

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

Long Green and Kanés Rds., near Glen Arm, MD

March 20, 2016

Worship 10:00 am                      Sunday School 11:10 am

**Large print hymnals are available                      see an usher**

This room is equipped with a sound loop for the hearing impaired

## Palm Sunday

*“You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you. O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.” (Psalm 118:28-29)*

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am)                      “I hunger and I thirst”                      474

Announcements

Prelude                      “Interlude”                      Clokey

## With branches waving

\*Call to Worship                      (back of bulletin)

\*Hymn                      “Ride on, ride on in majesty”                      239

\*Opening Prayer (ends with Lord’s Prayer)

Gospel                      John 12:12-16

Celebrating 25 years of Shepherd’s Spring                      Dennis Rosas

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Video                      “Count all the rings”  
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Dedicating a new Deacon                      (Philippians 2:5-11)

We, the members of this body of Christ, in the spirit of joy and in renewed loyalty to our Lord, acknowledge and receive you as deacon. We promise to pray for you and support you in confidence, encouragement, cooperation, and prayers, that together we may increase in the knowledge and the love of God, manifested to us in Jesus Christ.

## and hearts wavering

Scripture                      Psalm 31:9-16

Sharing a joy, a concern, a word of testimony or praise  
(please be brief, and aware of God’s listening presence)

Hymn                      “Beneath the cross of Jesus”                      250

Pastoral Prayer

Gospel                      Luke 22:31-34, 54-62

Message                      “Before the cock crows”

\*Hymn                      “Go to dark Gethsemane”                      240

\*Benediction

\*Postlude                      “The Palms”                      Faure

\* Rise in body or in spirit  
\* \* \* \* \*

# Call to Worship

Rise in body or spirit  
and join in the Call to worship  
on the back of your bulletin.

(pause until all are ready)

**All: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

One: In the midst of our celebration, we cry:

**All: "You are my God!"**

One: In the midst of our difficulties, we cry:

**All: "You are my God!"**

One: In the midst of our faithfulness, we cry:

**All: "You are my God!"**

One: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.  
God's love endures forever.

Remain standing and let us sing  
"Ride on, ride on in majesty"  
#239 in your hymnal

by Tim Harvey, pastor  
Oak Grove Church of the Brethren

# Opening Prayer

by Thom M. Shuman

Holy God,  
Architect of our grace:  
from your house we praise you.

Your love is never taken from us;  
your goodness is the constant in our lives.  
We worship you.

Jesus Christ,  
Sorrow of our salvation:  
you dared to listen to God  
instead of the cheers  
of the crowd  
and the jeers  
of your enemies.  
We walk with you.

Holy Spirit,  
Glory of God:  
you give us light  
so we might see  
the One who comes;  
you open our ears,  
so we might hear  
the whispers of hope;  
you sustain the weary,  
so we might journey  
through this week.  
We welcome you.

God in Community, Holy in One,  
hear us as we pray as Jesus taught,  
Our Father, who art... *(The Lord's Prayer)*

## John 12:12-16

Two Gospel stories bracket our worship today. The first is the Palm Sunday story of Jesus entering Jerusalem. Take out your Palm branch and be ready to wave it and shout out the welcome of the crowds.

<sup>12</sup> The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, *(repeat after me as you wave your branch)*

(speak and repeat the next 4 lines, one at a time)

“Hosanna!  
Blessed is the one  
who comes in the name of the Lord—  
the King of Israel!”

<sup>14</sup> Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

<sup>15</sup> “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.  
Look, your king is coming,  
sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

*(let’s do it again)*

(speak and repeat the next 4 lines, one at a time)

“Hosanna!  
Blessed is the one  
who comes in the name of the Lord—  
the King of Israel!”

<sup>16</sup> His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

# Celebrating 25 years of Shepherd's Spring

The summer of 1991 was the first year of camp at Shepherd's Spring. There were as yet no cabins, or any other buildings. The only dwellings were made of canvas in the middle of a field. It was an "in tents" experience. Much has changed in the years since. Poplar Village became a reality the next summer, comprised of 7 cabins and a pavilion. A pool and bathhouse was erected, followed by the lodge. The first maintenance building doubled as a dining room until the lodge was built. The cost of it all was higher than expected because state and county regulations were being re-written, with us as a guinea pig. The original plan did not include bathrooms in every cabin or a state-of-the-art poolhouse. The good news, however, was that we now had an excellent facility.

