



Summer

OUR SAVIOR
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, August 16, 2020



OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
745 Front Street S., Issaquah, WA 98027
425-392-4169

SERVICE OF THE WORD

GATHERING: THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TOGETHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

CALL TO WORSHIP *Here I Am to Worship* — arr. Patricia Cota Memorial Bells

WELCOME Pastor Jim Kruse

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PM: Let us pray. God of all peoples,

C: **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.**

WORD: GOD SPEAKS TO US IN SCRIPTURE READING, PREACHING AND SONG.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 56: 1, 6-8

¹Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. ⁶And 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—⁷these 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.

⁸Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

AM: Word of God, word of life. C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Celtic Alleluia — Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker

Memorial Bells

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 15: 10-28

¹⁰Jesus called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand:¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles."¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?"¹³ He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted."¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit."¹⁵ But Peter said to

him, "Explain this parable to us." ¹⁶Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."

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

PM: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Faith to Challenge God

Pastor Jim Kruse

The closest encounter I even had with celebrity happen 6 or 7 year ago on a family trip to New York City. Most of the visit centered around a busy schedule of gatherings with family and friends, so there was It was not much time to do tourist kinds of things. But on the last evening, my wife, Arlys, and her sister and mother and I, found a quiet cafe just off of Washington Park on the south side of Manhattan for dinner.

We were seated off in the corner of an enclosed patio garden that only held 8 tables. All the other tables were already occupied table except for one. It was the largest in the garden and was fully set, complete with a sign indicating it was "reserved." Not long after we were sat down, and before our order was taken, a three-person television crew tried to sneak in undetected around the edges of the area, and began to busy themselves with details that only television crews know or understand.

The four of us immediately started to speculate among ourselves, "I wonder what is going on?" But we quickly stopped talking when a well-dressed woman made her entrance into the restaurant with a great deal of commotion. She took her seat in the center of the long side of empty table facing toward the cameras, while a few others in her party filled the rest of table facing toward her. Everyone else on the patio stopped eating and drinking and talking, and focused their attention on this center table.

We all knew she was some sort of person of notoriety. But we did not recognize her. The four of us were full of speculation. What was going on? We had no idea. Who is she? No one had a clue. Shouldn't we know? We asked our waitress, but she simply said she was not allowed to say. We would have to figure that out for ourselves.

This is the same general atmosphere that accompanies the opening of our Gospel for today. It opens with a mixture of conversation involving three groups of people, who have been keeping their eyes on Jesus for some time. First, there are the crowds who seem to be gathered wherever Jesus shows up. Then there are the Pharisees, who act as observers, hanging around on the edges, waiting for Jesus to say or do something of notoriety that they

can record and send out to the authorities. And finally there are the disciples, who hang close to Jesus, and hang on every word.

All of these folks have been following Jesus as he moves further and further away from Jerusalem, and into the northern border towns and regions. It is a place where Jews and Gentiles live side by side, having daily doings with one another. In this place you are either clear about what you believe, about who God is, and about how God expects you to live, or you get lost, you get swallowed up by it all. This is a place where keeping of the religious laws and teachings is more than just a nice thing to do. Your very survival, your very identity, depended upon it. The air is thick with expectation. Everyone is watching Jesus. Everyone is tuned in. Everyone is wondering, “Who this guy? What will he do or say next? Should we know him? How close to him should we get?”

When Jesus begins to speak, he compares the Jewish kosher laws, the rules and regulations about how food can and should be prepared, and served, and consumed, to the human gastrointestinal track. “Don’t worry about what you eat,” Jesus says. “The body can sort it out. Whatever is bad, will be sent out the other end and down the sewer. Instead, worry about what you say and do. Worry about your motives. Worry about what comes out of your body from your heart.” The crowds just sort of take this teaching in along with everything else they’ve been seeing and hearing from Jesus. But the Pharisees are surprised by this attack on basic Jewish practices and the good order of life. And the disciples ask Jesus for a further explanation.

The, all of a sudden, from deep within the crowd, a voice cries out, and offers Jesus the perfect opportunity to illustrate his point. “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David” a woman shouts, proclaiming a full-throated confession of Jesus identity as God’s Messiah for all to hear. “My daughter is tormented by a demon.” This is a Canaanite, Matthew tells us. She is a non-Jew, and a woman, who has no right to have any contact with Jesus, let alone expect him to do something for her. Everyone is watching to see what Jesus will do next.

What looks like a quick, straightforward account of what happens next, is actually a fairly sophisticated dialogue that takes some important unpacking to understand. Jesus’ first reaction, the one that the Pharisees are looking for, is to simply ignore the woman’s plea. “He does not answer her at all,” Matthew says. But the disciples want more from Jesus, they want him to tell her to be quiet, to put her in her place. So he lobs a one-liner in her direction clarifying his role in God’s plan for salvation. “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” he tells her. Essentially saying to her, “It is not my job to help you. Leave me alone.”

