

RESPONSIVE READING

From Micah 6:8, II Peter 1:3-7, Philippians 4:8, Romans 12:9,
Galatians 6:9-10, Ephesians 2:10 and Hebrews 13:20

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?

TO ACT JUSTLY, TO LOVE MERCY AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD.

His divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life and true religion, enabling us to know the One who called us by His own splendor and might.

THROUGH THIS MIGHT AND SPLENDOR HE HAS GIVEN US PROMISES, GREAT BEYOND ALL PRICE, AND THROUGH THEM YOU MAY ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION WITH WHICH LUST HAS INFECTED THE WORLD, AND COME TO SHARE IN THE VERY BEING OF GOD

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

FINALLY, BROTHERS, WHATEVER IS TRUE, WHATEVER IS NOBLE, WHATEVER IS RIGHT, WHATEVER IS PURE, WHATEVER IS LOVELY, WHATEVER IS ADMIRABLE -- IF ANYTHING IS EXCELLENT OR PRAISEWORTHY -- THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

LET US NOT BECOME WEARY IN DOING GOOD, FOR AT THE PROPER TIME WE WILL REAP A HARVEST IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

FOR WE ARE GOD'S WORKMANSHIP, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS TO DO GOOD WORKS, WHICH GOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE FOR US TO DO.

May the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in all goodness so that you may do His will,

AND MAY HE MAKE OF US WHAT HE WOULD HAVE US BE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, TO WHOM BE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER! AMEN.

The Word of the Lord. **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

A SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

-- Colossians 3:17

The pastor will address those to be commissioned:

Friends, you have selflessly volunteered your time, talent and energy to serve our Lord Jesus Christ as His co-workers and representatives to those less fortunate. Will you, to the best of your ability and as God enables you, love and serve those whom God brings your way, as Christ has loved and served you? Will you seek to faithfully represent Jesus Christ and His church in all you do?

(The Mission Committee chair will address the congregation:)

William Carey, known as "the Father of Modern Missions", once wrote: "I will go down into the pit, IF you will promise to hold the ropes." The pit of which Carey wrote was the particularly dangerous mission field to which he was headed; the ropes to which he referred were the ropes of prayer and support. Will you, the members of Greenwood Community Church, Presbyterian, seek to remember these young people and their leaders in daily prayer and supplication before God for the duration of their trips? Will we "hold their ropes?" If so, please answer, "We will."

(Pastor) On behalf of the congregation and session of the Greenwood Community Church, Presbyterian, I commission all of you to this ministry of service and mission for which you have so diligently prepared. And now, "Whatever you do, put your whole heart and soul into it, as unto work done for the Lord, and not merely done for men -- knowing that your real reward, a heavenly one, will come from the Lord, since you are actually employed by the Lord Christ, and not just by your earthly master (Colossians 3:23-24)."

Let us pray: Almighty God, may You surround these young men and women with Your sustaining presence in the days to come. Go before them to prepare their way and to guide their paths; be behind them to prod them on and to be their constant support; be next to them as their Companion and Friend; and be within them, using them as vessels of Your grace and channels of Your love to those they will serve. Be their constant Guardian to protect them, and may their gracious spirit of selfless encouragement be a blessing to all You bring their way. We pray You will bless them, protect them and strengthen them in all they do, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen."

God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

PSALM 46
The Psalter, 1912

MATERNA C. M. D.
Samuel A. Ward, 1882

1. God is our Ref-uge and our Strength, Our ev - er pres-ent aid,
2. A riv - er flows whose streams make glad The cit - y of our God,
3. The na - tions raged, the king - doms moved, But when his voice was heard
4. O come, be-hold what won-drous works Je - ho - vah's hand has wrought;
5. Be still and know that I am God, O'er all ex - alt - ed high;

And, there-fore, though the earth re-move, We will not be a - fraid;
The ho - ly place where-in the Lord Most high has his a - bode;
The trou - bled earth was stilled to peace Be - fore his might-y word.
Come, see what des - o - la - tion great He on the earth has brought.
The sub - ject na - tions of the earth My Name shall mag - ni - fy. -

