

In *Luke 16:19-31*, we find Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The unnamed rich man dresses in fine silks and feasts sumptuously every day. Every day the rich man walks by the poor man, Lazarus, who sits in great need outside the gate of his mansion. Lazarus longs to satisfy his intense hunger by eating the scraps that fall from the rich man's table. The rich man is not serving God or loving his neighbor. He is the epitome of someone who is self-serving. The parable ends with the tables turned in the afterlife.

Preachers tend to make this story about the great reversal that happens in the afterlife. "It is better to store up riches in heaven than to accumulate them on earth." However, Old Testament scholar Amy-Jill Levine says this is really a story about economics. It is about the relationship between those of wealth and the poor.

F. Scott Fitzgerald in his classic novel from the roaring twenties, "The Great Gatsby," says the "Rich are different." What he means is when life turns sour, because of either reckless living or bad luck, the rich can use their resources and connections to escape the consequences. The rest of the population? Not so much. Great wealth not only separates one from the harsh realities of the poor and middle class, it provides endless second chances to those who make mistakes. Yes, the rich are different. They even profit when greed inspired booms end in bust.

What alarms me about the incoming cabinet members of the new administration is that they are almost all very, very wealthy. They are referred to as the billionaire cabinet. Not all of them are without merit. I think General James Mattis, Homeland Security boss John Kelly, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson are men of great skill and integrity. One notable billionaire exception is the heiress who was recently confirmed as the new Secretary of Education. She has no experience in education or in public policy work. And, neither she, nor her children, ever attended public schools. Her credentials were already weak; then she proved her ignorance when answering questions during her confirmation hearings. Heaven help us.

The breakup of the dam in California forced 200,000 citizens to evacuate their homes. This is yet another sign that the nation needs to upgrade its infrastructure. Yes, regulation that requires approval from a dozen or so agencies before any work can start is what stalled improvements to this vulnerable dam several years ago. A reduction in regulation is needed to speed up and reduce the cost of needed work. Wilbur Ross, who made his money running a hedge fund, believes these and other needed projects should be paid for through private public partnerships. This might work in Virginia toll lanes where the wealthy are not troubled by moving swiftly through traffic while only a few feet away folks who can't afford the extra \$20 a day in tolls sit in traffic. Since gas tax increase are anathema to the anti-tax lobby, this is what we seem to be left with. I have always thought that things that are worth having are worth paying for. Also, funding gimmicks and toll roads are not feasible in rural areas where traffic volumes are low. The wealthy think differently. I don't see this working out.

The same wealth influenced thinking applies with some of the GOP plans to replace or reform Obama care. The better way they say to provide coverage is through high deductible policies that utilize health saving accounts or tax credits. This however assumes large enough incomes to benefit from tax credits. If over half of American families live paycheck to paycheck and are greatly inconvenienced by a \$400 emergency, how will they accumulate money in a health savings accounts? Granted, high deductible policies cost less and will reduce use of health care. However, if you need to see a specialist and it's all out of pocket, will you schedule a 5 minute consultation that runs you \$400? I doubt it. It seems like all the ideas reflect the worldview of people of great means or are secure in their government or employer sponsored insurance plans. Thankfully, citizens who know their insurance coverage is at risk are making their voices heard.

I have two sons who work in banking. There is a growing enthusiasm in Congress to overturn most of the Dodd-Frank legislation that was enacted following the huge housing meltdown in 2008 that sent the whole world into a deep recession. Certainly small banks that present no systemic risk to our financial system should get some relief from the burden of compliance. However, if the consumer protections that were included in the bill are eviscerated, who suffers? Well, certainly the small saver that would lose protection by the elimination of the fiduciary mandate. It was estimated that \$17 billion a year is lost by small savers whose retirement savings are invested more to benefit their broker (i.e. produce high fees) than to provide security in retirement. The bank lobby cannot wait to get rid of rules that prohibit them from timing the crediting of deposits in order to run up over \$10 billion dollars a year in overdraft fees. Again, who is looking after those with modest incomes? The business lobby sees every regulation as a cost. Regulations are also wise rules that save us from our greed.

A large part of President Trump's appeal was that he seemed to understand the struggles of the working class. Can he stop the actions of Congressmen who tend to follow the wishes of corporate interests? Time will tell. I wish him well.

The Rich are different. They see the world with a different set of eyes. However, if they only talk among themselves, will they be able to see the problems and envision solutions that benefit everyone? We will see. Pray and pay attention. Jesus is assuming his followers care deeply about the poor and vulnerable.

