

# Gettysburg United Methodist Church

June 24, 2020

## Psalm 19

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 *The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.*  
2 *Day to day pours forth speech,  
and night to night declares knowledge.*  
3 *There is no speech, nor are there words;  
their voice is not heard;*  
4 *yet their voice goes out through all the  
earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.*

*In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,  
5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his  
wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man runs its course with  
joy.*

6 *Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them;  
and nothing is hid from its heat.*

7 *The law of the Lord is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the Lord are sure,  
making wise the simple;*

8 *the precepts of the Lord are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;*

9 *the fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the Lord are true  
and righteous altogether.*

10 *More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey,  
and drippings of the honeycomb.*

11 *Moreover by them is your servant warned;*

*in keeping them there is great reward.*  
12 *But who can detect their errors?  
Clear me from hidden faults.*  
13 *Keep back your servant also from the  
insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless,  
and innocent of great transgression.*  
14 *Let the words of my mouth and the  
meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you,  
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.*



## Meditation

Read Mark 12:28-14.

When John Wesley began the Methodist societies in England in 1739, he wrote three General Rules which all Methodists were expected to follow. These General Rules have been part of our *Book of Discipline* to this day, and we find great benefit in continuing to follow them as modern United Methodists. Even if you've been familiar with them for a long time, it's good to take few moments to remind yourself of their content, and to renew your commitment to keep them in your daily life.

The three General Rules are both simple and profound. They are first to do no harm, second to do

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# Do no harm.

# Do good.

*(Continued from page 1)*

good as often as possible, and third to maintain a loving relationship with God. If we follow them we'll find ourselves keeping Jesus' two great commandments as well—to love God with all our being and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The first two rules refer to our love for our neighbors; the third to our love for God.

Wesley's first rule is to do "no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced . . ." Wesley includes a list of practices to avoid. Many of them are still relevant today; some were specific to the eighteenth century. If he were making the list today I think he would add a few of our more modern practices as well.

Rather than come up with a specific list, however, I think it's better to examine all that we do and ask if our actions or words harm others, harm God, harm God's creation, or harm ourselves. Often the answer is obvious, but sometimes the answer is more subtle. There may be an action, for example, that seems harmless to us but affects our ability to witness with integrity to others. Or we may be so dedicated to helping others that we harm our family by not spending enough time with them. If we examine our actions from many angles, we may find that we are inadvertently causing harm in spite of best intentions.

Wesley's second rule is to do good at every opportunity. Again he provides a specific list, but I think a better approach is to remember a quotation that's often attributed to Wesley: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can." I think that covers it quite well.

Wesley's third rule is "attending upon all the ordinances of God" (followed by another list). By this Wesley means intentionally engaging in practices which strengthen our relationship with God. Bishop Reuben Job summarized it simply as "stay in love

with God". There are many practices that enable us to draw closer to God, such as worship, prayer, reading and studying scripture, Christian music, Holy Communion, Bible study groups, and anything else that deepens our love for God. The third rule is essential to the first two. A close relationship with God opens our lives to the action of his grace, and it's by grace that we find wisdom and strength to avoid harm and do good.

In the midst of difficult times, it's good to reevaluate our lives in light of Wesley's three rules. How do we live them out in the midst of a pandemic? What does it look like to follow them as we work for an end to racism? How can we be the embodiment of God's love in the world?

These are three simple rules that can change our lives, and change our world. May God grant us grace to follow them day by day to his glory and praise.

—Pastor Rick



## Prayer

Lord, we do our best to love you and to love our neighbor, but sometimes we fall short. Forgive us for those times when our faith is weak and our love is inadequate. Create in us a clean heart, give us a strong faith, and enable us to love others with your perfect love. Keep us ever mindful of the joy we find when we do no harm, when we do all the good we

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# Stay in love with God.

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can, and when we grow in our relationship with you.

