



Johnsville United Methodist Church

Union Bridge, MD

Our mission is to nurture the members of the congregation in developing a personal relationship with God and to share His word and His love with the larger community.

PRAISE, WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION

October 24, 2021

PRELUDE

“Jesus Is All the World to Me”

WELCOME

Opening Hymn

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

UMH 110

1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.
2. Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
were not the right man on our side,
The man of God’s own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord, Sabaoth, his name,
from age to age the same,
And he must win the battle.
3. And though this world,
with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
4. That word above all earthly powers,
no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours,
thru him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill;

his rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

God's truth abideth still;
His kingdom is forever.

Call to Worship: **(Psalm 34)**

Leader: Bless the Lord at all times.

People: Let everyone bless God.

Leader: Praise the Lord continually.

People: Let everyone praise Christ.

Leader: Our souls boast in the Lord.

People: We boast in the Spirit's greatness.

Leader: With one voice, we magnify and exalt the Lord, for God has delivered us and made us whole.

People: Exalt our God, the Lord of life.

Opening Prayer (Hebrews 7, Mark 10)

Great Triune God, through Jesus Christ, our great and eternal High Priest, we give you praise and consecrate ourselves to follow you. As we worship you and celebrate your glorious resurrection, open our eyes so that we may see— open the eyes of our mind to learning and understanding; open the eyes of our heart, to love and compassion; open the eyes of our soul, to see our spiritual selves during our time of worship. Amen.

Special Music

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Merciful God, we often turn away from you. We ignore what you say to us. We do not see your wonderous acts in this world. We listen to the grumbling voices around us rather to your voice. We walk on crooked paths rather than your ways. We forget how much you love us. We fail to heed your call to love one another. Forgive us, God. Turn our lives toward the light of your love, that we might continually praise and magnify your holy name. In your mercy, we pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

UMH 452

1. My faith looks up to thee,
thou Lamb of Calvary, Spirit divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
be wholly thine!

2. May thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire!
As thou has died for me,
O may my love to thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.

3. While life's dark maze I tread,
and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide;

4. When ends life's transient dream,
when death's cold sullen stream
shall o'er me roll;

bid darkness turn to day,
wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray
from thee aside.

blest Savior, then in love,
fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Hebrew Scripture Lesson: Job 42:1-6, 10-17

Then Job answered the Lord: "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare to me.'

I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he had prayed for his friends; and the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Then there came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they ate bread with him in his house; they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; and each of them gave him a piece of money and a gold ring.

The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys.

He also had seven sons and three daughters. He named the first Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch.

In all the land there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers.

After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children, and his children's children, four generations.

And Job died, old and full of days.

Gospel Lesson: Mark 10:46-52

They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside.

⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'

⁴⁸Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!'

⁴⁹Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.'

⁵⁰So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.

⁵¹Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.'

⁵²Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon:

"The Restoring Love of God"

Pastor Shari McCourt

Today's Hebrew scripture, and gospel lessons, are stories of God's restoring love for God's people. Our gospel lesson introduces us to Bartimaeus, while our Hebrew scripture lesson concludes the story of Job. Although the situations of the stories are different, there are many nuggets of wisdom found in each that may help us to grow into the rewards of faith in our Lord.

Our gospel lesson from Mark 10:46-52, begins as Jesus, and the disciples traveled to Jericho finding themselves in a large crowd gathered there. Bartimaeus was sitting on the side of the road. He was a blind man who was begging for survival. Bartimaeus heard that it was Jesus in the crowd, so he began to shout out loud, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" We can only imagine those in the crowd, looking down at this man, as he was blind. They sternly told him to be quiet! In that society at that time in history, it was believed that if you were born with a disability or developed one later in life, the fault was on that person or their family. They, or the person, must have done something wrong. It made sense that no one would want to talk to or hear from this man from that perspective. It was also believed that he should know his place!

Bartimaeus's faith was strong enough to know who Jesus was as he called to him louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Bartimaeus understanding Jesus' lineage, linked to King David, as the Son of God, the Messiah, and one who has the power to save, restore, and set free. His faith in Jesus was greater than to allow well-meaning people hold him back from the restoring love of God through Jesus. He wanted a new life through Jesus, and nothing was going to stop him!