Grace and peace,
James Brassard

Worship Notes

Feb 19th. While at dinner in the home of Simon, a prominent Pharisee, and women break into the gathering and ask Jesus for forgiveness. Seeing the disapproval in Simon's eyes, Jesus tells a short parable. He then asks the question, who loves God more?

Feb 26th. Jesus takes his body up to a mountaintop. There his body is transfigured into a bright, white radiance. The disciples are in awe. What does this magnificent view of Jesus glory tell us about faith?

Ash Wednesday, March 1st. We will have two services of worship. Both will offer the imposition of ashes. The morning service is at 7:30am and does not include music (25 minutes). The evening service is at 7:30PM and will have a homily titled: "Picking Your Dance Partner." The singing will include Taizé Chants (short meditative songs) and a chance to share your spiritual dance lessons.

March 3rd. First Sunday in Lent. Communion at both service. Jesus fields a question from a vain and self-righteous lawyer who asks, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus responds by telling the famous Parable of the Good Samaritan. Justin Devine will give the homily.

Lenten Lectionary

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Looking for a different Lenten discipline this year?

Join us in the Sanctuary each morning (except Sundays) during Lent (March 1—April 15) at 7:15 AM for the reading of the daily lectionary and a brief prayer. We are usually finished by 7:30 AM.

What Is Per Capita

Per capita are funds gathered from all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It allows us to connect and participate in the work of the wider church and makes possible our effort for visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ. By providing the primary means through which commissioners and advisory delegates can gather to do their work, per capita dollars help to sustain our governance system. Each member is asked to pay \$38.75 from National Capital Presbytery for 2017. We appreciate your contribution toward Per Capita this year; please indicate it on your offering.

A Message from Kevin Maxwell

Dear Clergy,

I would like to thank you for your support last year in our endeavor to ensure that all of our students had their required immunizations to start the school year. Because of your support, the students in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) met their immunization requirements, and they were able to stay in school and be engaged in their academics. We need your help again this year in communicating with your congregation about the need for students to have proper immunization.

For students to attend school, they must have the proper vaccinations. Without proper immunization, students will not be allowed to attend school. We are asking that you include the following statement in your church bulletin or in your church announcements:

Parents, are your children properly immunized for the start of the new school year? Parents of children going into

kindergarten or 7th grade have specific immunization needs. Children who are not immunized will not be allowed to start school on September 6, 2017. Please contact your child's doctor to make sure your child has the necessary

immunizations. You can also contact Prince Georges County Public Schools' Office of School Health at 301-749-4722 or the Prince George's County Department of Health at 301-583-5920.

We want all students ready to start school in September 2017!

Thank you for supporting PGCPS in our efforts to ensure all children are immunized. We appreciate the continued partnership and support.

Warm Nights **Wrap Up**

On behalf of the Mission Committee, I would like to thank everyone for supporting the Warm Nights Program. CCPC had another successful year. Based on the feedback from everyone we had a great group of clients. Many of them had jobs and they frequently expressed their appreciation for the support we provided to them. We could not host Warm Nights without the active participation of many congregation members. It takes the involvement of the women's circles, the men's groups, the youth group and the many families and individuals who sign up to perform so many tasks. I would especially like to thank Ryan and Irene Remley and Bob and Ann Shelby, who took over the coordinating duties. It is comforting to know that I can go off on the Honduras Mission Trip and not have to worry because we have so many helpful and caring people at CCPC who will jump in to help.

As I mentioned in my last note, CCSI, the group that manages Warm Nights, is running the shelter program all year now. CCPC has agreed to host a second week—14 to 21 May. During the warmer months, there will be only one church hosting each week instead of two. Over the next couple of months, we will provide more details. We look forward to your continued support to this important mission program.

Paul Sell



Adult *Education Classes*

Great Christian Hymns

Please join us in the Adult Education Conference room on the following Sundays at 9:30 AM.

Feb 19: Sherry Saylors
The Revival Movement in England

Feb. 26: Vonn Willingham
Negro Spirituals

March 5: Gary Cox
The 19th Century Gospel Hymns in the Tent-Meeting Era

March 12: Chuck Tanner
Contemporary Hymns

March 19: Marshall Saylors
Hymns We Shouldn't Sing

March 26: Kevin Clemence
Contemporary Worship Songs

Questions regarding Adult Education should be directed to Wayne Smith at wwsmith36@aol.com or 410-956-1034.