This response may appease the disciples, but it most likely irritated the Pharisees to no end. They don’t like being referred to as “lost sheep.” But to everyone’s horror, the woman takes Jesus’ acknowledgement of her existence in this world as an invitation to approach him, to kneel at his feet, and to beg for his help.

The rest of the Gospel is only three phrases, two by Jesus and one by the Canaanite woman, but it is enough to turn Jesus’ heart and save her daughter’s life. So what in the world is going on here?

Jesus says to her, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” Immediately, everyone who hears this, including us, knows that the word “children” is a reference to the Jews, who called themselves the “Children of God, and the word “dogs” is a reference to the Gentiles, a common term of insult at the time. And “food” is a reference to the gracious provisions of God suggested by manna.

Now we, the hearers of these words 2,000 years later, are the ones who are shocked. How can Jesus be so unkind? Has he no compassion for this woman’s pain? We are shocked because we do not understand what Jesus is doing. Jesus is using a rhetorical device called “peirastic irony,” an experimental or probing phrase meant to invite a response. [Think of the seemingly offensive jabs that we are going to hear during the debates and TV ads over the next few months. After the debate is over, everyone says, “That was a good one. Good job! At least that is the hope.] The original hearers of this line would have been as shocked as we are, but not for the same reason. Rather than putting her in her place, Jesus is treating this woman as an equal. He is inviting her into a debate before this public forum. A common form of entertainment in the Greek culture.

When Jesus says, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs,” he is saying that there is a natural order to things. In the Greek household, the adults eat dinner first. Then the servants and children of the house eat from the leftovers. And finally the scraps are mixed with the garbage and thrown out to the working and feral dogs in the yard. “What I have to offer is too important,” Jesus is saying, “to be wasted on a Gentile.”

But Jesus leaves her an opening in his words. Instead of using the common word for “dogs,” he uses the diminutive term. Instead of “dogs” we might translate it more like, “the household pet” or “the puppies.” Desperate to save her child, the woman seizes the opportunity. “Yes, Lord,” she says, “yet even the puppies eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” It is a brilliant response. Now in her version, the Gentile “dogs” are not only eating the same food as the Master of the house and the other adult members, but they are doing so at the same time, even before the Jewish “Children” get their portion.

Jesus realizes that she truly understands the gracious relationship that God intended for all human beings that is built into the created order of things. “Woman, great is your faith!” he says, “Let it be done for you as you wish.” And everyone, except the woman herself is left shocked and confused.

Make no mistake about it, dealing with the Gentile world is not Jesus’ job, and he knows it. This is Israel’s job. At the very beginning, when God chose Abraham and established a relationship with the children of Israel, God promised, “I will make you a great nation, and through you, all the nations will be blessed.” Isaiah recalls this promise in the First Lesson when he writes, “Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others ... besides those already gathered.”

When Jesus engages in a conversation with the Canaanite woman, when he praises her faith and heals her daughter, he is flat out wrong. He is in violation of every semblance of proper behavior. But he cannot help himself. He does not do it because it is the right thing to do. He does it because it is deep in his nature to be compassionate, even when it is the wrong thing to do. And that is what “great faiths” do. “Great faiths” put demands upon God to be gracious even when God is trying to do something else at the time.

Like Israel before us, there are times when the larger church, and the individual congregations of it, lose their way trying to get everything right. Especially at times of stress, the church can focus on getting its own house in order, forgetting that it exists, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the world, the sake of the nations.

Even though we cannot do it right now, because of the pandemic, we long for the day when we can return. We want to see our friends. We want to be encouraged for a difficult life in the world, and we want to encourage others. We want to hear in a fresh way that God loves and cares for us. And all of that is great. I long for that day as well.

But if that is all it is about, getting what we need and going home again, then that is not going to help the church much, and it is not going to help the world much either. The church needs what we have to offer to fulfill its mission. And the world needs it even more. There is too much ugliness in the world. There is too much selfishness, too much self-preservation.

It takes great faith, great courage, to stand up to God and shout, "This is not good enough." This is tough stuff, being gracious over being right. It is hard work being the presence of Christ in a world that for the most part does not care. But no one else in the Gospel is called a "Great Faith." Not the disciples, not the crowds, not the religious leadership. The only one who has "great faith" is the one who stands up to God in Christ and demands that God be gracious to her, even when God is busy doing something else at the time.

Thank goodness for a mother's love for her child. That's all I have to say.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Give Thanks* — Don Moen, arr. Patricia Cota Memorial Bells

Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.
And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"
Let the poor say, "I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us."

