

Sundays at 9:00AM

June 01, 2025

The Jefferson Spirit



When God Shakes the Prison

Acts 16:16–34 recounts a powerful episode from the missionary journey of Paul and Silas, revealing how faith, praise, and divine intervention can transform even the darkest circumstances. Set in the city of Philippi, this passage begins with a confrontation involving a slave girl possessed by a spirit, which leads to Paul and Silas being unjustly beaten and imprisoned. But rather than despairing, they sing hymns to God at midnight—sparking a miraculous earthquake that shakes open the prison doors. What follows is not just a physical release, but a spiritual awakening, as the jailer, moved by the events and their witness, cries out, “What must I do to be saved?” This dramatic narrative reminds us that God’s power can break every chain—both literal and spiritual—and that salvation can come in the most unexpected places.

George Wesley and Nellie Louise Strickler Memorial Scholarship

Anyone going to college or a vocational school can apply. Applications must be received by the **end of June** either by email or mail attention trustees. Applications can also be given to Jackie, Chasity, or Maurice. The only qualification for an individual to apply for and receive college/vocational scholarship is that the individual must be a Full Member of the Jefferson United Methodist Church.

Joann is seeking special music or readings for the service throughout the summer.



Order of Worship

Welcome

Time of Reflection and Prayer

Opening Prayer

***Call to Worship (Congregation)**

Leader: Come, all who are weary and burdened—

People: For even in prison, God's presence breaks through!

Leader: Come, all who feel bound or confined—

People: For the Lord shakes the very foundations to set us free!

Leader: With songs in the night and hope in our hearts,

People: We lift our voices to the One who opens every door.

Leader: Let us worship the God who saves, who delivers, who restores—

All: For He is our refuge, our strength, and our salvation!

Children's Message

*O Worship the King, p.73 UMC Hymnal

Scripture Reading: Acts 16:16-34

Sermon: When God Shakes the Prison

Offertory - UMC Choir

*Doxology - p.95 UMC Hymnal

Wonderful Word of Life, p.600 UMC Hymnal

The Great Thanksgiving

Pastor:

"The Lord be with you."

Congregation:

"And also with you."

Pastor:

"Lift up your hearts."

Congregation:

"We lift them up to the Lord."

Pastor:

"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."

Congregation:

"It is right to give our thanks and praise."

Pastor:

"It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. We give you thanks for your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, who took upon himself our sin and suffering, offering us new life and hope."

"On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks, gave it to his disciples, and said: 'Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us."

Communion

***Ask Me What Great Think I Know, p.163 UMC Hymnal**

Announcements

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Forgive us, Lord.

Breathe Your Spirit into us again.

Open our hearts to Your presence.

Set us free to believe, to love, and to be sent in Your name.

Amen.

*Sending Forth

Postlude

Paul and Silas in Prison

¹⁶ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹ When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. ²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴ When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. ²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!”

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹ They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

Announcements:

June 1 - Holy Communion

June 8 - 10AM June Birthday Celebration

June 8 - 10:15 AM Planning session for rest of 2025

June 14 - 9 AM Prayer Meeting at JUMC

June 15 - Maurice to lead service

June 22-26 - 6:15-8:15 PM Vacation Bible School at JUMC

July 12 - 9AM Prayer Meeting at JUMC

July 13 - 10AM July Birthday Celebration

Sermon Insights

Sermon Lesson:

The story of Paul and Silas in Acts 16:16–34 teaches us that true freedom isn't found in our circumstances, but in our relationship with God. Even in a prison cell, bruised and chained, they chose to praise—and in doing so, they invited the miraculous. Their worship shook the earth, opened doors, and turned a jailer's heart toward salvation. This passage challenges us to trust God not only in our triumphs but especially in our trials, to sing in the darkness, and to believe that God is always working for redemption—even in the most unlikely places. Our faith, like theirs, can lead others to ask, "What must I do to be saved?"

Application:

Worship Before the Breakthrough

Don't wait for things to improve before you praise. Worship now. Worship anyway.

Don't Run Too Fast—Someone Might Need You

You might feel ready to move on or give up—but someone around you might be barely holding on. The way you stay calm and faithful could help them find hope.

Believe the Gospel Works in the Dark

Even at midnight—even in pain—the message of Jesus still transforms hearts, homes, and stories.

Conclusion:

As we reflect on Acts 16:16–34, we are reminded that God's power is not limited by chains, walls, or circumstances. The earthquake that freed Paul and Silas was more than a physical event—it was a divine response to faith, praise, and perseverance. Their story assures us that worship can be a weapon, that God is present in our suffering, and that our trials can become someone else's turning point. May we leave this place with renewed courage, ready to praise God in every season, trusting that He still opens doors, still saves souls, and still sets the captives free.