

AUGUSTANA

where Lutherans and Anglicans worship together

Pentecost 11 August 16, 2020

WOV Service of Word & Prayer

Welcome to Good Shepherd who are worshiping with us this week!

Thank you to worship assistant Pat Blakley, musician Deborah Buck and technical assistants Greg F-N and Bryan Tastad.

We begin our time of worship as we began our life of faith: in the name of God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

GATHERING HYMN “Baptized and Set Free” # 453 verses 1, 3, 4

We are people created, chosen by God.
Then we're washed, ever gently, in mercy and love.
Sin has power no more, Jesus opened the door
To a fountain bringing healing and wholeness and more.

We are nourished by water, all living things,
And by life that the Spirit abundantly brings
As we journey toward home, may your presence be known:
Precious river, ever flowing, now carry us home.

Now with praise and thanksgiving, we join the song.
All are welcome! We gather to sing loud and strong.
Not enslaved, but set free! From now on, all will be
One in Jesus, one in water, baptized and set free!

CHILDREN'S TIME

- Salt and sand – can you tell which is which?
- One belongs at the beach and the other we put in our food and I don't think we would want to mix them up ... especially sand and food ... bleagh!
- We want to keep them separate: sand – beach; salt -- food
- But it's not such a good idea when we try to do that with people.
- Insiders and outsiders – and we find lots of ways to make others be outsiders

- Jesus and the outsider (in our Bible story) ... why should I help you? And the outsider (the Canaanite Mom) reminds Jesus of what is right.
- People can be as different as salt and sand, but we're better when we are mixed all together ... and that is justice

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Holy One of Israel, covenant-keeper, you restore what is lost, heal what is wounded and gather in those who have been rejected. Give us the faith to speak out as boldly as the Canaanite woman did, so that the outcast may be welcomed and all may be blessed. For you are our Creator, our Redeemer and our Sustainer now and always. Amen.

SCRIPTURE SONG

Refrain: Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe
 Just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.
 Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name? /refrain

For you alone are the Holy One.
 All nations will draw near and worship before you,
 For your just and holy works have been revealed. /refrain

SCRIPTURE READINGS

a reading from Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, 'Send everyone away from me.' So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?' But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer to me.' And they came closer. He said, 'I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor

harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, "Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty." And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honoured in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.' Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Word of God, Word of life **thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

Our hearts burn within us while you open to us the Scriptures.

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

GOSPEL:

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew chapter 15:21-28 **Glory to you, O Lord**

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet

even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

MEDITATION

I have been trying to remain calm in the midst of a changing reality. I periodically try to take a deep breath in and a slow breath out. It's one way to deal with strong emotions – but it is hard sometimes to stay calm ... and perhaps it's good to let lose sometimes.

I have often been with people during difficult times and found that folk are uncomfortable or even embarrassed by their own strong, deep emotions

- A woman burying her mother – apologizing for her tears
- A man who, after 69 years of marriage, was facing a separation from his spouse due to illness ... apologizing for weeping “I shouldn't be such a baby,” he said.
- Someone hearing a difficult diagnosis ... tears ... fear And again an apology

No apology is necessary ... tears are appropriate and even healing. But many are uncomfortable with the show of strong emotions. Or maybe uncomfortable with the vulnerability that comes with expressing such deep feelings.

Covid 19 has led us down this path as well ... and our reality changes from day to day: the numbers go up and down ... we ask ourselves, “is the test positive?” It has been a bit of a roller coaster.

Are you uncomfortable with your own reactions? ... or to be around those who are expressing them ... do you try to hush them up? Again there is no need for apology for the worry or sadness ... or for the fear. There is no need to apologize for being vulnerable.

In our Scripture readings today we hear of two vulnerable people and their very emotional responses

The first: Joseph A familiar story ... a younger brother has been betrayed and sold into slavery by his older brothers and now is reunited with them when they come to Egypt seeking aid.

Joseph's emotions were over the top ... He was unable to control his strong emotions on seeing his brothers, especially his youngest brother Benjamin. He closed the door and sent people away, but the sound of his emotional response was heard by everybody on both sides of the closed door.

The second is an unnamed Canaanite mother who approached Jesus shouting "help me". In my mind's eye I see a woman who is exhausted from caring for a sick child ... hair a mess, eyes crazy looking from lack of sleep and worry. Arms waving, mouth shouting and arguing ... losing control.

Both of these people have good reasons for their emotional response. Joseph's years of separation from family, his abuse at the hands of his brothers ... The mother her fear for the life of her child and anger at being brushed aside ... not heard ... deemed unworthy because she wasn't the right kind of person ... that she was sand not salt ... and she was powerless to do anything except yell and argue.

Both of these reactions challenged ... broke ... an ever repeating cycle of hate and exclusion ...

