

Gettysburg United Methodist Church

May 27, 2020

Psalm 33:1-12

- 1 *Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.
Praise befits the upright.*
- 2 *Praise the Lord with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten
strings.*
- 3 *Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud
shouts.*
- 4 *For the word of the Lord is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.*
- 5 *He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of
the Lord.*
- 6 *By the word of the Lord the heavens were
made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.*
- 7 *He gathered the waters of the sea as in a
bottle;
he put the deeps in storehouses.*
- 8 *Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in
awe of him.*
- 9 *For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.*
- 10 *The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to
nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.*
- 11 *The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*
- 12 *Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his
heritage.*



A Prayer for Memorial Day (May 30)

Lord God, we are so thankful for the many blessings you have poured out upon America. We are especially thankful for the gift of freedom, and for those whose sacrificial service has made it possible for us to live in a land of liberty.

May we always remember those who gave their lives for our freedom. May we honor them in our hearts; may their courage be an inspiration for our lives.

We pray, O Lord, that you continue to bless America. Guide us safely through these difficult times. Make us a nation where all people are valued equally and given equal dignity, where there is abundant opportunity for everyone, where there is peace with justice for all. Bless us, Lord, not only for our sake, but that we may truly be a light and a blessing to the world. Amen.



Meditation

Read Psalm 42, Philippians 4:4-7.

When I was walking on the battlefield (W. Confederate Ave.) early last Saturday evening, I saw a faint rainbow in the distance. Even though it only lasted a short while and was not as bright as some I've seen, it was still a beautiful sight.

Rainbows inspire us because they remind us of God's promises to us, and of God's faithfulness to his promises. They lift our eyes above earthly con-

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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.

God is good . . .

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cerns and refocus them on God. Rainbows often appear during or after a storm (Saturday evening was an exception). They testify to God's unfailing love in the midst of a storm, and that the Lord is more powerful than any storms we may encounter. For me it was a sign of hope in the midst of this pandemic, and a reminder to trust in God. God is always our Good Shepherd.

Rainbows call us to praise God and rejoice in his love and his presence. Praise is our response to God's majesty and power. When we see the wonders of his creation, when we contemplate the cross and the depth of his love in Jesus Christ, when we see his image in the heart of another human being, we're inspired to praise him.

Praise is more than our response to God; it can be a weapon of spiritual warfare. In Psalm 42, the writer longs for God's presence when God can't be found. We sense the writer's despair and hopelessness: "My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?'" "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?" Yet the psalmist is still able to say, "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." Praising God overcomes our despair and our hopelessness; praise brings us into God's presence even when we don't feel his love; praise gives us victory over despair and darkness.

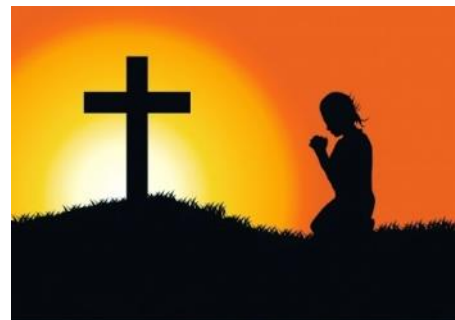
Praise can be like a rainbow that we create. It removes our focus on our current situation and our despair, and refocuses us on God's love and power. The light of praise drives away the darkness of our souls. We praise God because we know his promises and his faithfulness. We praise God for the gift of his Son and his Holy Spirit. We praise God for his constant presence with us. We praise God for his creative power and untiring work for peace with justice. Above all, we praise God for his amazing love for us, and for the ability and desire he gives us to love others in the same way.

Praise may be most significant when it's most diffi-

cult. In Philippians 4:4, Paul writes "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" In the face of persecution and trial, Paul knew that the joy of the Lord was his strength. We praise God when our souls are downcast and disturbed, when the last thing we feel like doing is praising him. As we face trials and difficulties, the doorway that opens our hearts to God's joy is often the doorway of praise and thanksgiving.

When difficulties come and God seems distant, picture in your mind the beauty and promise of a rainbow. Give praise and thanks to God in all circumstances, that the rainbow of joy may abide in your heart forever.

