

Miracle in the Darkest Times

On March 13, 2020, I scanned the faces of the students in my high school classroom. We had just received the news. With all the numbers of cases surging, we would have to switch temporarily to virtual learning. I told my students we would be back in two weeks at the most. I couldn't have been more wrong, for we returned over sixty-five weeks later. Over a year had passed since we had "normal" life, and the new normal was filled with so many unknowns.

What a time it has been! Many have experienced their world turned upside down. My students tell me numerous accounts of how much their lives changed in such a short period of time. So much transpired. So many felt fear and uncertainty. Loss of jobs for some of their parents. Loss of family members and dear friends. Feeling isolated and alone. Missing the physical presence of their loved ones. I cannot imagine how many stories are left to be shared.

In the midst of this dark time my family received some devastating news. My four-year-old nephew was diagnosed with cancer. Words cannot describe the range of feelings that overwhelmed my loved ones as they watched him go through chemotherapy and radiation therapy. The only threads that held us together were prayer and the strength that only comes from the Lord.

My hope grew stronger as my nephew continued to come through each step, not without struggle and hardship, but with a sweet smile and unexplainable strength. During his treatments a song would come from his lips: "I'm gonna see a victory. For the battle belongs to you, Lord!" He would sing as loud as his lungs would allow over the phone as his mother and father played their instruments and sang along. With tear-filled eyes, I silently praised God in my heart for the faith of a child, a reminder that we can claim God's victory in every dark, unknown, and upside-down time and find hope for tomorrow. We can cry out to the Lord like the psalmist: "My heart celebrates . . . yes, my whole body will rest in safety because you won't abandon my life" (vv. 9-10a, CEB).

—Jennifer Quijano West
Brooklyn, New York

Text for today: "For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit. *You show me the path of life.* In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:10-11, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** 1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21; Psalm 16 (11); Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62.

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You show me the path of life



CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

June 26, 2022

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE "Blessed Ye Who Live in Faith" (Brahms)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Eunice Plank, Worship Leader

One: Jesus said, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

All: **"For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."**

One: Jesus, we want to become your followers.

All: **We come here today to follow you. Help us ... guide us ... save us.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Lord, we want to follow you wherever you lead. Reach out to us this day, stirring our souls and spirits with the winds of your power that we may faithfully be your disciples. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

***HYMN #76** "Praise, I will praise you, Lord"

[Verse 1]

Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways, and glorify your name.

Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

[Verse 2]

Love, I will love you, Lord with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways, and glorify your name.

Love, I will love you, Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

[Verse 3]

Serve, I will serve you, Lord with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways, and glorify your name.

Serve, I will serve you Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

DEDICATION OF VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Introduction of Teachers and Helpers

VBS Teachers and Helpers Response:

We have heard God's call to teach and lead Vacation Bible School for our church. We teach, trusting in God's support, sustaining grace and empowerment for this task. We teach, relying on prayer and the presence of the Holy Spirit. We teach, inviting others to recognize and respond to God's call in their lives. We teach, depending on our church family to uphold us in prayer, love and support.

Congregational Prayer:

Loving God, you have entrusted us with the message of your love for everyone. We ask for your guidance, that we may be teachers and learners together. Believing that you are in our midst, we set apart those who would serve in our Vacation Bible School. May they serve you in nurturing the spiritual growth of all who are entrusted in their care. Bless each one gathered here, enabling them to be channels of your grace. We pray all these things through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

The way to Jerusalem was costly for Jesus. The way of Christian faithfulness is costly today. It requires nothing less than the full commitment of our lives. Our offering is a symbol of our life in the Spirit, our total commitment to the reign of God.

You are invited to place your offering in the plate at the front of the chancel during the offertory or after the service. If you are watching on facebook live or the HCOB webpage, we virtually pass the offering plate to you. You can drop your offering off at the church, mail it to the church or use Paypal on the Hagerstowncob webpage to give.

Offertory

Menuett in C

(Haydn)

***Doxology #119**

"Praise God from whom"

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Let us pray. Gracious God, we did not know it would cost so much or feel so good to follow Jesus. We are grateful that we have so much to give and so much yet to learn. We dedicate our offerings so that we and our neighbors may be equipped for life in your realm. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website.

Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.

An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.

PRAAYER HYMN #357 "O Master, let me walk with thee"

[Verse 1]

O Master, let me walk with thee in lowly paths of service free. Tell me thy secret, help
me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.

[Verse 2]

Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear, winning word of love. Teach me the
wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.

[Verse 3]

Teach me thy patience, still with thee in closer, dearer company, in work that keeps
faith sweet and strong, in trust that triumphs over wrong,

[Verse 4]

in hope that sends a shining ray far down the future's broad'ning way, in peace that
only thou canst give; with thee, O Master, let me live.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

TEMPLE CHOIR

"On Eagle's Wings"

(Hayes)

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 9:51-62

NT 70

51 When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. 52 And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; 53 but they did not receive him, because his face was set towards Jerusalem. 54 When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?' 55 But he turned and rebuked them. 56 Then they went on to another village. 57 As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." 58 And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' 59 To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 60 But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." 61 Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." 62 Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

MESSAGE

"Looking Into the Unknown"

Pastor Twyla Rowe

*HYMN #447

"O Jesus, I have promised"

[Verse 1]

O Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end.
Be thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend.

I shall not fear the battle if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if thou wilt be my guide.

[Verse 2]

O let me feel thee near me, the world is ever near:
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear.
My foes are ever near me, around me and within,
but, Jesus, draw thou nearer, and shield my soul from sin.

[Verse 3]

O let me hear thee speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will.

O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control,
O speak, and make me listen, thou guardian of my soul.

[Verse 4]

O Jesus, thou hast promised to all who follow thee
that where thou art in glory there shall thy servant be.
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end.
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.

*BENEDICTION

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

POSTLUDE

"Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah"

(Haan)

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\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship  
Thank you for joining us in worship today.  
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