts of Jesus' day, yet Jesus made a point of reaching out to them and including them in

his kingdom. Jesus overcomes the obstacles that separate us from others, such as class and race. The kingdom is a place where everyone is welcome and everyone is equal before God.

As we continue to read through the gospel of Mark, we see other ways in which Jesus embodies the kingdom of God. We ultimately arrive at the cross, where Jesus in his love dies for our sake so that we may partake of his kingdom. At the cross, Jesus embraces the power of sacrificial love as he rejects and subverts the authority and power of this world. His kingdom is unlike any earthly kingdom; his authority is unlike any earthly authority. Through his resurrection, we share in the victory of his love and enter his eternal kingdom.

Together, we are the body of Christ—his presence in the world. If Christ lives in our hearts by faith, then his kingdom should be present wherever we are present. May God grant us grace to be the living presence of his kingdom on earth, even as we pray "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

Prayer

Most loving God, your Son, Jesus Christ, proclaimed the coming of your kingdom. Draw us close to your heart, that we may experience your kingdom in our lives. Enable us to grow daily in faith and in grace as we become more like Christ in all that we say and all that we do. May we become the presence of your kingdom in the world.

Help us to grow in love and compassion as we reach out to others in your name. Enable us to see the needs and concerns of those around us, and grant us the gifts and grace to meet their needs with generosity and mercy. Especially be with those impacted by COVID-19, and grant them healing and hope.

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Thy will be done

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Guide our nation and our world through these difficult times. Remind us that you are our Good Shepherd, and help leaders everywhere seek and follow your will. May we be the constant presence of your love wherever we go.

Watch over us and our families. Keep us in the shadow of your wings, and lead us daily to love you and our neighbor. Fill us with your light, that we may be the light of the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



“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. 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 1/26/2021) is:

Family and friends of Rev. Jay Zimmerman;
Joyce Dye
Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt’s brother
Don Fortnum
Susan Pester
Jean Green

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 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 us, please contact Pastor Rick (pastor@gettysburgumc.org) each week for a Zoom link and information.

HYMN

Rejoice, the Lord Is King

Charles Wesley, John Darwall

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice; again I say, rejoice.

2. Jesus the Savior reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice; again I say, rejoice.

3. His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of earth and hell
are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice; again I say, rejoice.

4. Rejoice in glorious hope!
Jesus the Judge shall come,
and take his servants up
to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear th'archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

Charles Wesley was born in 1707 in Epworth, England. With his older brother, John Wesley, he founded the Methodist movement. He was educated at Oxford and ordained a priest in the Church of England. Renowned as a preacher, he traveled throughout England spreading the gospel until he was married and settled down in Bristol. During his lifetime he wrote over 6,500 hymns, and is considered one of the greatest hymn writers in the English language. John Darwall was born in 1731 in Haughton, Staffordshire, England. He was both a pastor and a composer, having written two volumes of piano sonatas as well as serving as curate and vicar of St. Matthew's Church, Walsall, England.

Charles Wesley wrote the text of *Rejoice, the Lord Is King* in 1746, using phrases from Psalm 97 as a basis. The hymn includes New Testament images of Christ's return, as well as the phrase "Lift up your heart" from the Communion liturgy. Darwall wrote the tune around 1770 as part of a project to compose melodies and bass lines for all of the Psalm versifications sung in church. The tune was matched with Charles Wesley's text in the 1800s. The hymn is a powerful expression of Christ's majesty and power, and lifts up our hearts with hope of his return in glory. It is found as No. 715 in our hymnal.

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

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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