

ST. DAVID'S (SHERMAN'S) UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
15th Sunday After Pentecost
September 13, 2020

WELCOME

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Forgiving God, we, who find it hard to forgive, seek understanding of Your good purposes at work, even in the face of evil. Keep us from judging others or nursing grudges. We would extend to all the patience that You have shown toward us. Remove the self-righteous limits we impose when pardoning others, for Your grace toward us has far exceeded our deserving. AMEN

OPENING HYMN: "There's A Wideness In God's Mercy"
(Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863)

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea.
There's a kindness in his justice,
Which is more than liberty

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Vast and open, full and free.
By his kindness, He pardons me.
There's a wideness in God's mercy.

There's a welcome for the sinner,
And more graces for the good;
There is mercy with the Savior;
There is healing in his blood.

For the love of God is broader,
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Vast and open, full and free.
By his kindness, He pardons me.
There's a wideness in God's mercy.

*If our love were but more simple;
We would take Him at his Word;
And our lives would be illumined
By the presence of our Lord.*

*There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Vast and open, full and free.
By his kindness, He pardons me.
There's a wideness in God's mercy.
There's a wideness in God's mercy.*

CHILDRENS MESSAGE: The Koala, Miss Dee

CALL TO CONFESSION

Some of us are haunted by the evil we have done to others. Some harbor hatred against a sister or brother. Some of us fear any whose ways are strange to us. Some are tired of forgiving again and again. All of us are in debt to a loving God who never gives up on us. Let us seek to make things right once more in our relationship with God and all humankind.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We bow before Your judgement seat, O God. We have ranked our sisters and brothers by the faulty standards of our society to decide who is worthy of our attention. We have rejected those whom we dislike and have been harsh with those we think do not measure up. We have been quite willing to overlook our own faults as we look down on other people. O God, You have shown us a better way. Save us from the pain we inflict and help us to discover the blessing of forgiveness. Hear now our individual pleas.

TIME OF SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God has pity on us and releases us from the debts we have accumulated. In the great design of the universe, we are equipped to receive this forgiveness only when we extend it to others. Jesus points us to unlimited willingness to forgive seventy times seven. How amazing is God's love for us, and God's expectation of us!

HOLY SCRIPTURES: Genesis 50:15–21, Psalm 103:1–13, Matthew 18:21–35

GENESIS 50:15–21

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?"

¹⁶ So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father left these instructions before he died: ¹⁷ This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly. Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father. When this message came to him, Joseph wept.

¹⁸ His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said. ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. ²¹ So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

PSALM 103 (of David)

¹ Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

² Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

⁶ The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: ⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; ¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

MATTHEW 18:21–35

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³ “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

SERMON: “Forgiving is Hard”

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

BENEDICTION:

We are called to forgive and build up, to offer mercy in place of harsh judgment. Let us love in grateful response to God’s forgiving love. Let us go forth rejoicing and giving ourselves for others.

CLOSING HYMN: “Lord I Want to Be a Christian”

Lord, I want to be a Christian
In my heart, In my heart
Lord, I want to be a Christian
In my heart.
In my heart, In my heart
Lord I want to be a Christian
In my heart.

Lord, I want to be more loving
In my heart, In my heart
Lord, I want to be more loving
In my heart.
In my heart, In my heart
Lord, I want to be more loving
In my heart.

Lord, I want to be more holy
In my heart, In my heart.

Lord, I want to be more holy
In my heart.

In my heart, In my heart
Lord, I want to be more holy
In my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus
In my heart, In my heart

Lord, I want to be like Jesus
In my heart.

In my heart, In my heart
Lord, I want to be like Jesus
In my heart.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

POTATO HARVESTING: The potatoes will be harvested this afternoon (Sunday, September 13), beginning at 1:00 PM. All help will be much appreciated.

MAKE-A-WISH TRUCK CONVOY: Make-A-Wish Truck Convoy pit beef and ham fundraiser will be held Sunday September 13 after the church service.

\$7.00 Each. No Bake Sale this year. Please contact Todd & Wanda if you have any questions. Thank you for your support!

