

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

June 30, 2021

Psalm 72

(NRSV)

Of Solomon.

- 1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
- 2 May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
- 3 May the mountains yield prosperity for the
people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
- 4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the
people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
- 5 May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all
generations.
- 6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown
grass,
like showers that water the earth.
- 7 In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.
- 8 May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
- 9 May his foes bow down before him,
and his enemies lick the dust.
- 10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts.
- 11 May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.
- 12 For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
- 13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

- 14 From oppression and violence he redeems
their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.
- 15 Long may he live!
May gold of Sheba be given to him.
May prayer be made for him continually,
and blessings invoked for him all day long.
- 16 May there be abundance of grain in the land;
may it wave on the tops of the mountains;
may its fruit be like Lebanon;
and may people blossom in the cities
like the grass of the field.
- 17 May his name endure forever,
his fame continue as long as the sun.
May all nations be blessed in him;[c]
may they pronounce him happy.
- 18 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
- 19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may his glory fill the whole earth.
Amen and Amen.

Meditation

Read Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

When I was growing up, sometimes I borrowed something (like a toy, for example) from a friend. My parents would always tell me to take especially good care of it. "Remember," they said, "it doesn't belong to you. Be careful, and return it in even better shape than it was in when you got it."

Perhaps unknowingly, they were teaching me a basic principle of stewardship—taking care of something that belongs to someone else. In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus tells us the parable of the talents. A man goes on a journey and, before he leaves, he gives talents (units of money) to three of his servants—one receives five, one receives three, and one receives only

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We take care of everything . . .

(Continued from page 1)

one. The one who receives five puts the money to work and makes five more. The one who receives three earns three more talents for his master. The master is well-pleased with both. But the one who receives only one talent buries it in the ground, trying to keep it safe. The master rebukes him for his failure to use his talent to earn more. Two of them cared well for the talents that belonged to their master; the other failed miserably.

How does this apply to us? We have to realize, first of all, that everything belongs to God, and nothing really belongs to us. God created all that is, including us. All that we are is God's gift to us; all that we have is God's gift as well (after all, it's God who gives us the ability to work and earn things for ourselves). Indeed, we *ourselves* belong to God. In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Paul tells us that we are not our own for we were bought with a price—the price of Jesus' death on the cross. At the cross he redeemed us (bought us back) from the power of sin and death. At the cross he brought us from death into life—it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us (Gal. 2:20). And if we ourselves belong to God, then so does everything we own and control.

So we are stewards of all that God has given us; we are taking care of things that ultimately belong to him. How does God want us to invest the “talents” he has given us? I believe he wants us to invest in love—loving God and loving our neighbor—making the world a better place and leading others into a loving relationship with God. Or, as The United Methodist Church puts it, to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Stewardship is often applied to time, ability, and possessions. How well do we use them for God's work in the world? It's been said that if you want to learn someone's priorities you look in two places—their calendar and their checkbook. Do we seek God's guidance about how we use our time? Is God our first priority, with family a close second? Do we seek God's will about our use of money and other possessions? Do we invest them in making disciples and transforming the world? Do we use our abilities in God's service?

Stewardship goes beyond the traditional considerations of time, ability and possessions, however. God calls us to care for all of his creation—for the world we live in and the earth we live on. This earth is not our possession; we hold it in trust for God and for future generations. God has given us a beautiful place to live—how well are we taking care of it? Will our grandchildren be able to enjoy this same beauty? Will God be pleased with the way we have cared for his world?

As we celebrate Independence Day, we remember that we are stewards of freedom. Freedom is something we preserve for others, not just something we possess for ourselves. Freedom is God's gift, as well as the gift of the millions throughout history who have served and sacrificed to preserve it. As stewards of freedom, we're called to ensure that *all* people enjoy equal freedom and justice, and are equally free to exercise their God-given rights without constraint or oppression. It's up to each generation to preserve and enhance freedom for their own generation and for those who come after them.

The practice of good stewardship leads to an entirely different perspective on life. We recognize that nothing really belongs to us—we were bought with a price—everything we are and everything we possess belong to God. We learn to ask different questions. We no longer ask “What's in it for me?” Now we ask “How can I help others and bring glory to God?” We are challenged to live no longer for ourselves, but rather to live for Christ, for the sake of our neighbors, and for the sake of generations to come. As Jesus said, “For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.” (Mk. 8:35 NRSV) How are you looking after the things God has placed in your care?