Tiger Lilies

Tiger Lilies is meeting on Monday, March 13th at 7:30 PM in the Parlor.
We will be selecting our next book. All are welcome!

Any questions, please contact Andrea Brassard.

The Chesapeake Chorale presents:

The Chorale Goes to the Opera

Be enchanted by the thrilling sound of opera choruses, arias, and ensembles as the Chorale goes to the opera! On two nights in March, the Chorale will captivate you with favorite opera choruses by Verdi, Puccini, Wagner, and many more.

The Chorale is pleased to welcome members of the Soldiers Chorus's expert small ensemble Cantare, who will sing favorite opera arias. Members of Cantare are professionally trained, versatile musicians who bring fresh characterizations and dramatic flair to their spirited performances. With the Chorale adding choruses, you will think you are at the Met!

The evening includes coffee, tea, and desserts in a cabaret setting.
Seating is limited. Advance ticket orders are advised.

**Friday & Saturday
March 3 and 4, 2017 at 7:30 PM
CCPC Sanctuary**

**Adults \$20.00
Seniors & Military \$15.00
Children & Students Free**

Jesse Parker, Artistic Director
Susan Ricci Rogel, Accompanist

For more information, contact the Chesapeake
Chorale at www.thechesapeakechorale.org
410-721-5422

The Holmes in Central Malawi



I am in the middle of what I would say is a 'Central Malawi Tour.' I am combining a Centre water quality field visit, two student research spot checks, and four meetings in the capital of Lilongwe into a 5-day trip. In fact, I have not even opened my laptop since Monday. Miss M and her babysitter are also along as I balance being a working mom and fieldwork.

Yesterday, I was along the lakeshore in the Central Region area of Senga Bay visiting Evance, a Bachelor's student who is looking at food hygiene in the fish transport chain. Essentially, hygiene in how caught fish travel from the lake to the customer at the local market. Evance is about half way done with his data collection and his lab analysis is going smooth.

We had started this work in the north along the lakeshore in Nkhata Bay with some challenges. But, we moved the field site and things are now going well. It shows sometimes the first shot at new and innovative research doesn't quite work out, so we have regrouped and now things are going very smooth.



And, because Miss M is missing preschool to be out in the field with me this week, we did some supplemental homeschooling. We visited the historical site where in 1861, Dr. David Livingstone slept to make a treaty with local chiefs to stop slavery. We had never visited the site before, and were able to pass by after work just before it was getting dark.

We just got back home to Mzuzu last night, it was good to be in the field and see some great work going on. I will spare you photos of meetings in the capital of Lilongwe, but they also went very well at the end of the trip.

It is amazing how the capital of Lilongwe has grown in the last few years, there are several new modern shops on the edge of town and a new (paved) bypass road around part of the city.

During the entire week, we were chasing the rains (or at least very dark rain clouds) daily. It made for some beautiful views on the long days driving.

It is always surprising to me that even in rural areas with no electricity, I am seeing more and more solar coming into Malawi. Here is a thatch roof house with solar panels in a rural area along the lakeshore.



We were also able to stop in for a fun visit with our friends Susan and her son J. I loved that I could take Miss M on this work trip!



Thank you for your love and support for our family and our work in Malawi. Please consider to continue to financially partner with our positions in 2017 to serve the people of Malawi.

Blessings, The Holm Family

Tax-deductible donations can be made to:

West Side Church, 615 Wright Ave, Richland, WA 99352.
Please designate the funds for "Account #3014 Holm PCU-SA Malawi

Presbyterian Church USA, PO Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Please designate the funds for "Presbyterian World Mission: Account #E200532



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CCPC, the first Protestant church in Levitt Bowie, was born from a passion for Christian mission in the local community, and this focus continues.

Our Mission: To worship God, to grow in faith and community, and to place our gifts in the service of Jesus Christ.



Belair Cooperative Nursery School

The school is a non-profit, non-sectarian, and non-partisan organization. It's located in the CE Building of Christian Community Presbyterian Church.

Call 301-464-5782 or Email info@belaircoop.org

www.belaircoop.org



Imagine - Yoga & Wellness Center



Located in the CE building, offers yoga and a variety of wellness programs to CCPC members and the community. For more information, visit www.ImagineThePlace.com, call 443-510-6308, or e-mail info@ImagineThePlace.com. Scholarships available.

