

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY's WORD – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler

to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week

July 8, in the year of our Lord 2020 – #844

Singing In The Storm

Monday evening, I was on my way home from visiting Cathy in the hospital. Ashley & Mike Frantz were watching Jericho & Jaxsen between when Jes went to work and I got home from the hospital. Just as I pulled into the Frantz driveway the storm hit. Hit big! Driving rain! Wind! Lightening! Thunder! I sat in my van awhile. Ashley and I texted back and forth. I said I would wait out the storm. Finally, after the heavy storm pounded on for a while, here comes Mike, with his big golf umbrella carrying Jax to the van. Little Jax was a bit afraid of the storm. At home, as we walked from the van to the house he curled up in a little ball in my arms. Ashley had him already for bed, so as soon as we got home, I made him his bottle, we cuddled in bed, he wanted to sing “*Jesus!*” (“*Jesus Loves Me*”), then we said our prayers and he was gone... sound asleep snuggled up against me tight as the lightning flashed outside our window and the rain pelted against the window! I was his shelter from the storm. Mike had been my shelter from the storm.

This week's sermon will focus on Jesus as our Shelter. One of the things I believe the Lord is doing through this pandemic is to turn all believers to Himself as their true Shelter. We tend to put our confidence and trust in so many things, people and institutions of this world. But really, there is only one sure Shelter! In planning the worship and choosing songs I was reminded of Robert Lowry's wonderful old hymn, “*My Life Flows On.*” Lowry (1826-1899) wrote over 500 hymns including some timeless classics we love like: “*Shall We Gather at The River,*” “*Nothing But The Blood of Jesus,*” “*I Need Thee Every Hour,*” and “*Christ Arose!*” “*My Life Flows On*” never gained quite the fame of some of those, but it is a wonderful hymn.

The other thing the hymn affirms is our “*singing*” thru the storm! As churches slowly come back to face-to-face worship one of the big questions has been about singing. Some early research declared singing to be very dangerous for coronavirus transmission. There was a case of a large choir practice in the west that turned out with quite a few choir members getting the virus and several dying. Those folks were not in a sanctuary but tightly packed in a low ceiling choir room with no masks, no sanitizing, sitting tight together, sharing choir music papers. That one case gets repeated & reported over and over. But the latest research and most current CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidance is that singing for a church service, where folks are socially distanced in the sanctuary, and seated facing the back of the person in front of them, is not especially dangerous. But still many uninformed, and still basing thoughts on that early March case, are strongly proclaiming, “*No singing!!!*” In California there has even been an outright ban for church singing. But how can people of faith not sing?

My life flows on in endless song, above earth's lamentation. I catch the sweet, though far off hymn that hails a new creation.

No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging. Since love is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts die? The Lord my Savior liveth. What though the darkness gather round? Songs in the night He giveth.

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing! All things are mine since I am His! How can I keep from singing?

How are you weathering the storm? Who do you run to when the storm rages? Where do you find shelter when life is throwing its mess your way? There is one real Shelter! Jesus Christ our Lord! He will hold you tight, comfort you, help you, protect you, guide you! Right now, I have a lot going on with health and family issues. It would be easy to be overwhelmed. But I proclaim that The Lord is my Shelter in the midst of this storm, and like Jax I'm going to sing of His love & power! So dear friends, as you face the storms of life in this time, run to Him! And while you are running ... Sing praise to Him!

In Dr. David Jeremiah's just released new book, "Shelter in God," he writes, "*I don't know all the details about what God is going to do. But what I do know is what He has done! And that is what we can count on. The God who sheltered His people in Biblical days won't stop now. So, come what may, I am trusting Him. And, so can you. You can count on the sheltering God....*"

"You have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat." Isaiah 25:4 NIV

Sheltered in God! Pastor Larry <><