Adams Rescue Mission Golf Tournament

Join the 7th Annual Golf Tournament to benefit the Adams Rescue Mission at The Links at Gettysburg on September 18. Register online at www.adamsrescuemission.org. Sponsorship opportunities still available. Call Heidi with questions 717-334-7502 x 26.

. . . that God gives us.

Prayer

Lord God, you have blessed us in so many ways. Above all, you have shown us your love in the person of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend, who died for our sake upon the cross. Remind us, Lord, that we with all that we have ultimately belong to you, for we were bought with a price. Grant us grace to be good stewards of our lives and of your world. Teach us to live for you and for the sake of others in accordance with your purpose for us.

Make us a blessing to this world. Give us strength to work for peace with justice, to meet the needs of those around us, and to reach out in love to all people. Enable us to preserve and extend the freedom you have given us. May we be faithful witnesses to the gospel of Christ. Be with those who face times of trial—illness, grief, financial challenges, stress, and other concerns. Grant them your healing and your peace.

Lead us daily with the wisdom of your Holy Spirit. Keep us and our families safe in your loving care as you guide us in the service of others. Enable us to be good stewards of all that you have entrusted into our hands; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer Chain

To put any concerns on the Prayer Chain on June 20 or later, please call Sue at (717) 357-0983.

Car Wash

The participants of the Bountiful Blessings program will be providing a free car wash, from 9:00 - noon on Saturday, July 17th, to you, the congregation of GUMC, as a thank you for your support and for providing supplies when the “cupboard was getting bare”. Please stop by on that day as it will help these folks with their responsibilities to the program as well. Some will also be inside cleaning the tables in Fellowship Hall and wiping pews.

Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week's list (as of 6/29/2021) is:

Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt's brother
Florence Davis
Mary Fleming
Ben Fisher
Rev. Meredith Ball
Family and friends of Charles Reeder (Cathy Libera's father who passed on 6/27)
Tom and Pat Kellam
Chuck and Rochelle Lutz
Judy Woolston

Members in Assisted Living / Skilled Care Homes:

Edith Bulman (SpiriTrust 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

Bountiful Blessings

Once again we are in need of more shampoo, tooth paste and dish liquid for this program. Any donations can be placed in the labeled bin near the office doors. Thank you so much.

HYMN

America

Samuel F. Smith; Anonymous (Thesaurus Musicus)

1. My country, 'tis of thee,
sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
land where my fathers died,
land of the pilgrims' pride,
from every mountainside let freedom ring!

2. My native country, thee,
land of the noble free, thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
thy woods and templed hills;
my heart with rapture thrills, like that above.

3. Let music swell the breeze,
and ring from all the trees sweet freedom's song;
let mortal tongues awake;
let all that breathe partake;
let rocks their silence break, the sound prolong.

4. Our fathers' God, to thee,
author of liberty, to thee we sing;
long may our land be bright
with freedom's holy light;
protect us by thy might, great God, our King.

Samuel Francis Smith was born in Boston in 1808, and died there in 1895. He was educated at Harvard and Andover Theological Seminary. He hoped to serve as a foreign missionary, but his health was not adequate to the task. A prominent Baptist pastor, he also served as editor of the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* and later became editorial secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union. He was a close friend of Lowell Mason and Oliver Wendell Holmes. During his lifetime he wrote around one hundred hymns. The *Thesaurus Musicus* was a collection of tunes and songs published in London in 1744.

Smith said that he was inspired to write this hymn when he was translating German songs into English. He came across this tune, and was led to write this text. In his own words,

I instantly felt the impulse to write a patriotic hymn of my own adapted to the tune. Picking up a scrap of waste paper which lay near me, I wrote at once, probably within half an hour, the hymn "America" as it is now known everywhere. (*Companion to The United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 208)

The hymn was first performed by a children's choir in Boston on July 8, 1831, and quickly became popular. The tune was first published in 1744. It is sometimes attributed to Henry Carey (ca. 1687-1743), but the evidence for that attribution is quite weak. The tune may have originated in England as early as the late 1500's. It has also been used for other patriotic songs, including *God Save the Queen*. *America* is found in our hymnals as number 697.

We greatly appreciate your continued faithful donations to GUMC during this time of continuing change. Your faithful giving is greatly appreciated, and we are very grateful for your continued generosity.

Altar Flowers

The altar flowers for Sunday, July 4, are presented by Larry and Betsy Speer to the glory of God and in celebration of the birth date of our great nation.

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