



1875 Farnsley Road
Louisville, KY 40216
(502) 448-2544
ststephe_@bellsouth.net
www.ststephenucc.net

Reverend Jim Harper III, Pastor

June 19, 2016

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

OPENING OF WORSHIP

Prelude

It Is Well with My Soul

Robert J. Hughes

***Opening Words of Worship** (Responsively)

We are here to celebrate life,
to celebrate this world and the universe we live in,
so unimaginable, so vast, yet so minutely beautiful.

**We are here to celebrate human life
with all its physical, intellectual and spiritual delight,
so close to earth, so near to God.**

We are here to celebrate our unity in Christ,
to pray for peace, joy, and love
for ourselves and every human being.

We are here to praise God, the great giver of it all.

Amen.

Amen.

~ Adapted from a prayer written by Angus McLeod

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* Please stand if you are able

***Opening Song #58**

This Is My Father's World

***Opening Prayer** (Unison)

**God of struggle and blessing,
we thank You that You are so willing to meet us
in love here and now, as you met our
mothers and fathers in faith on their journeys,
and as You entered our human life in Jesus.
Help us today to open our hearts to You
in this time of worship, that we may
grow in love toward You and all people
through the gentle wind of your Spirit. Amen.**

~ Adapted from Ruth C. Duck and Patricia Wilson-Kastner,
Praising God (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 139-140.

***Gloria Patri** (Unison)

Henry W. Greatorex (From Red Hymnal #623)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, Amen.**

***Welcome to Our Guest(s)**

After you fill out a Guest Card, please place it in the offertory plate later in the service.

Greet one another and pass along the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You may say, "Peace be with you." The response is "And also with you."

Celebrating Our Lives and Faith Together

SHARING OF GOD'S STORY

Scriptures of the Day

Luke 8:26-39

Jesus Frees a Demon-possessed Man

²⁶ Jesus and his disciples sailed to the Gerasenes' land, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, a certain man met him. The man was from the city and was possessed by demons. For a long time, he had lived among the tombs, naked and homeless.

²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he shrieked and fell down before him. Then he shouted, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" ²⁹ He said this because Jesus had already commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had taken possession of him, so he would be bound with leg irons and chains and placed under guard. But he would break his restraints, and the demon would force him into the wilderness.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had entered him. ³¹ They pleaded with him not to order them to go back into the abyss. ³² A large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs. Jesus gave them permission, ³³ and the demons left the man and entered the pigs. The herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and drowned.

³⁴ When those who tended the pigs saw what happened, they ran away and told the story in the city and in the countryside. ³⁵ People came to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, fully dressed and completely sane. They were filled with awe.

³⁶ Those people who had actually seen what had happened told them how the demon-possessed man had been delivered. ³⁷ Then everyone gathered from the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave their area because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and returned across the lake. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone begged to come along with Jesus as one of his disciples.

Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return home and tell the story of what God has done for you." So he went throughout the city proclaiming what Jesus had done for him.

~ Scripture Reading from the Common English Bible (CEB)

Response to the Sharing of God's Story (Unison)

One Day as Jesus Traveled

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("Lead On, O King Eternal"; "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers")

Eva Morse, Vocalist ~ Verses 1, 2, & 3

Congregation ~ Verses 4 & 5

Song Lyrics Removed for Website Publication

Biblical References: Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39; Matthew 8:28-34

Tune: Traditional Welsh melody, from Daniel Evans' Hymnau a Thonau (Hymns and Tunes), 1865

("Lead On, O King Eternal"; "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers") (MIDI)

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Luke 8:26-39 ~ Cotton Patch Gospel of Luke

²⁶ They sailed on over to Gerasa County, Alabama, which is across the lake from Georgia. When he got out on land, he was met by a city man who had a "demon." For a long time he had worn no clothing and wouldn't stay in a house but in a cemetery.

When he saw Jesus, he stood in front of "him and yelled and shouted at the top of his lungs, "What you got against me, Jesus, you God's holy boy? I warn you, don't you put the screws on me." (For Jesus was telling the mean spirit to come out of the man, because it frequently convulsed him, and he had to be placed under guard, shackled and handcuffed. But he broke loose and was driven by the "demon" into the back woods.)

So Jesus asked him, "What's your name?" He said, "Multitude," since a whole slew of demons had entered him. Then they started begging him not to order them into

exile. Now, there on the hillside a large herd of hogs was being fed, so the demons begged him to let them go into them. He permitted them, and the demons rushed out of the man and into the hogs. When they did, the whole herd went tearing down the slope and into the lake and were drowned.

When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran like mad and told it to both farmers and city people. Everybody flocked out to gawk, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at Jesus' feet, fully clothed and completely sane.

It just scared the daylighters out of them, especially when the herdsmen kept telling them how the demon-man had been cured. So all the people in that part of Alabama asked him to go away and let them alone, because they were so scared they were shaking all over.

³⁸ When he got into the boat to leave, the man from whom the demons had departed asked to go with him. But he turned him down and said, "Go back home and tell them about all that God has done for you." So he went through the whole city, speaking on what Jesus did for him.

~ Excerpt From: Clarence Jordan. *Cotton Patch Gospel: Luke and Acts*. iBooks. <https://itun.es/us/2-6Rz.1>"

Meditation

God Offers Us Wholeness

SERVICE OF HEALING

Prayer for Healing

Holy Love, You see us as we are. What others see as imperfections,
You see as beautiful possibility. You love us in our differences
and in our uniqueness. We see Your image reflected
in our diversity and in our solidarity with one another.