Bartimaeus was loud enough for Jesus to hear him, and have him brought to him. Mark 10:49-50, says, "Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart' get up, he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus." In these two verses, we see where Jesus calls us all where we are, no matter who we are; to receive new life, and the restoring love of God. Jesus asked Bartimaeus what he wanted, but did not assume his desire. This is another indication of Jesus unconditional acceptance of us all. Jesus demonstrated love, cared for, and respected this man who was tossed away by the society of the time. Jesus did not impose his will on the man, but asked what he willed for himself. Bartimaeus was so eager to that he tossed away his belongings, and went to Jesus. His faith was so great that when he asked, Jesus restored his sight, and gave him new life by the virtue of the strength of his faith. The strength of our faith, just like this man, is a gift of God's grace. We can see through this story that no matter who we are, Jesus calls us to him, and if we ask, we may be given the strength of faith.

Faith is required to be restored. Both of the men from our scriptures lessons had great faith. Both of these men had personal relationships with God. Neither of these men, let well-intentioned

people, steer them away from their faith. Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as “confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see”

Learning from Bartimaeus, we **shouldn't just say** in our hearts we believe God can do a certain thing for us, we should **instead act** as though God can do it for us. Bartimaeus did not forget Jesus after Jesus helped him. We all know we shouldn't forget to express our gratitude, but we can always use a reminder. After Jesus healed Bartimaeus, Mark 10:52 states that he “followed Jesus along the road” (NIV). Bartimaeus was a believer who became a follower!

Restoration is to be of God's will, and to benefit God's people by placing them in a new, and right relationship with God. This takes place through repentance. This brings to our Hebrew scripture lesson in the Book of Job.

Last week Job was answered by God, after all of his lamenting following his losses, and sores all over his body. Job had made so pretty big accusations against God. And, God was ready for Job!

Job begins today with his response to all that God had to say in return. Job begins with his eyes opened to a bigger picture of life in the universe, and to what his accusations mean to God. It is God's Spirit that aided in Job's opening to all that God does, and God's presence within the lives of all God's people. Even though God is busy running the universe; God is still present with us just like with Job. Job realized that it is God, who gives us opportunity to open our eyes, and see the truth in God, and of God's love for us through God's very actions of giving us life. Job said, “Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare to me.’ I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

When I talk to different people, and they share with me how it is that they have come to faith, there are a variety of ways that God's Holy Spirit has moved through people's lives to bring them into God's family. What most stories have in common is the moment when the individual comes to realize, and truly see all of the ways that God through Jesus Christ has been with them carrying them, loving them providing for them and giving them gifts, and graces that they could have never imagined. And, they realize how unholy they were, before that moment, and before God claimed them as God's own. That is what we see with Job's story when he despised himself for not seeing God with clarity, and accusing God of being less than all God is. This is the moment that we fall to our knees in prayer before God and repent. We ask for forgiveness, for the many ways that we have missed the mark of discipleship in Christ.

Restoration does not always look like for us what it did for Job in some ways. We do not always have a full restoration of all of our material possessions, the way that Job experienced. Job was not only restored with all of what he had, before the loss materially, but he received more. He received more children, and doubled the livestock, material possessions, and restored health. Job's faithfulness was its own reward, without all of the stuff, but this was all to prove God's faithfulness. Job was fully restored and reconciled in his relationship with God. He came to realize that God was, and is, ever present in the midst of our lives. And, God's redeeming grace is always open to us, as God's Spirit moves within us, stirring us into a closer relationship to the one, who loves us more than we love ourselves. Thanks be to God.

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS TO GOD

DOXOLOGY

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Offering Prayer (Psalm 34, Job 42)

You invite us, God, to taste and see that you are good. Well, we have tasted and you are truly good. As a token of our gratitude and a reflection of our devotion, we give back to you from our abundance. Multiply the gifts of our hands, that they may double what we could do alone. To the glory and service of Jesus, Amen.

Closing Hymn

“Wonderful Words of Life”

UMH 600

1. Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of life;
let me more of their beauty see
wonderful words of life;
words of life and beauty
teach me faith and duty.

Refrain

Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life.
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life.

2. Christ, the blessed one, gives to all
wonderful words of life;
sinner, list to the loving call,
wonderful words of life;
all so freely given,
wooing us to heaven.

Refrain

3. Sweetly echo the gospel call,
wonderful words of life;
offer pardon and peace to all,
wonderful words of life;
Jesus, only Savior,
Sanctify forever.

Refrain

BENEDICTION

Go! Your faith has made you well.

**We go, knowing that our faith
has been made stronger.**

Go! Follow him on the way.

We go, knowing Jesus is the way.

POSTLUDE

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

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