

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

May 12, 2021

Psalm 47 (NRSV)

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

- 1 *Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs of joy.*
 - 2 *For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome,
a great king over all the earth.*
 - 3 *He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.*
 - 4 *He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah*
 - 5 *God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.*
 - 6 *Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.*
 - 7 *For God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.*
 - 8 *God is king over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.*
 - 9 *The princes of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.*
- For the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is highly exalted.*



Meditation

Read Acts 1:1-11

It must have been an amazing time for the disciples. Just a few short weeks before, they thought that all was lost. They had placed their hope in Jesus of Nazareth, believing that he might be the Messiah of God, the Savior of the world. Then he was arrested, tried, and crucified. They fled; their faith was replaced with fear.

But then an amazing, world-shaking thing happened. The women who had gone to the tomb early on the first day of the week said that it was empty. Even more amazing, they said they had seen the Lord, that he had risen from the dead. That night he appeared to all of the disciples (except Thomas) in the upper room. He was truly alive! They could touch his body and see the wounds in his hands, feet, and side. He had conquered death forever!

For forty days he met with them, fellowshiped with them, and taught them many things. Then another amazing thing happened! He departed this world and ascended to heaven.

Why did he have to leave them? I imagine that they would much rather have had him stay around, but there were good reasons that he had to return to his throne in heaven.

While he was on this earth, Jesus could only be one place at a time. He was limited by time and space. But after he departed this creation to sit at God's right hand, he could be everywhere in spirit. His disciples became his physical presence in the world, the body of Christ, with Christ as its head. Wherever they were present, his love was present. They could feed the hungry, heal the sick, and welcome the out-cast. They could work for truth and justice in the world. They could witness to their faith. Wherever we are present throughout the world, Christ is present through us.

After his ascension, Christ was able to send us the Holy Spirit. In John 16:7 Jesus said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate [Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send

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Be my witnesses . . .

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him to you.” It was when Jesus had completed his work of the cross, the resurrection, and the ascension that God sent the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came upon the disciples in power just ten days after Jesus’ ascension, and the disciples went forth to change the world. God still gives his Holy Spirit to his followers today, and it is the Spirit who gives us power to do his work in the world.

He went to resume his rightful glory and power as God’s Son, and to intercede for us with God. When Christ became one of us, he surrendered his heavenly power and glory (Philippians 2:5-11). Just as he humbled himself for our sake, now he is highly exalted and has returned to his place at the right hand of God (symbolic of sharing God’s power and glory). He is the great high priest, who sits at God’s right hand and works for the final victory over all sin and evil that will occur when he comes again in glory (Heb. 9:11-15; Eph. 1:17-23). As our great high priest, he represents us before God and brings our prayers and petitions before God’s throne. As the One sitting at God’s right hand, he assures us that his power is with us, and that his power will triumph in the end.

Just before he left his disciples, he gave them a mission which they could only accomplish because of his ascension. He told his disciples (and us) “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) Jesus’ desire is that we take his gospel of love and salvation to everyone in the world. It’s only possible, however, because he ascended into heaven. Only after his ascension could he break the limits of time and space, and make all of his disciples into one body throughout the world. Only then could he send us the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Only then could he intercede for us with God, and give us the hope of his return in final victory.

We serve a risen Savior, who calls us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. May we walk in the power of the Spirit, live together as his physical presence in the world, and work and pray for his final triumph over all evil, injustice, oppression, suffering, and even over death itself.



Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you for your glory, your majesty, and your power. We rejoice in the victory of your resurrection and your triumphant ascension into heaven. Remind us that your glory is found in truth and justice for all, that your majesty is the majesty of a crucified redeemer, and that your power is the power of sacrificial love. Fill us anew with the glory, majesty, and power of your Holy Spirit. Make us your witnesses to all the world, as we work and pray for justice and freedom for all peoples, and tell others the good news of the salvation and eternal life we find in your name.

As always, Lord, we pray for those in special need of your grace. For the sick, the suffering, and the grieving we seek your healing. For those who are hungry, homeless, and hurting we pray that their needs will be met. For those who suffer injustice and oppression we pray for strength and justice. May all know the joy of your presence, now and forever.

Mold us, Lord, into the body of Christ, your presence in the world. Use us to share your love, and keep us always safe in the shadow of your wings. May we reflect your glory in all things, for this we pray in your name. Amen.

. . . to the ends of the earth.

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"Spring of Promise" Worship Services

The United Methodist Churches of Upper Adams and Gettysburg are holding Wednesday evening outdoor services from April 14 through May 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Oakside Community Park Amphitheater, 2880 Table Rock Rd., Biglerville.

This week (May 19) Pastor Trish Guise will preach on "The Promise of Complete Joy".

The weekly offering will be divided among area fire companies.

Jesus never promised us a life without suffering, but he did promise that it is possible to experience peace in all circumstances. In this Spring Series of Worship, we'll discover that we can always rely on the Promises of Jesus.

Weekly Prayer Concerns

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

This week's list (as of 5/11/2021) is:

Rodney Truscott
Penny Daugherty
Scott Bowers
Imogene Hunt's brother
Florence Davis
Mary Fleming
Ben Fisher
Family and friends of Don Richmond,
Jackie Rudisill
Rev. Meredith Ball
Pat Kellam
Dale Shade (sister passed away)

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 Schaille, Betty Schulteis, June Spencer

Announcements

We will not be holding the spring yard sale this year due to continuing COVID concerns.

The Missions Committee is collecting gently used shoes for donation to Mission Central. If you have shoes that you can donate, please place them in the box in the church lobby. Thank you for your generosity.

HYMN

Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise

Charles Wesley, Robert Williams

1 Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
To his throne above the skies, Alleluia!
Christ, awhile to mortals given, Alleluia!
Re-ascends his native heaven, Alleluia!

2 There the glorious triumph waits, Alleluia!
Lift your heads, eternal gates, Alleluia!
Christ hath conquered death and sin, Alleluia!
Take the King of glory in, Alleluia!

3 See! the heaven its Lord receives, Alleluia!
Yet he loves the earth he leaves, Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
Still he calls the world his own, Alleluia!

4 See! he lifts his hands above, Alleluia!
See! he shows the prints of love, Alleluia!
Hark! his gracious lips bestow, Alleluia!
Blessings on his church below, Alleluia!

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. Robert Williams was a blind basket maker on the Island of Anglesey in North Wales. Born in 1781, he was a gifted musician who had a fine singing voice. He had the ability to write out a hymn tune after hearing it just once. He died in 1821.

Hail the Day the Sees Thee Rise was published with ten stanzas in 1739 (today we sing stanzas 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the original). Various changes have been made to the text over the years, including the addition of alleluias by G. C. White in 1852. The tune was written in 1817. Our version uses a harmonization written by David Evans in 1927. The hymn proclaims the glory of Christ's ascension into heaven amidst the celebration of the triumph of his death and resurrection. It may be found as number 312 in our hymnal.

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.

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.

Mission Can for May

This Sunday (May 16), our special Mission Can offering is designated for Tender Care Pregnancy Consultation Services in Gettysburg.

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