—Pastor Rick



Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the gift of rainbows. We praise you for your faithfulness to your promises, and for the amazing depths of your infinite love. Grant us grace to praise you in all circumstances, even in the darkest of times. May our praise draw us closer to your heart as we come into the light of your presence.

We pray for our world and our nation in the midst of this pandemic. Guide us to a successful reopening of our state and our nation. Heal those who are sick, comfort those who have suffered loss, protect those who even now work to bring healing to others. Watch over all who have sacrificed to make a difference in our world. Fill us with your joy, that we may bring your blessing to everyone we meet; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

. . . all the time.

Introducing GUMC's New On-Line E-giving Service

We are excited to announce that we have added a significant easy-to-use on-line giving tool. The E-giving tool is accessible through a link from our webpage at www.gettysburg.org or can be downloaded as an app for your smart phone. It offers you a quick and secure way to offer your stewardship gifts to a variety of GUMC ministry programs (General Fund, Mission Can, Building Fund, Memorial) either on a one-time or recurring basis. You can donate by using your credit card, checking account or savings account. You can access the service from your home computer, or you can download the e-giving app to your smart phone (more info on our website). This service may be especially useful while we are "staying at home" during the Covid-19 crisis, saving you postage and using your paper checks.

If you have any questions concerning our new E-giving program, feel free to contact Cindy Tous-siant, Church Treasurer or Bob Berkey, Chair of the Finance Committee.

Crisis Hotlines and Helplines

During these trying times, it's good to be aware of some of the positive resources available in our community. Many people are under extraordinary stress because of the current situation. Please feel free to share this information with others as you feel appropriate.

CONTACT Helpline: (800) 932-4616

Wellspan Behavioral Health Helpline (Philhaven): (800) 932-0359

TrueNorth Crisis Line: (866) 325-0339

Substance Abuse Hotline: (800) 662-4357

Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-7233

Adams-Hanover Crisis Information Referral Hotline: (717) 632-4900

Honoring Our DS

Our District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Charles Salisbury, is finishing his term as DS and will be assigned to Grace UMC in Hummelstown effective July 1. Due to the current situation, we are unable to hold a traditional farewell gathering to thank him for his service and wish him well.

If you wish to recognize and thank Rev. Salisbury, you may send a donation in his honor to

The Preachers Aid Society

P.O. Box #24

Williamsport, PA 17703-0024

Your donations will help pastors in our Conference who face unexpected and extraordinary personal expenses (such as costly medical expense or car repairs).

If you wish to send him a personal card, you may address it to him at

638 Foxtail Drive

York, PA 17404

Please contact Pastor Rick if you have any questions. We will welcome our new DS, Rev. Cathy Boileau, this fall.

Thank You!

It's difficult to find the words to express my gratitude for the many kindnesses you have shown me during this very sad time. I am so grateful for the prayers, love and emotional support. The cards (most with personal notes), phone calls, meant so much to me as I struggle through this loss. All of your concern really sustained me day-by-day. Knowing that I am not alone helped me bear my grief and sadness.

God gives us comfort in the form of good friends, may his peace be with you. In Christian love of my church family, thank you all so much.

Blessings, Sandy Shelley

HYMN

America, the Beautiful

Kathryn Lee Bates, Samuel A. Ward

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!

America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self control,
Thy liberty in law.

Katherine Lee Bates (1859-1929) was born in Falmouth, Massachusetts. She was educated at Wellesley College, and eventually became head of the English department at her *alma mater*. She was the author or co-author of over 20 books and collections. Samuel A. Ward was born in Newark, NJ in 1847. He studied music in New York, and operated a music store in Newark. He served as a church organist for many years and died in 1903.

The words were written during Katherine Bates's trip to Pike's Peak in 1893. Her journey across the country inspired many of the images in the hymn. Samuel Ward wrote the music in 1888 for another text. It was officially paired with Bates's words in 1912. The words and music together express a beautiful prayer for our nation. It may be found as No. 696 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Special thanks to everyone who has continued to send their weekly donations to GUMC. Your generosity is helping us to get through this difficult situation. Your faithful giving is deeply appreciated!

As Adams County moves toward the "Green Zone" in COVID-19 readiness, we anticipate resuming regular worship services as soon as we may safely do so. Our Worship Committee is working on plans to adjust for the new situation. You will be notified through this weekly newsletter and also via our phone tree when regular worship services resume.

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