We seek wholeness for our world and for our nation. Heal those who are sick, comfort those who mourn, keep us safe through this current pandemic. Grant us grace to stand against racism and violence in whatever forms they present themselves, and to work for peace with justice in our land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Worship Services Have Resumed

Our regular Sunday Worship Services have resumed at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. In order to ensure the safety of all who attend, special guidelines must be followed, including social distancing and wearing masks. The complete guidelines are available on our website. Each person and family should prayerfully make their own decision about attending at this time. We support and respect whatever choice you make.

Our modified online worship services will continue to be available on Facebook every Sunday. The sermon for the online service will be the same as the sermon that will be preached in the Sunday morning Sanctuary service.

Sunday School has not yet reopened.

## A Note from Your Parish Nurse

We are all enjoying the weather, sunshine, the blooming flowers in our yards. And, yes, the ability to come together to worship in our physical church again!

However, the Covid-19 virus is still with us and spreading among us. Our community is a popular site to visit. So, many people are coming to our town to visit from other areas and states. We want to make them feel welcome. We see many without masks. Even some in our own community have felt it's time to relax the precautions we have practiced so faithfully over the past few months.

We cannot let down our guard!! Please continue to practice safe distancing, wash your hands often, use sanitizer, and wear a mask when in public places! I know many are not! That is why it's so important for you to have that protection. Be sure to cover your mouth AND your nose. Don't let it be a chin strap. Both areas are the susceptible areas for the droplets of the virus.

As always, I pray for all of you! Please stay healthy! Please let me know if I can be of assistance to you.

In your service, Janet Weitkamp, RN

## Worship Notes

Holy Communion for July has been postponed to July 12 due to a delay in obtaining pre-sealed containers of bread and grape juice. Online Communion will also be celebrated on July 12.

Pre-service music begins Sundays at 10:00 a.m., one-half hour before the service begins. You are welcome to arrive any time before the service officially begins at 10:30 to be inspired by the music.

# HYMN

## *Take Time to Be Holy*

*William D. Longstaff, George C. Stebbins*

1. Take time to be holy,  
speak oft with thy Lord;  
abide in him always,  
and feed on his word.  
Make friends of God's children,  
help those who are weak,  
forgetting in nothing  
his blessing to seek.

2. Take time to be holy,  
the world rushes on;  
spend much time in secret  
with Jesus alone.  
By looking to Jesus,  
like him thou shalt be;  
thy friends in thy conduct  
his likeness shall see.

3. Take time to be holy,  
let him be thy guide,  
and run not before him,  
whatever betide.  
In joy or in sorrow,  
still follow the Lord,  
and, looking to Jesus,  
still trust in his word.

4. Take time to be holy,  
be calm in thy soul,  
each thought and each motive  
beneath his control.  
Thus led by his spirit  
to fountains of love,  
thou soon shalt be fitted  
for service above.

William D. Longstaff was born in 1822 in Sunderland, England, and died there in 1894. He served for many years as the treasurer of Bethesda Free Chapel in London, and worked closely with Dwight L. Moody (the renowned evangelist) and with William Booth (founder of the Salvation Army). George C. Stebbins (1846-1945) was born in Carlton, New York. He studied music in Buffalo, Rochester, and New York City. He became music director of churches in Chicago and Boston, and was a song leader with Dwight Moody's revival team. He composed hundreds of songs (his last one at age 98).

The text of *Take Time to Be Holy* was perhaps inspired by 1 Peter 1:16, "Be holy because I am holy." It calls us to be holy in our relationships with God, with others, and with the world, and challenges us to take time to make holiness a priority in our lives. To be holy is to be devoted to God's service and righteousness. The tune was written for this text while the composer was serving on an evangelistic campaign in India. It may be found as number 395 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

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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.

Sunday worship video services are uploaded to our GUMC Facebook page every week. You don't have to be a member of Facebook to view them. If you have any trouble watching our services, feel free to call Larry Speer at 717 642-6123 (H) or 717 387-3577 (M).

## Church Woman United Cancelled

We've been asked to inform you that the Church Women United Meeting & Luncheon scheduled for Wednesday, July 1, at the Gettysburg Church of the Brethren has been cancelled.

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