

Sunday, August 20, 2017  
11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

## INTRODUCTION

*In Isaiah we hear that God's house shall be a house of prayer for all people and that God will gather the outcasts of Israel. The Canaanite woman in today's gospel is a Gentile, an outsider, who is unflinching in her request that Jesus heal her daughter. As Jesus commends her bold faith, how might our church extend its mission to those on the margins of society? In our gathering around word and meal we receive strength to be signs of comfort, healing, and justice for those in need.*

## PRELUDE

*"This Little Light of Mine"*

arr. Mark Hayes

## \*GATHERING SONG

*"Rise Up and Praise Him"*

Let the heavens rejoice,  
let the earth be glad;  
let the people of God  
sing His praise  
all over the land.  
Everyone in the valley,  
come and lift your voice;  
all those on the mountaintop  
be glad and shout for joy.

Rise up and praise Him,  
he deserves our love;  
rise up and praise Him,  
worship the Holy One.  
With all your heart,  
with all your soul,  
with all your might,  
rise up and praise Him. *(repeat from the beginning)*

## \*GREETING

☞ *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.**

## \*CANTICLE OF PRAISE     *"He Is Exalted"*

He is exalted,  
the King is exalted on high;  
I will praise Him.

He is exalted, forever exalted,  
and I will praise His name.  
Jesus is the Lord,  
forever his truth shall reign;  
heaven and earth  
rejoice in his holy name.  
He is exalted,  
the King is exalted on high.

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

☐ *God of all peoples,*

☑ **your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

***“Fill My Cup Lord”***

Richard Blanchard

Sarah Groh Correa, soprano

**FIRST READING**

**Isaiah 56:1, 6-8**

*The prophet calls upon Israel to do justice in view of God’s imminent intervention to save. Righteousness and obedience define who belongs to the Israelite community—not race, nationality, or any other category.*

<sup>1</sup>Thus says the LORD:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,  
for soon my salvation will come,  
and my deliverance be revealed.

<sup>6</sup>And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,  
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,  
and to be his servants,

all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,  
and hold fast my covenant—

<sup>7</sup>these I will bring to my holy mountain,  
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;  
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices  
will be accepted on my altar;

for my house shall be called a house of prayer  
for all peoples.

<sup>8</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD,  
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,

I will gather others to them  
besides those already gathered.

***Reflection***

*This section of Isaiah was probably written during the time of the return of the exiles. What is the message of the prophet, speaking for God, to these exiles? (verse 1) Who is included in the community of the faithful people of God? (verse 6) Those foreigners who had been excluded are now included. What do they need to do (along with the people for whom Jerusalem was their home)? What does God say about the “house of God”? (verse 7) What does God’s promise mean to those who may feel outcast? (verse 8) Who might be considered outcasts today? How do we follow the call of God in this text to include them in the community of faith?*

### **PSALM 67**

<sup>1</sup>May God be merciful to | us and bless us;  
may the light of God’s face | shine upon us.

<sup>2</sup>**Let your way be known | upon earth,  
your saving health a- | mong all nations.**

<sup>3</sup>Let the peoples praise | you, O God;  
let all the | peoples praise you.

<sup>4</sup>**Let the nations be glad and | sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the na- | tions on earth.**

<sup>5</sup>Let the peoples | praise you, O God;  
let all the | peoples praise you.

<sup>6</sup>**The earth has brought | forth its increase;  
God, our own | God, has blessed us.**

<sup>7</sup>May God | give us blessing,  
and may all the ends of the earth | stand in awe.

### **Reflection**

*Do the words of verse 1 sound familiar to you? (You might compare them with Numbers 6:24-26, which is the blessing sometimes used at the end of the worship service.) Why are we blessed? (verse 2) Is the blessing of God limited to us? (verses 3-5) Why do the nations (that is, those who are not Israel) praise God? (verse 4) How does God bless all the people of the earth? (verse 6) We may look back to see how God has blessed us in the past, but the psalmist proclaims God’s continuing blessing! (verse 7) How will you look for God’s blessing in the life of the people you encounter this week?*

### **SECOND READING**

**Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32**

*God has not rejected Israel. Rather, the call and gifts of God are irrevocable, so that while all have been disobedient, God has mercy upon all.*

[Paul writes:] <sup>1</sup>I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2a</sup>God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

<sup>29</sup>For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup>Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup>so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. <sup>32</sup>For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

## **Reflection**

*This chapter of Romans is the end of Paul's discussion about how the Jews are to be regarded by Christians if they do not accept Jesus as the Messiah. What is the question Paul begins with? (verse 1) Paul himself is an answer to this question. (verses 1b-2a) I invite you to read the verses that are not included in this text to get the full flavor of Paul's discussion. (verses 2-28) How does Paul finally and unmistakably answer the question in verse 1? (verse 29) What is the relationship of us Gentiles with the Jews, whom God has called irrevocably? (verses 30-32)*

### **\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

***"Alleluia. Lord, to Whom Shall We Go?"***

**Alleluia. Lord,  
to whom shall we go?  
You have the words  
of eternal life.  
Alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
Alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia.**

### **\*GOSPEL**

**Matthew 15:10-28**

*Jesus teaches his disciples that true purity is a matter of the heart rather than outward religious observances. Almost immediately, this teaching is tested when a woman considered to be pagan and unclean approaches him for help.*

<sup>10</sup>[Jesus] called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand:<sup>11</sup>it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." <sup>12</sup>Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" <sup>13</sup>He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. <sup>14</sup>Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." <sup>15</sup>But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." <sup>16</sup>Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? <sup>17</sup>Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? <sup>18</sup>But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. <sup>19</sup>For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. <sup>20</sup>These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."