Later years brought an expansion of the program beyond the summer. To be honest, summer camping does not pay for itself. In order to survive, outdoor ministry centers like Shepherd's Spring need other ways of paying the bills. Early on, we developed a relationship with what was then called *Elderhostel*, now *Road Scholar*. Many weeks of the year, our lodge hosts senior citizens from around the world coming to explore various topics and enjoy our natural setting. We also connected with *Heifer International* to provide this region's *Global Village*, where persons of all ages can come to learn about hunger issues around the world. Shepherd's Spring continues to explore new ways of making the most of the facility, in addition to expanding the core ministry of summer camping, which is in itself changing.

To celebrate this 25th year in ministry, and to prepare for the many years ahead, you are invited to add a special offering to support the ministry of Shepherd's Spring. For this purpose, an offering plate (*hold it up*) was made from a tree at

Shepherd's Spring. It was used last week at the *University Park Church of the Brethren*, and will travel from here to the *Sam's Creek* congregation. We'll use it as one of our two plates for this morning's offering. If you wish to make a special anniversary offering to Shepherd's Spring, please put it in a manila envelope found in your pew rack. Write "SS" or "25" on it. Or, designate it on your regular offering envelope.

Now, if you look closely at the Shepherd's Spring offering plate, you can still see the rings of the tree. Think about that as the plates are passed and we watch a video which incorporates the song Pastor Pete wrote for this 25th anniversary. The words are on your bulletin insert. May we lay down our monetary palm branches and rejoice in the many rings of Shepherd's Spring that have rippled out and continue to touch so many.

*(give the plate to the ushers)*

Offertory Song - "Count all the Rings"

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious, loving God,

We thank you for a source of renewal and a place to grow. As we look back on 25 years, we are so thankful for this beautiful place and the many people who have been deeply rooted in faith through the ministry of Shepherd's Spring. Led by you, may the years ahead continue to renew and grow all who set foot in the presence of the spring. Bless this wonderful place for the continued ministry ahead. We pray all these things in the name of the Shepherd of the Spring. Amen.

# Dedicating a new Deacon

Pete:

To the church in Philippi, the apostle Paul wrote:

Sharon:

- <sup>5</sup> Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.  
<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Pete continues:

Those are good words for all of us on this Palm Sunday, when “Hosanna” is both a celebration and a cry for mercy. Our first clue is the humble donkey upon which Jesus rode. Humility comes before exaltation, as this scripture reveals. We are all called to let the example

of Jesus be our guide, to seek the mind of Christ together. These good words are especially important for those we call to attend to the spiritual and physical needs of our congregation.

The early church quickly recognized that the original disciples, now called apostles, could not do it all. And so, with the help of the Holy Spirit, they called forth deacons to serve alongside. We continue this tradition. As Love Feast is this Thursday evening, it is appropriate that we dedicate a new deacon this morning, who will not only help prepare the way for this special meal, but also be an important caregiver in this congregation throughout the year... At this time I ask Zoanne Denham to come forward. Would all the other deacons also come and join her?

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we set apart deacons to look after identified needs of our congregation and to labor for the spiritual unity and growth of the members of Christ's body. Those called to this office are people whose commitment and faithfulness are evident. They are open and responsive to the Spirit, and carefully exercise wisdom and sound judgment while being faithful and loyal to Christ and the church. Having confidence in the faithfulness, loyalty, wisdom, and spiritual integrity of Zoanne, we call her to be a deacon.

Now, I have asked the rest of you deacons to stand with Zoanne, in part to support her in this new step of faith, but also to have the opportunity to reaffirm promises you made earlier. So, you will join your voice to hers through the following questions.

Zoanne, and all you with her - Inasmuch as the church has called you to be deacons, I now ask:

Do you declare anew your faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Yes, I do.

Will you seek to cultivate more fervently your spiritual life by Bible reading, meditation, prayer, and Christian witnessing?

