

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

March 31, 2021

Psalm 111 (NRSV)

- 1 Praise the Lord!
I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole
heart,
in the company of the upright, in the
congregation.*
- 2 Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.*
- 3 Full of honor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.*
- 4 He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.*
- 5 He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.*
- 6 He has shown his people the power of his
works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.*
- 7 The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.*
- 8 They are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and
uprightness.*
- 9 He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is his name.*
- 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of
wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good
understanding.
His praise endures forever.*



Meditation

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-19

When I was growing up, I thought Christmas was easier to understand than Easter. Christmas was pretty straightforward: Santa Claus brought gifts, and they represented God's gift to us in the birth of Jesus. Easter was more complicated. The Easter Bunny brought Easter eggs and chocolate—but it didn't make much sense to me as a child. I loved the chocolate and didn't care much for the eggs, but I couldn't figure out the Easter Bunny. After all, rabbits don't lay eggs, and I don't think they make chocolate. Eggs come from chickens, not rabbits—so what's the connection? And what do they symbolize? It just didn't make much sense to me back then.

Eventually I understood the symbolism. Rabbits and eggs are signs of new life. When we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus we celebrate the new life we have in him. Rabbits are associated with the end of winter, the coming of spring, and fertility; eggs are

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Christ is risen!

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a symbol of new birth. (I'm still not sure where the chocolate fits in, but I'll enjoy it anyway.)

But the new life we receive through the resurrection of Christ isn't like the new life of springtime or of eggs, however. It's much more profound than that.

Strangely enough, the new life we have in Christ begins with a death—the death of Jesus on the cross. God is the source of all true life, but we are separated from God by our sin. Jesus died that our sin might be forgiven. He died to reconcile us with God and prove the infinite extent of God's love for us. His death reconnects us with God's life and God's love as we believe in him. By faith, he enables us to die to ego and sin, so that we can receive new life in his name.

The new life we have in Christ is eternal life. When an egg hatches it gives birth to a chick, but that chick eventually becomes a chicken that grows old and dies. But the new life we have in Christ is life that goes on forever. As Jesus said in John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." By faith in Jesus we receive life that continues beyond death, and know that Jesus is faithful to his promise to prepare a place for us in heaven. (John 14:1-3)

The new life we have in Christ is abundant life. Eternal life is not only life that lasts forever; it's life that is full of joy and meaning here and now. Jesus said "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (Jn. 10:10b) Abundant life has purpose as we spread God's love in the world. Abundant life yields rich relationships with others. Abundant life fulfills our deepest desire for a profound relationship with God. Abundant life is cool, fresh, living water on a hot and sultry day; it's light in the midst of darkness; it's love in the midst of hatred; it's a feast for the soul.

For the new life we have in Christ anticipates God's new creation—the new heaven and the new earth of Revelation 21. God not only gives us new life; he transforms our lives and makes us into new creatures in Christ. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a

new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17) Since we are already part of God's new creation, we live as if that new creation were already here. We love others as Christ loves us, and welcome all people equally. We reach out to help all in need. We work for freedom with justice for all people in this world. We strive to be peacemakers. We tell others about our joyous new life in Christ, that they also may receive life through faith in him. We have passed from darkness into light, from death into life, and we live in hope, joy, and love.

Easter is about much more than rabbits and eggs (or even chocolate). It's about new life and a new creation. Paul tells us that the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our faith. Indeed, if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is in vain (1 Cor. 15:14).

But in fact Christ has been raised, the first fruits of God's new creation. We have new, eternal, and abundant life by faith in him. Because he lives, we shall live. The Lord is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Prayer

Almighty God, we rejoice in the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. He has won the victory over sin and death, and gives new and abundant life to all who believe in him. Strengthen our faith, that we may find increasing joy in our new life in Christ. Deepen our love, that we may reach out to others in their need and concern. Enable us to live as part of God's new creation.

Bless our world with justice and freedom. Teach us to work together to meet the needs of all people. Bless those individuals who call out to you for healing, for comfort and peace, for meaning and purpose, and for friendship and love. Meet their needs out of the abundance of your grace.

Help us to live every day in the joy of your abundant life. May we carry your light in our hearts, that we may dispel the darkness of this world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Alleluia!

Bountiful Blessings

As the weather improves, our numbers for Bountiful Blessings are picking up as well. Also there have been changes in the supply of delivered items from the headquarters in Mechanicsburg. We've been getting supplies for about 20 for twice a month but we have been having 24-28 guests. If you wish to donate items, we could use the following (please place them in the box outside of the office): dish detergent, shampoo, tooth paste, cleaners and laundry detergent (\$1 items at Dollar Tree are fine). THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.



Reminder

Copies of this mailing are posted weekly on the church website. They are usually up no later than Saturday afternoon. If you haven't received your weekly mailing due to postal delays, please check our website.

Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week's list (as of 3/30/2021) is:

Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt's brother
Joyce Dye
Ben Fisher
Family and friends of Virginia White
Victims of mass shootings
Carolyn Dillman
Don Richmond
Pastor Chuck Slaybaugh

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

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.

Altar Flowers

The altar flowers for Sunday, April 4, are presented by Sharon Brown in memory of Rev. Paul and Rebecca Jones and Edna and Clement Crook, Sr.

HYMN

Thine Be the Glory

Edmond L. Budry (trans. R. Birch Hoyle, George F. Handel)

1 Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment
rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave clothes
where thy body lay.

[Refrain:]

Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast won.

2 Lo! Jesus meets thee,
risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets thee,

scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness
hymns of triumph sing,
for our Lord now liveth;
death hath lost its sting. (Refrain)

3 No more we doubt thee,
glorious Prince of life!
Life is naught without thee;
aid us in our strife.
Make us more than conquerors,
through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan
to thy home above. (Refrain)

Edmond L. Budry was born in Vevey, Switzerland, in 1854; he died in 1932. Budry was a pastor for thirty-five years in the Free Evangelical Church. He often translated hymns from other languages into French as well as writing his own original hymn texts. This hymn was translated from French into English by R. Birch Hoyle, (1874-1939), a Baptist minister who was born in Cloughfold, Lancashire, England. George Frederick Handel was born in Halle, Germany, in 1685. He moved to London in 1712, and became a British subject in 1727. He wrote numerous operas, oratorios, orchestral works, and chamber works. One of the greatest composers of his age, his most famous work is the oratorio *Messiah*. He died in 1759.

Thine Be the Glory was first published in 1885 in Lausanne. Budry may have been inspired by the text of an Advent hymn he translated into French. It was translated into English in 1923, and is filled with powerful images of Jesus' resurrection. The original "Thine is the glory" was changed to "Thine be the glory" by the editors for our hymnal. The tune was first used in Handel's oratorio *Joshua*, and later transferred to his better known oratorio *Judas Maccabeus*. It was one of John Wesley's favorites. *Thine Be the Glory* may be found as number 308 in our hymnal.



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