

*Hit Songs, B.C. Summer Sermon Series*  
“Mighty Love”  
by Rev. James C. Ramsey

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Texts: Psalm 93  
John 3:15-17

Preached: 6/2/19

[IMAGE – hit songs 2019]

This morning I begin a summer sermon series featuring hit songs. But these are not current songs you would hear on the radio or find on Pandora.

[IMAGE – oldies hit songs]

I guess you might call these hits oldies. But they are not the kind of oldies you might be imagining. These songs were long before vinyl.

[IMAGE – Psalms as songs]

I am titling my series “Hit Songs, B.C.” Each Sunday this summer I will highlight one of the top hits.....from 3,000 years ago!!!! That’s right, my summer sermons will highlight the Psalms. Each Sunday we will celebrate a different Psalm, marveling at how timeless these sung prayers are. They speak to our contemporary life and faith as if they were currently on the Billboard Top 40!

[IMAGE – Psalm 93 Title]

Today we highlight Psalm 93. This brief psalm describes a royal enthronement procession. God’s people imagine God being installed as king...the people cheer, “The LORD reigns.” God comes in victory to claim his realm and assume his throne. With God at the helm – we give thanks for the resulting well-being of the world. While the future may have seemed precarious before...now, we can trust things will be solid and reliable.

[IMAGE – real Psalm text]

Even with our struggles...God’s people have always struggled...even with the chaos of the world, we rely on God’s power and authority. People have always known that the flood waters of chaos are overwhelming and terrifying – but the singers sing that God is clearly more powerful than the chaotic waters. The waters are mighty – but God is mightier. The waves crash on the shore, but God stands above them.

[IMAGE – Psalm text-love version]

When we think of God's strength, we think of it in terms of love. There is a popular rendition of the Psalm that insists God's love is mightier than the waves of the sea. So, for many of us, going to the beach is a spiritually nurturing destination. The waves keep rolling in, reminding us of God's unending love for us. Even when the wind blows and the storms stir up the ocean, it can remind us of God's mighty love, mightier than the biggest waves.

[IMAGE – God's love-Zephaniah text]

God's love grounds us. When our foundation rests on God's love, we have confidence that we are established, that no power in this world can wash over us or carry us away.

God's love stands at the heart of our faith. *God so loved the world...that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. Indeed, the Son was not sent to condemn, but that the whole world might be saved through him.*

God loves you...God loves us...God loves the world. It's a mighty love – something for us to celebrate and proclaim...to take with us in mission.

[IMAGE – Bonfire cross]

I feel like we did that on Friday night here when we hosted the Community Youth Bonfire as part of the You Matter campaign for mental health awareness. We wanted to offer youth a chance to end the school year on a positive, fun note. We wanted to share with them the hopeful word that “the light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it” -- that “you are not alone.” Everyone that came received a bracelet with those words (“you are not alone”) – over 100 youth

[IMAGE – Bonfire staff]

and more than 50 East Union helpers! Over 150 people on a glorious night. There were all sorts of games and activities, inside and out, badminton, volleyball, 9-Square,

[IMAGE – Bonfire lanterns]

Sky lanterns, sparklers, board games, Twister, Spikeball, football, Frisbee, an art project, a photo booth

[IMAGE – Bonfire marshmallows]

Marshmallows around the small fire, food and drinks in the EUCC. West Deer Fire Company #1 was there all night.

[IMAGE – Bonfire glow and sparks]

And what a glorious night it was. You know what the weather was like all week, but on Friday the clouds parted, the sun shone, the wind abated and God blessed us. The atmosphere was peaceful, relaxed, welcoming, supportive. I think the youth felt that. We gave them space and time and hospitality. We didn't really tell them anything...we showed them...showed them God's mighty love.

[IMAGE – Joella staff]

Joella Miller was one of the East Union staff at the bonfire. Joella's home from college, but not for long. She's headed on a grand adventure...

[IMAGE – Ethiopia]

a mission adventure soon – and we will call her up in just a few minutes for a blessing.

Joella's not the only East Union missionary going far afield this summer to proclaim and act out God's love!

[IMAGE – Philippi]

Our Youth Mission Team will head to the small town of Philippi, West Virginia later this month to spend a week in

[IMAGE – mission tools]

Hands-on mission work, serving the many clients of Appalachian Community Care.

[IMAGE – drilling]

They don't know exactly what they will be doing. Could be drilling

[IMAGE – youth digging]

Could be digging! Or any number of other jobs related to home repair, remodeling and perhaps other jobs, too, like childcare or whatever might be needed when they are there.

We will shortly commission our Youth Mission Team and give them our blessing in their final three weeks of preparation before their mission adventure!

[IMAGE – Cover]

Our Youth are ready for a good summer – we all are. Let us be guided by God’s mighty love – for us and for the world. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.