GRIEFSHARE: A new 13-week group series will begin on Tuesday, September 15, 7:00 PM. There will be a workbook resource for new members. Please share with family members and friends who are experiencing a time of grief.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Please send your prayer requests directly to Pastor Scott either by text (717-880-6082) or e-mail (pscott8283@comcast.net) prior to Sunday, so that he can lift them up during worship.

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY: Throughout September.

This offering will be used to support a seminary student pursuing a degree in Christian theology. It is so important to support our next generation of church leaders who will serve God and be agents of positive change in our world. This offering is in memory of our former pastor, Rev. Dr. Harvey M. Light. Your donations may be given to Linda Huggens after church services or mailed to our treasurer, Harley Hartman at 2195 Black Rock Road, Hanover, PA 17331. *Please indicate that the funds are for the Lancaster Seminary offering.* Thank you for your donations!

HACC NEEDS:

PAL: Cooking spray, Egg Noodles, Cream of Chicken Soup, Canned Fresh Carrots, Dish Detergent, Salad Dressing, Ziplock Sandwich Bags, Black Pepper.

Clothing Bank: Adult Toiletries.

Changing Lives Shelter: Volunteers Needed 4 PM – 7 PM, Deodorant, Feminine Products, Body Wash, Shampoo, Conditioner, Santizing Wipes w/Bleach.

Ruth's Harvest: Single-serve Entrees, Cereal, Juice Boxes, Snack or Veggies (All Single Serve Containers).

Donations Accepted Monday to Friday, 8 AM – 12:30 PM, Saturdays, 8 AM – 11 AM or by Appointment (Call 717-633-6353 to schedule a drop-off time).

September PAL Date: September 26

No September Clothing Bank Date

YOUR WEEKLY OFFERINGS: If you would like to mail your offerings to the church, please mail them to Harley Hartman and include one Offering Envelope with your mailed checks indicating the manner in which you would like to have your funds applied. Harley's Mailing Address:

Harley Hartman, 2195 Blackrock Road, Hanover, PA 17331

Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of St. David's!

SONG HISTORY

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY:

Raised in the Church of England, Frederick W. Faber (b. Calverly, Yorkshire, England, 1814; d. Kensington, London, England, 1863) came from a Huguenot and strict Calvinistic family background. He was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and ordained in the Church of England in 1839. Influenced by the teaching of John Henry Newman, Faber followed Newman into the Roman Catholic Church in 1845 and served under Newman's supervision in the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. Because he believed that Roman Catholics should sing hymns like those written by John Newton, Charles Wesley, and William Cowpe, Faber wrote 150 hymns himself. One of his best known, "Faith of Our Fathers," originally had these words in its third stanza: "Faith of Our Fathers! Mary's prayers/Shall win our country back to thee." He published his hymns in various volumes and finally collected all of them in *Hymns* (1862).

LORD I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN:

Both text and tune were first published in *Folk Songs of the American Negro* (1907), compiled by brothers Frederick Work and John W. Work, Jr. (PHH 476). This music is an example of the slow, sustained, long-phrased tune found in a number of African American spirituals. In the manner of many such spirituals, this is a call-and-response song, in which a soloist (or choir in unison) sings the stanzas (first two lines) and everyone responds by singing the chorus (last two lines) in four-part harmony. The soloist's lines could be sung rather freely, and the rest in more regular rhythm, but not fast. This music is intended to be reverent, with little, if any, accompaniment (perhaps piano). --*Psalter Hymnal Handbook*, 1988

Miles Mark Fisher, in *Negro Slave Songs in the United States*, writes that this African American spiritual could have been written in Virginia in the 1750s based on a story from Hanover, Virginia, 1756: "A black slave asked Presbyterian preacher William Davies, 'I come to you, sir, that you may tell me some good things concerning Jesus Christ and my duty to God, for I am resolved not to live any more as I have done...Lord [Sir], I want to be a Christian'" (PHH).

What a powerful line — "I am resolved not to live any more as I have done." It is very easy for us to say as Christians that we have "arrived;" we've accepted the call, received Christ into our hearts, and are thereby "Christian." But how often do we use this as a crutch? How simple it is to justify our painful comments, our complacency in the face of injustice, and our actions done out of pride rather than humility, all because we bear the name "Christian." Today, and every day, we must dedicate ourselves to being Christian - not just claiming the name as our own - and resolve "not to live any more as we have done."