<sup>21</sup>Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup>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." <sup>23</sup>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." <sup>24</sup>He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." <sup>25</sup>But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." <sup>26</sup>He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." <sup>27</sup>She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." <sup>28</sup>Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

## **Reflection**

*Jim and I were discussing this text the other evening, and he said of it, "I can understand the woman's behavior, and I can understand the disciples' behavior, but I just don't get how Jesus acts!" (Fortunately, he's preaching this morning, so presumably you'll get a clue about how he answers that question.) Who do Jesus and his disciples encounter in this non-Jewish region of Palestine? (verse 22) You may remember the Canaanites were the people in the land before God led the Israelites there after leaving Egypt. So the woman, as a Canaanite, and as a woman, was regarded as an outcast. This text also reminds me of my very first class in seminary, which I think was entitled "God and Creation." The day that sticks in my mind was the day the title of the lecture was "Are Women Human?" I think the professor was not expecting a woman in the class—perhaps he looked forward to a theological discussion that I'm sure would have ended with the conclusion that, yes, just like us, women are human. I certainly changed the dynamics of the class when I was so angry that I was in tears! It wasn't a theological discussion for me—it was ME they were talking about! If the disciples led a class that day, it might have been "are Canaanites human?" What was their reaction to her? (verse 23) What was she shouting about? (verse 22) How did Jesus respond? (verses 23 and 24) Then she responds, more like how I have learned to answer someone—she sasses Jesus. (verse 27) This is both one of my favorite Bible stories, and one of my most disconcerting. An answer I've come up with to Jim's observation is that perhaps this was Jesus' "come to Jesus" moment—or "come to the Canaanite woman" moment. Perhaps her expression of faith turns him from his understanding of his ministry from one exclusively to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" to one that is to all the lost sheep. What do you think? Who have you seen differently when you have experienced their faith?*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Kris Langdon

**SERMON**

**"Walls"**

Rev. Jim Pierce

**SONG OF THE DAY**

***"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"***

**ELW 708**

### **Refrain**

**Jesu, Jesu,  
fill us with your love,  
show us how to serve  
the neighbors we have from you.**

**Kneels at the feet of his friends,  
silently washes their feet,  
master who acts as a slave to them. *Refrain***

**Neighbors are wealthy and poor,  
varied in color and race,  
neighbors are near us and far away. *Refrain***

**These are the ones we will serve,**

these are the ones we will love;  
all these are neighbors to us and you. *Refrain*

Kneel at the feet of our friends,  
silently washing their feet:  
this is the way we will live with you. *Refrain*

#### **\*APOSTLES' CREED**

**☒ I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen!**

#### **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Generous, compassionate God, we gather before you to pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Unite us, O God, so that all who worship receive assurance and nourishment by faith. Rescue those who suffer from religious persecution. Strengthen and sustain Pastor Philip, that with patience and understanding he may love and care for your people. Grant the South Sudanese Congregation passion, guided by the Holy Spirit, to follow in the way of your son, Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Teach us, O God, so that the holy mountains and peaceful valleys of your good creation can be restored to the health you intend. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Empower us, O God, to advocate for those on the margins. Open the hearts of leaders in every nation to serve those who are most vulnerable. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Equip us, O God, with your love for our brothers and sisters. Comfort the grieving, feed the hungry, calm those in distress, and heal the sick, *especially Carl, Dee, Lin, Robert, and Linda*. We also pray for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (*pause for 10 seconds*). Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Rouse us, O God, to praise you with gladness. We give thanks for musicians, worship leaders, intercessors, those who prepare the communion table, and all who make our worship express our joy. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Protect us, O God, we pray for all the men and women of our armed forces, at home and abroad. We especially lift up to you, Jason Shields. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks, O God, for the saints who have deepened our lives of prayer. Gather us with them in endless praise of you. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting in the mercy of Christ Jesus. **Amen!**

**\*SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P** *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

**C** **And also with you!**

**OFFERTORY**

***“The Beatitudes”***

Albert Malotte

Sarah Groh Correa, soprano

**\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

**\*OFFERING PRAYER**

**P** *Merciful God,*

**C** **you open wide your hand and satisfy the need of every living thing. You have set this**

**feast before us. Open our hands to receive it. Open our hearts to embrace it. Open our lives to live it. We pray this through Christ our Lord. Amen!**

**\*DIALOGUE**

**P** *The Lord be with you.*

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** *Lift up your hearts.*

**C** **We lift them to the Lord.**

**P** *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

**C** **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**\*PREFACE**

**P** *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection, you pour out the fire of your Spirit, uniting in one body people of every nation and tongue. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

**\*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of pow'r and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**\*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

**P** *In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

**\*LORD'S PRAYER**

**P** *Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

**C** **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 and ever. Amen!**

**\*INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**P** *Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread. Our Lord's body let us take together.*

**\*BLESSING**

**P** *The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

**C** **Amen!**

**\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P** *We give you thanks, almighty God,*

**C** **that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!**

**\*BENEDICTION**

**P** *May God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, grant you the gifts of faith and hope. Almighty God, Father, ~~F~~ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.*

**C** **Amen!**

**\*SENDING SONG**

**"Earth and All Stars!" vv. 1, 4, 5**

**ELW 731**

Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets!  
Sing to the Lord a new song!  
Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blowing snowstorm!  
Sing to the Lord a new song! *Refrain*

*Refrain*

God has done marvelous things.  
I too sing praises with a new song!

Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes!  
Sing to the Lord a new song!  
Athlete and band! Loud cheering people!  
Sing to the Lord a new song! *Refrain*

Knowledge and truth! Loud sounding wisdom!  
Sing to the Lord a new song!  
Daughter and son! Loud praying members!  
Sing to the Lord a new song! *Refrain*