Today we come before You. Imperfect. Rejoicing. Confused. Strong.
Lonely. Ready. We seek Your vision. Help us to see each other
and all of Your creation as You see us.

We call to You now. Some of us are in pain
in our bodies, our hearts, our minds, or our spirits.
Some of us have family or friends who feel broken or isolated.
There are also those who we have never met
and yet care for because they too are created in Your love.

We call forth your power to heal and to transform.
Guide us now as we pray with one another.

The Act of Laying on Hands, Praying, and Anointing with Oil

The Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)

**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.**

SHARING OF OUR GIFTS AND GOD'S GIFTS

Call to Give

Sustainer of life, You send us into this hurting and fearful world
to be compassionate and caring people.
Enable us to use these gifts as agents of Christ's love,
aware that we are the receivers of the greatest gift ever,
our Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.
Amen.

Litany of Recognition and Honor for Father's Day

On this day we recognize our fathers and stepfathers,
those who have nurtured and guided us in our lives.

**We thank You, O God,
for those who have been fathers to us.**

We honor our grandfathers, our uncles and brothers,
those who have demonstrated love and care to us in our lives.

**We thank You, O God,
for those who have been like fathers to us.**

We appreciate our teachers, leaders and pastors,
who have been both male and female,
but we especially honor those who have extended
fatherly tenderness and love in our lives in our past and present.

**We thank You, O God,
for those who have fulfilled a fatherly role in our lives.**

Loving God, You have been both Mother and Father to us.
Abba, Father, we remember how Jesus called out to You on earth,
recognizing that You are closer to us than our earthly parents.

Your love and care for us are felt
in the ways we are loved and cared for by others.

We thank You for all the male figures in our lives
who have shared Your love with us.

We ask that You guide and nurture new fathers and fathers-to-be.

We seek Your forgiveness for fathers who have fallen short,
for models of fatherhood that were limiting rather than embracing,
for that is not Your model.

You are our ever-loving Parent, Father of us all.

Grant Your wisdom to all fathers and fatherly figures
to love their children as You have loved Your children.

**We thank You, O God,
for fatherhood and motherhood,
for the blessing of parents in our lives.**

Abba, Father,
we pray with those who are mourning the loss of fathers today,
and for those whose fathers were absent or abusive.

Ease their pain on this day, loving God.

May they know Your embrace,
and that You are more than Father or Mother to us—
You are the all-loving, all-caring Parent,
Creator of heaven and earth,
who knows the hairs on our heads.

**We thank You, O God,
that You are always with us,
that You will never leave us or forsake us.**

We thank You for this day,
and ask that You bless all of Your children with Your love,
as a wonderful father loves their child.

Amen.

~ Written by Rev. Mindi, and posted on the **Rev-o-lution** blog. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>

CLOSING OF WORSHIP

***Closing Hymn #560**

For the Beauty of the Earth

***Closing Words of Worship** (Responsively)

Our worship has ended,
But now our service begins!
Go from this place for you
and I are the body of Christ
and the whole world awaits us;

So live passionately, and love faithfully,
and celebrate every moment of your life
from now until the Finale.

Our God of relentless grace goes with us!

Amen.

Amen.

~ Adapted from a prayer written by The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

Postlude

God of Our Fathers

Roger C. Wilson

Time with your Children and the Bible this Week

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Luke 8:26-30 — The Man Who Lived in a Graveyard — by Dell Smith Klein

Have you ever been to a scary movie? A movie where someone did something frightening--and you could feel your heart beating in your chest--and you began to wish you hadn't watched the movie at all? (Give children an opportunity to respond.) Yes, I've done that, too! I've watched scary movies, and ending up wishing that I had not seen them.

Movies like that sometimes give us bad dreams. The story I'm thinking about today is a little bit like that. It's a very strange story. You may even feel like you are watching a horror movie as you listen. But Jesus is in this story, so you know everything will turn out all right.

Jesus and his friends were in a boat and when they arrived at a certain place, Jesus stepped off the boat onto the shore. This spot was very different from other places where Jesus had taught. He and his friends could see the town nearby, but the place they got off the boat was a cemetery, a graveyard with tombs and graves scattered along the way.

Suddenly, they heard a loud noise of clanking chains, and the angry voice of a man screaming and shouting at Jesus. The man had no clothing and was homeless. He was living in the cemetery. Now if you were watching a horror movie, you might expect the hero of the movie to get rid of the screaming man. That isn't what Jesus did! Jesus began to talk to the homeless man. He asked the man his name, and before very long the man was standing with Jesus and his mind was healed, and all the things that troubled him were gone. People came from the town and found the man standing there--bathed and wearing clothing. His hair was clean and combed. His eyes were clear and the people could see that the man was in his right mind. Jesus had made him well. The man sat at Jesus' feet, and Jesus taught him about God's love.

Before long, it was time for Jesus and his friends to get back into the boat and go on to another place. The man whom Jesus had healed begged to go with Jesus on the boat. But Jesus told the man to stay in his hometown, so that he might "declare what great things God has done for (him)." The man started that very day telling his hometown people what wonderful things Jesus had done for him.

See, I told you everything would turn out right. The man was healed and never again had to live in a cemetery. He was well and strong. Jesus wanted the man to tell others what God had done for him. He wants us to tell others what God has done for us. What has God done for you ? (Allow children to respond). Maybe he brought your lost dog home. Maybe he helped you to find your lost bike. Maybe you were very sick and God made you well.

PRAYER: Thank you, God, for healing that man's mind so he didn't have to live in a graveyard any more. And thank you for all the things you have done and are doing for us. Amen.

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