With God's help, I will.

Will you encourage and lead the congregation in deepening its spiritual life and its ministries of compassion?

I will.

Will you seek to be a good example in faith and conduct?

I will.

Do you then accept the call to the ministry of deacon in this body of Christ, and promise to perform faithfully all the duties thereof?

I do.

*(Zoanne kneels, surrounded by the other deacons, who lay hands on her and pray:)*

Eternal God, you have come in Jesus Christ not to be served but to serve. Now we set apart and consecrate this your servants to this ministry of deacon, that she may serve in your name. Grant her deep compassion for human

needs; fill her with tender care and steadfast love for those for whom Christ died. Inspire her with devotion to your church. Grant her growth in faith that she may lead others by precept and example. Grant to the church the grace to work with her and all our deacons for the increase of faith and caring within the fellowship. Sustain them all in their labors. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

*(Zoanne rises)*

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are now set apart in the sacred ministry of deacon. Serve God and this congregation faithfully and courageously. And may God bless you in your service.

CONGREGATION: We, the members of this body of Christ, in the spirit of joy and in renewed loyalty to our Lord, acknowledge and receive you as deacon. We promise to pray for you and support you in confidence, encouragement, cooperation, and prayers, that together we may increase in the knowledge and the love of God, manifested to us in Jesus Christ.

## Psalm 31:9-16

## Pastoral Prayer

<sup>9</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;  
my eye wastes away from grief,  
my soul and body also.

<sup>10</sup> For my life is spent with sorrow,  
and my years with sighing;  
my strength fails because of my misery,  
and my bones waste away.

<sup>11</sup> I am the scorn of all my adversaries,  
a horror to my neighbors,  
an object of dread to my acquaintances;  
those who see me in the street flee from me.

<sup>12</sup> I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;  
I have become like a broken vessel.

<sup>13</sup> For I hear the whispering of many—  
terror all around!—  
as they scheme together against me,  
as they plot to take my life.

<sup>14</sup> But I trust in you, O LORD;  
I say, “You are my God.”

<sup>15</sup> My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand  
of my enemies and persecutors.

<sup>16</sup> Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.

## Luke 22:31-34, 54-62

Pete:

For our second Gospel reading, we shift from the gates of Jerusalem and Jesus arriving on a donkey, to an upper room and then a garden, where Jesus shares a final meal with his disciples and prays. This gospel reading is in two parts... Imagine sitting around a table. Jesus has just shared the meal we remember as communion. His disciples, still a bit confused over what is happening, then debate their position in the Jesus movement. "Who is the greatest?" they argue. "I am among you as one who serves," Jesus replies, sort of along the lines of "the last shall be firsts, and the first shall be last of all." However, there is much more to come that evening, and the next few days. Then Jesus focuses upon Simon, also known as Peter. Listen as Jesus speaks...

Sharon:

<sup>31</sup> "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." <sup>33</sup> And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!" <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me."

Pete:

From the upper room they move to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prays, and his disciples struggle to stay awake. The time of trial is coming, not just for him, but for Peter and the rest. Jesus concludes his prayer, "not my will, but thy will be done." And then a mob arrives, led by the Temple authorities. Jesus is betrayed with a kiss from Judas, and is led off as a common criminal. Listen to what happens next...

Sharon:

<sup>54</sup> Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. <sup>55</sup> When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. <sup>56</sup> Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." <sup>57</sup> But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." <sup>58</sup> A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" <sup>59</sup> Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." <sup>60</sup> But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. <sup>61</sup> The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." <sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly.

## Benediction

In sunshine and shadow, joy or grief,  
this is the day which the Lord has made,  
rejoice and be glad in it.

Step gratefully into this holy week;  
tread softly for many things are already bruised;  
go reverently for holiness is found in unlikely places;  
walk lovingly for the love of the Crucified One  
is the key to all things on earth and in heaven.

May the blessings of this Lord's Day,  
through our Savior Christ,  
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
from the God who gathers all our joys and sorrows  
into one mighty consummation,  
be with you now and always.  
Amen!

by Bruce Prewer, Uniting Church in Australia  
<http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocC/C25palms.htm>

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