Though hills a - midst the seas be cast, Though foam - ing wa - ters roar,
Since God is in the midst of her, Un - moved her walls shall stand,
The Lord of Hosts is on our side, Our safe - ty to se - cure;
To ut - most ends of all the earth He caus - es war to cease;
The Lord of Hosts is on our side, Our safe - ty to se - cure;

Yea, though the might-y bil - lows shake The moun-tains on the shore.
For God will be her ear - ly help, When trou-ble is at hand.
The God of Ja - cob is for us A ref - uge strong and sure.
The weap - ons of the strong de - stroyed, He makes a - bid - ing peace.
The God of Ja - cob is for us A ref - uge strong and sure. A - MEN.

BLESSINGS TO ALL OUR STUDENTS AND LEADERS being commissioned for mission service today: **Logan Carson, Nicholas Cobb, Lindsay Cobb, Adam D'Antico, Luke Donovan, Henry Hersum, James Ladino, Jared Ladino, Carissa Koop, Amelia Lombard, Devon Mendez, Adi Pfeiffer, Gabrielle Pisano, Owen Phillips, Mandy-Lynn Phillips, Rachel Porcaro and Greg Warren** along with adult leaders **Matthew and Corrie Majeika, Stephen Clark, Cynthia Pisano and Karen Lockhart** will be leaving Monday for the **Lifeway/Fuge Mission Camp** held at Eastern University near Philadelphia, PA, where they will spend the week in service projects, fun and fellowship with 300+ young people from all over the eastern United States. **Godspeed to all!**

EXCERPT FROM A JULY 2017 SERMON, UPDATED FOR TODAY:

Each summer since the year 2000, with your support, young people from this congregation and their adult leaders have gone on some sort of mission adventure, a "sowing expedition" ... if I may mix metaphors, they go out to sow their good oats (not wild oats!) and scatter their good seed. We've called these sowing expeditions "MISSION TRIPS." In 2000, twelve went to Garysburg, NC; in 2001, twenty-four went to Littleton, New Hampshire; in 2002, twenty-six went to Montgomery, West Virginia; in 2003, twenty-eight when to Ontario, Canada; in 2004, ten went to Rochester, New Hampshire; in 2005, nineteen went to Reading, Pennsylvania; in 2006, thirty-four went to Washington, DC; in 2007, twenty-six went to Philadelphia; in 2008, twenty-four returned to Philadelphia; in 2009, fifteen served in needy parts of the North Shore area of Massachusetts, mostly in Lynn; in 2010, seventeen went back to Lynn; in 2011, fourteen went again to Philadelphia; in 2012, fifteen returned to Philadelphia; in 2013, fourteen went to Nashville, Tennessee; in 2014, fourteen again returned to Philadelphia, 2015 eleven again returned to Philadelphia, 2016 ten went to Lynchburg, Virginia, 2017 twelve went to Philadelphia, 2018 saw twenty-three return to Philadelphia and tomorrow 22 are heading out, again to Philadelphia.

*Looked at in another way, this church has faithfully and generously supported three hundred and seventy young mission adventurers over the years (not counting our individual young people who served in places such as Nicaragua, Romania, Japan, United Arab Emirates, LaVida Wilderness ministry and three on summer staff with LifeWay FUGE!) They've all donated their time, energy and talents to building and refurbishing projects for needy people, they've worked with refugee or disadvantaged children, they've helped in nursing homes, they've raked, dug, weeded, painted, hauled trash, cleared debris, hammered and scrubbed; they've participated in community outreach and they've verbally shared their faith with others, and more. **What are they really up to?** Their business is not just to give themselves something "to do" in the summer, although these trips certainly do that ... however, they could easily find plenty else to do, as could their selfless leaders who take time off from work and family to accompany and assist them. Nor is their business to just do something nice for needy people, although this, too, is certainly accomplished. Nor is it their business just to have fun, although these experiences have given wholesome, cherished, enjoyable memories that'll last them a lifetime. **What is their business?** Their main business each summer is to learn how to get better at fulfilling their life's calling, which is to do good ... as Paul puts it in Ephesians 2:10, for we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*