

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

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

March 19, 2017

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

## Third Sunday of Lent

*“If you knew the generosity of God and who I am,  
you would be asking me for a drink,  
and I would give you fresh, living water.”  
(John 4:10 from *The Message*)*

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am)                      “I love to tell the story”                      398

Announcements

Prelude

\*Responsive Call to Worship                      662

\*Hymn                      “Let the whole creation cry”                      51

\*Opening Prayer

\*Greeting each other

Paul’s Gospel                      Romans 5:1-11                      (from *The Message*)

Our Response                      “Alleluia”                      (see insert)

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory                      (Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

Unison Confession                      699

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

Hymn                      “O let all who thirst”                      495

Pastoral Prayer

John’s Gospel (4:3-42)                      (from *The Message*)

Our Response                      “Alleluia”                      (see insert)

Message                      “*Even when we don’t fully grasp*”

\*Hymn                      “The King of love my shepherd is”                      170

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

\*Rise in body or in spirit

\* \* \* \* \*

message to be posted at

[www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-03-19.mp3](http://www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2017/17-03-19.mp3)

# Responsive Call to Worship

M - After our Call to Worship, we will actively sing hymn #51 with our voices and our bodies.

P - Please note that every verse of this song includes four alleluias.

M - Whenever we sing an “alleluia,” we will do this:

*(both arms stretched high, then sweep outward in a circle, meeting at the bottom, then coming up together until palms are raised skyward at the “yah.”)*

M - Let’s try doing that... (repeat)

P - By the end of the hymn, we’ll get it right.

M - Please stand if you are able.

P - You might want to put a little space between you and the person next to you.

M - If you are height challenged, feel free to move to a spot where you can see the screen.

P - Now, let’s join in the Call to Worship. It’s on the screen, as well as in the back of the hymnal, #662.

*(M leads)*

Leader: Come, let us worship

**People: For we are the people of God's pasture.**

Leader: Come, let us worship and bow down,

**People: For we are the sheep of God's hand.**

Leader: Come, let us worship and bow down,  
before the Lord, our Maker.

**All: For the Lord is our God,  
and God desires our worship!**

Hymnal #662, by Earle W. Fike, Jr.,  
from *We Gather Together*, copyright © 1979 Brethren Press.  
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Actively singing with our voices and our bodies,  
“Let the whole creation cry,”

Hymn #51

## Opening Prayer

Rock of our salvation,  
you who are our foundation,  
we lift up our joyful noise.  
You are both great and good,  
ruler above all others,  
creator of and provider to  
all who live upon this earth.

We come this day as those who long for  
our thirst to be quenched  
with your living water, and  
our hunger to be fed  
by your bread of life.

Though you have been present with us all the time,  
as you have promised,  
we invite you to dwell with us this morning,  
opening ourselves once again  
to your Word and your Spirit.

You, Lord God, are a treasured guest  
at the well of this worship service.  
Welcome.

This we pray in the name of your Son,  
Jesus,  
our Christ. Amen.

# Greeting each other

While you are standing, reach out and greet the sisters and brothers around you, making sure they know they are welcome.

*(after a while....)*

Let's return to our seats...

We turn now to Paul's letter to the Romans. We'll be reading from Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of the Bible called *The Message*. In these words we hear the "gospel," the "good news" that the apostle Paul just had to share about Jesus and the graciousness of God. Listen.

*(1 reads from the lectern, 2 from the pulpit)*

# Paul's Gospel

- 1 - By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us –
- 2 - set us right with him, make us fit for him –
- 1 - we have it all together with God because of our Master Jesus.
- 2 - And that's not all:
  - 1 - We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that he has already thrown open his door to us.
  - 2 - We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we might stand - out in the wide open spaces of God's grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise.
  - 1 - There's more to come:
    - 2 - We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles,
      - 1 - because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us,
      - 2 - and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue,
        - 1 - keeping us alert for whatever God will do next.
        - 2 - In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged.
          - 1 - Quite the contrary - we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!
          - 2 - Christ arrives right on time to make this happen.
            - 1 - He didn't, and doesn't, wait for us to get ready.

- 2 - He presented himself for this sacrificial death when we were far too weak and rebellious to do anything to get ourselves ready.
  - 1 - And even if we hadn't been so weak, we wouldn't have known what to do anyway.
  - 2 - We can understand someone dying for a person worth dying for,
    - 1 - and we can understand how someone good and noble could inspire us to selfless sacrifice.
    - 2 - But God put his love on the line for us by offering his Son in sacrificial death while we were of no use whatever to him.
      - 1 - Now that we are set right with God by means of this sacrificial death,
        - 2 - the consummate blood sacrifice,
          - 1 - there is no longer a question of being at odds with God in any way.
          - 2 - If, when we were at our worst, we were put on friendly terms with God by the sacrificial death of his Son,
            - 1 - now that we're at our best, just think of how our lives will expand and deepen by means of his resurrection life!
            - 2 - Now that we have actually received this amazing friendship with God, we are no longer content to simply say it in plodding prose.
              - 1 - We sing and shout our praises to God through Jesus, the Messiah!

## Alleluia



by Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan  
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CCLI #1347096

\* \* \* \* \*

**Change:** the “Returning our Tithes and Offerings” to the right is not being used. Instead, Ellis Shenk will speak briefly about *Heifer International*, beginning our month-long mission emphasis on this organization. He’ll then invite folks to return their offerings.

## Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Our Call to Worship earlier was taken from Psalm 95, verses 1-2 and 6-7. It seems appropriate to hear what was left out, verses 3-5. Listen

<sup>3</sup> *For the LORD is the great God,  
the great King above all gods.*

<sup>4</sup> *In his hand are the depths of the earth,  
and the mountain peaks belong to him.*

<sup>5</sup> *The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.*

It’s easy to forget that the earth does not belong to us. We are caretakers of, we are “stewards” of God’s creation. Unfortunately, we have a tendency to misuse what ultimately belongs to God, thinking it is ours for the taking. But it’s not.

This time of returning our tithes and offerings is not just about making sure our church can pay its bills and support its mission. It’s also about getting things straight in our minds and hearts...

All that we see, all that we have  
- truly -

is a gift from our Creator...

As you return your offering just now, ponder how getting this straight changes how you treat the earth, and all that is within it – including people.

Ushers?

# Unison Confession

Let's join in the following confession.

Lord, our God,  
great, eternal, wonderful  
utterly to be trusted:  
you give life to us all,  
you help those who come to you,  
you give hope to those who cry to you.  
Forgive our sins, secret and open,  
and rid us of every habit of thought  
that stands against the gospel.  
Set our hearts at peace,  
so we may live our lives before you  
confidently and without fear,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN

Hymnal #699

Based on a prayer from The Liturgy of St. Basil of Caesarea, 4th c.,  
adapted from Contemporary Prayers for Public Worship,  
ed. Caryl Micklem, copyright © 1956 1967 SCM Press, Ltd.

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# John 4:3-42

*from The Message*

*[M reads from lectern, J from pulpit. P stands between]*

J - So Jesus left the Judean countryside and went back to Galilee. To get there, he had to pass through Samaria. He came into Sychar, a Samaritan village that bordered the field Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob's well was still there. Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon.

M - A woman, a Samaritan, came to draw water.

P - Jesus said, "Would you give me a drink of water?"

J - (His disciples had gone to the village to buy food for lunch.) *[J then sits on wall behind pulpit until later]*

M - The Samaritan woman, taken aback, asked, "How come you, a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (Jews in those days wouldn't be caught dead talking to Samaritans.)

P - Jesus answered, "If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking me for a drink, and I would give you fresh, living water."

M - The woman said, "Sir, you don't even have a bucket to draw with, and this well is deep. So how are you going to get this 'living water'? Are you a better man than our ancestor Jacob, who dug this well and drank from it, he and his sons and livestock, and passed it down to us?"

P - Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."

M - The woman said, "Sir, give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty, won't ever have to come back to this well again!"

P - He said, "Go call your husband and then come back."

M - "I have no husband," she said.

P - "That's nicely put: 'I have no husband.' You've had five husbands, and the man you're living with now isn't even your husband. You spoke the truth there, sure enough."

M - "Oh, so you're a prophet! Well, tell me this: Our ancestors worshiped God at this mountain, but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place for worship, right?"

P - "Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem. You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God's way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you're called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter.

"It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your

spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.”

M - The woman said, “I don't know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we'll get the whole story.”

P - “I am he,” said Jesus. “You don't have to wait any longer or look any further.” *[J gets up & stands at pulpit]*

J - Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked. They couldn't believe he was talking with that kind of a woman. No one said what they were all thinking, but their faces showed it.

M - The woman took the hint and left. In her confusion she left her water pot. Back in the village she told the people, “Come see a man who knew all about the things I did, who knows me inside and out. Do you think this could be the Messiah?” And they went out to see for themselves.

*[M then sits on wall behind lectern until later]*

J - In the meantime, the disciples pressed him, “Rabbi, eat. Aren't you going to eat?”

P - He told them, “I have food to eat you know nothing about.”

J - The disciples were puzzled. “Who could have brought him food?”

P - Jesus said, “The food that keeps me going is that I do the will of the One who sent me, finishing the work he started. As you look around right now, wouldn't you say that in about four months it will be time to harvest? Well, I'm telling you to open your eyes and take a good look at what's right in front of you. These Samaritan fields are ripe. It's harvest time!

“The Harvester isn't waiting. He's taking his pay, gathering in this grain that's ripe for eternal life. Now the Sower is arm in arm with the Harvester, triumphant. That's the truth of the saying, ‘This one sows, that one harvests.’ I sent you to harvest a field you never worked. Without lifting a finger, you have walked in on a field worked long and hard by others.”  
*[M gets up & stands at lectern]*

M - Many of the Samaritans from that village committed themselves to him because of the woman's witness: “He knew all about the things I did. He knows me inside and out!” They asked him to stay on, so Jesus stayed two days. A lot more people entrusted their lives to him when they heard what he had to say. They said to the woman, “We're no longer taking this on your say-so. We've heard it for ourselves and know it for sure. He's the Savior of the world!”

from *The Message*  
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# Benediction

P - God be with you till we meet again;  
loving counsels guide, uphold you,  
may the Shepherd's care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

M - God be with you till we meet again;  
unseen wings, protecting, hide you,  
daily manna still provide you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

P - God be with you till we meet again;  
when life's perils thick confound you,  
put unfailing arms around you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

M - God be with you till we meet again;  
keep love's banner floating over you,  
smite death's threatening wave before you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

by Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1880 alt.  
Hymnal #430