Joseph whose emotions boiled over

- Could have chose to blame his brothers ... he could have retaliated but he rejected that option
- Instead he chose to care for them ... to help them find a place of safety (the land of Goshen)

The Canaanite woman used her emotional response

- Not for senseless violence or verbal abuse
- But she raised her voice to highlight an injustice
- Also for the purpose of caring ... in order to bring healing

Let us learn from them. Let our own deep emotions, our own vulnerability take us to a place of caring for others ... a place where healing and justice happens.

It is too easy to simply look for others to blame for covid 19 ... to look for ways to retaliate:

- But – like Joseph -- we are called to put blame and retaliation aside – and focus on how to take care of those who need care

It is too easy to simply look after our own ... to brush the sand away

- But -- like our justice-seeking mother – we are called to look beyond our own needs... separating people into salt and sand ... insiders and outsiders. We should care for the people in our bubble – there is no doubt about that. But Covid 19 has effected the whole world not just our bubble.
- That justice-seeking mother that Jesus called faithful would tell us that the people who depend on the food bank need us to hear their cries for help, the people of Lebanon who are now homeless need us to hear their cry for assistance, The refugees of the world who already live in precarious situations– including the Iqbal and Alhamad-Wahid family -- cry out for help.

Blame seeking and retaliation will not offer help, healing or justice. Our faith calls us ... challenges us to respond to these deep needs and emotions through God's steadfast lovingkindness.

Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. **Hate** cannot drive out **hate**; only love can do that."

Prayer: Almighty God, give us the grace to know when to yell at injustice, when to cry in sorrow, when to forgive, and most especially grant us the grace to love as you have loved. In Jesus name. Amen.

SONG “Goodness Is Stronger than Evil” # 721 (two times)

*Goodness is stronger than evil;
Love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness;
Life is stronger than death;*

*Victory is ours, victory is ours
through God who loves us.
Victory is ours, victory is ours
through Him who loves us.*

OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

- Prayer of Confession –God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. Gracious God, have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, know and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GOD’S RESPONSE TO US

Hear then God’s response: God who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. **AMEN.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us join hearts and voices together in prayer. Each short prayer will end with the words “Lord in your mercy” and you can make the prayer your own by responding “**hear our prayer.**”

Confident of God’s care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Lord, you gather the church to be part of your mission as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. As Jesus acknowledged the great faith of a woman from outside his people, help your church discover and find blessing in the faith of people we might reject.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for Bishop Geoff Woodcroft, the clergy and people of the Diocese of Rupert's Land; the dean, council, and congregations of the West Central Area of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories. We pray also for the online gathering of Anglican and ELCIC youth as they met in the only way they can this year. Guide them in their interrupted journey.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You have blessed us with the bounty of the earth. Grant your grace to all your creatures, that the earth will flourish. Relieve waters choked by garbage, renew soils stripped of nutrients, and refresh the air all creatures need to live.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You call the nations to be glad and sing for joy. Bring peace and justice to the places in our world where there is great need ... especially in Lebanon and Belarus. Protect those who are far from home especially the Iqbal family in Thailand and the Wahid-Alhamad family in Lebanon. Closer to home we pray for Tristan Derocher and those who gather at our legislature grounds mourning the loss of indigenous youth through suicide and seeking resources to address the crisis.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You show unexpected mercy, kindness, and generosity. We pray for those who do not have enough, for outcasts in our villages, cities, and towns, and for those who need your healing, *especially* Bruce, Gloria, Clayton, Logan, William, Marcus, Brody, Karin, Anthony, Robert, Curtis, Linda, Marci, Gayle, Evelyn, Lisa, Danielle, Inger, Anne Jane, Deanna, Mary, Marlene, those who feel a sense of isolation during this pandemic and for all those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts (*a pause to offer time to name others*)..... Hold them all in your care, O God.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who grieve and especially for the family and friends of Mary Burrows and for Mik Bickis and his family on the death of Mik's brother Ugis.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In you we live and move and have our being. Grant our church family grace to find our life refreshed in you. Accompany us in the rhythms of late summer. Protect those who travel. Give us rest and renewal, and strengthen us so we may care for one another as you have taught us.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You challenge us to confront outdated notions. Open our eyes -- expand our thinking -- as we search for safe ways to live and learn during a pandemic. We pray for teachers, professors, administrators, parents, and students as they preparing for a new school year.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

[Here other intercessions may be offered.]

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer you these prayers and those which are too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Pastor Marilyn: Knowing how God loves us as a Mother and Father we pray in the words Jesus taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, + Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal life. AMEN.

SENDING SONG “The Lord Now Sends Us Forth” # 538

Sing twice:

The Lord now send us forth with hands to serve and give,
To make of all the earth a better place to live

Sing twice:

The angels are not sent into our world of pain
To do what we were meant to do in Jesus’ name;
That falls to you and me and all who are made free.
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will today.

DISMISSAL

You are the church. Christ is with you as you go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

+ + +

Zoom coffee time at 11:15 am Sunday August 16

To join Zoom Meeting

Click on this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85895823130>

Meeting ID: 858 9582 3130

YOU CAN ALSO JOIN IN BY PHONE:

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