

82nd Annual Reunion Service, Central Mine Methodist Church – July 31, 1988

Minister: The Rev. Dr. Daniel Rosemergy

Organ Preludes Donald M. Ross

***Introit:** There Is a Green Hill Far Away (Old Cornish Hymn)

Greetings: Charles Stetter

Hymn: Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

Invocation and Lord's Prayer

***Anthem:** O Jesus, Grant Me Hope and Comfort

Responsive Reading: Selection No. 45

Hymn: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name (Diadem)

Scripture Readings: Jeremiah 29: 1-7, 10-13
John 7:37-38
Acts 20:22-24

Pastoral Prayer & In Remembrance: Virginia Nicholls Harvey Adams, 1918-1987
Henry Cox, 1889-1987
Elsie Harper, 1891-1987
William Curto, 1924-1987
Bertha Jewell, 1898-1987
Russell Rosemergy, 1914-1987

Announcements and Remarks Charles Stetter

Offering and *Offertory Anthem: Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem

Doxology

Sermon: **Coming Home** (Abridged)

Each time that I return [to Central], it is for me a "coming home." I hope it is for you, too, even if it's your first visit. It can be a "coming home" for all of us—to this place, to our faith, and to ourselves.

In faith history, there is the ongoing theme of going up to Jerusalem—a coming home. For us today, there is an ongoing search for finding ourselves, our true home—and that's difficult. In our mobile society, one often has a succession of homes. We develop and establish our own homes. Our true home is a place—any place—where we as human beings are living out our lives in a fulfilling and loving way.

In a profound way, our home is wherever we are and it's whatever grounds us. Home is a sense of our being and belonging. It has to do with our being as an individual and as part of a community. It has to do with our relationship with God and with others over time. Home has to do with the past, present, and future—because our true understanding of who we are and what and where our home is grows out of our past, takes on reality in our present, and continues to be fulfilled in our futures.

In "Peanuts," Charlie Brown and Lucy are leaning on a fence, just talking. With her face in her hands, Lucy says plaintively, "I never think about the past," and then continues, "Also, I never worry about the future." Charlie considers that for a moment, then says, "What about the present?" That really gets to Lucy. She faces him and yells, "The present drives me crazy." I hope that isn't true for you, because to be here is to come home to this place, to be thankful for what the past means to us in the present, and to take home for the future.

It is easy to feel adrift, in exile, longing to come home to a place that no longer exists or is fully home. Jeremiah speaks to the Israelites exiled from Jerusalem. His message is to live wherever you are—build, plant, pray—wherever you are. Jerusalem would never lose its central place in their history but they could create "home" wherever they were and their God would be with them. The essence of Jeremiah's message was "You will seek me and find me." God is present with us in all places and at all times. The miners who came from Cornwall and other places came here and made it their home in their faith. We come home to a faith that endures over time.

In *More Copper Country Tales*, Alfred Nichols shared feelings of one of his homecomings: "I sought out some convenient spot and was soon reclining upon nature's carpet, feasting up the scenes of the ole home. How hallowed its memories, how picturesque its landscape, with its undulating hills, decked in green. As I sat musing over its past, a peculiar and unspeakable delight seemed to permeate my whole being. My heart was filled with rapture, my memory reveling in happy reminiscences. It is true the homes were modest and the home life simple, but they represented all that home stood for and brought to each heart all the sacredness and reverence embodied in that term" (pp. 14-15).

As we come home to this place, may each of us remember the places that have been our homes and those places, ideas, values that are home now. May we be touched by the sacredness and reverence that homes can be in our lives. With Jeremiah, may we experience this place as a part of our seeking for our God present in all such places and homes. As Christians, we have traveled the road to Jerusalem with Jesus many times. For him, too, Jerusalem was a coming home to his faith and trust in God—and his sharing with others, particularly the oppressed and outcast—his vision of God's love and how we should live. He moved beyond "outward" places to the "inner" places of our hearts. He drew strength from faith history and traditions, but only as they gave insight into God's love for us and how we should live.

Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Tabernacles. A part of the symbolism of that festival was a reminder of the water given to the Israelites from the rock in the desert in their time of need. Jesus promised not symbolism merely but the reality of "living water." I hope that each of us, too, "comes home" for the "living water" of God's love and vision for our lives. To be here is to come to know a God present in creation, present in the life of this Central Mine community, sustaining and encouraging through joys and struggles. It's not that everything goes right. In fact, a lot goes wrong. But in the middle of it is a God who suffers with us and calls us to be more than we now are.

Hopefully, this "coming home" has been for you an act of seeking God. Perhaps by coming here, you have found a moment to stand before God, to look at yourself and your life, for in doing that, you find your real home—a place that gives you meaning; a place that in love takes you in, sustains you, encourages you, inspires you, gives you strength and gives you vision; a place where you belong and share in faith and community—a place where in covenant with God, you love and care for one another.

Benediction: Let us go having received the living water that flows from God's eternal love. Let us go living that love and sharing our faith with this and future generations. Let us go confident that God is with us, leads us, and provides for every need. Go with God's blessing and joy. Amen and Shalom.

Hymn: Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

Benediction, Response, and Postlude

Organist: Donald M. Ross

***Choir Members:** *Sopranos:* Susan Rowe, Mary Henderson, Betty Martin, Patricia Mitchell, Mary Painter, Esther Rosemergy, Carol Waisanen

Altos: Carol Bard, Flora Graham, Deanna Martin, Carolyn Meyer

Tenors: Robert Bryant, Peter Manderfield, Dr. Stanley Martin, Silas Rosemergy

Bases: Dr. Fred Bryant, Jr., Jay Martin, Jack Porritt, Harry J. Vine, David Waisanen

Executive Committee Members: Dr. Fred W. Bryant, Gary A. Bryant, Robert J. Bryant, James K. Curto, Jeffrey Nicholls Curto, David C. Heikka, Hollace G. Roberts, Silas C. Rosemergy, Donald M. Ross, R. Charles Stetter, David H. Thomas, Henry J. Vine, Dr. Brian D. Wake, John E. Wilson