OFFERING

Please take a moment to give thanks to God for all that you have received in life, and remember your generous financial support of the ongoing ministry obligations of OSLC.

OFFERING PRAYER

PM: Merciful God,
As grains of wheat scattered upon the hills
were gathered together to become one bread,
so let your church be gathered together
from the end of the earth into your kingdom,
for yours is the glory through Jesus Christ, now and forever.

C: Amen.

OFFERING SONG *Praise to You, O God of Mercy* — Text & music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Praise to you, O God of mercy: thanks be to you forever!
Raising high the weak and lowly: thanks be to you forever!
From of old you loved and sought us: thanks be to you forever!
Truth and justice you have taught us: thanks be to you forever!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

“Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead, it is water used according to God’s command and connected with God’s word. With the word of God, it is a grace-filled water of life and a ‘bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit.’ It brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it.” -*Luther’s Small Catechism*

AM: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are clothed with God’s mercy and forgiveness.
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.
By water and your word you claim us as daughters and sons,
Making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Adapted from the NW Washington Synod “Weekly Prayer Message.”

God of life and breath, you are our source of hope.

+ We give thanks for your precious gift of life; embrace us in your love; sustain us when we are feeling broken or frightened; open our hearts to hear your word and call; strengthen us to seek justice for our neighbors; grant us creativity to joyfully share your Good News.

We give thanks for your creation.

+ Enable us to be educated to be better stewards of your world. We give thanks for our partners at Earth Ministry and Lutherans Restoring Creation.

We pray for our world, nation, and local communities.

+ We lift up people for whom insecurity and violence are the norm. Help us to bring healing and safety to all.

+ God of Mercy, guide us to awareness of our prejudices and empower us to act to eliminate racism in our church and community. O God, help us to behold one another as you behold us. Help us to be more firmly rooted in the practices of the gospel—so that the way we live will make real your beloved community within and among us.

+ We pray for all in the wake of natural disasters, including recent tropical storms on the east coast, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. Grant strength to those affected as they recover and rebuild.

+ We lift up all in our community who provide emergency services: medical workers, fire-fighters, and police. Grant them strength, endurance, and safety.

We pray for all who are in need of healing and strength:

+ We pray for those who are facing ongoing challenges and health concerns: Scott, Gwynn and Don, Dee, Jeremy, Henrik & Patty, Vern, Mike, communities across the country, Mike,

Pattie, Paul, Lyle, Dave, Emily, Guests of the Community Meals Program, Sonja, Nicole, Josee and Jeannie.

+ We continue to pray for those affected by the COVID-19 crisis: grant peace to the families of those who have died from the corona virus; provide healing for those diagnosed; protect and sustain care providers and chaplains; guide work to improve testing and work toward a vaccine; sustain those unable to work and facing financial uncertainty; and help us to be wise when we go out in public and catch up with friends.

+ We pray for our neighbors who are fearful or in danger in their relationships. We lift up the work of those who protect, support, and advocate for people who are experiencing domestic violence.

+ We lift up those experiencing anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. Empower us to reach out to those who need care and support. For those who are in despair, remember you are loved. You are never beyond God's mercy, grace and love.

We pray for those who are grieving:

+ Loving God, wrap your arms of love and hope around all who are experiencing any kind of loss, disconnection, or brokenness. We lift up the family and friends of Marlene, Nikki, Sheila, Dick, Germaine, Bob, Fran, Joe and Don.

We pray for your church:

+ We give thanks for the leaders and members of ministries of our congregation. Grant them creativity for their work; give them grace to rest when needed.

+ We pray for the residents, staff, and families of nursing homes and care facilities, including those ministries that are part of our synod: Josephine Caring Community, Foss Home, Columbia Lutheran Home, Norse Home, Bethany of the Northwest, and Hearthstone Community.

+ We pray for congregations in the call process. Grant them wisdom and patience as they discern where it is that you are leading them. We lift up transition teams, call committees, transition pastors, congregation staff and lay leaders, and synod staff.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

+ Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Trusting in your mercy and grace, we lift our prayers to you.

Amen.

THE 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

PM: God of all grace,
who has called you to life in Christ,
restore, support, protect, strengthen, and bless you
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Summons — Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949; Music: Scottish traditional
Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

POSTLUDE

Fantasy in C Major — J.S. Bach

Jiyoung Lee

Serving in Worship:

Worship Leader: Pastor Jim Kruse
Assisting Minister: Jen Winslow
Memorial Bells Director: Alice Lewis
Song Leader: Sue Johnson, David Hersey
Videographer: Elizabeth Waltzer
Banner: Elaine Stamm
Flowers provided by: Dianne Tanner
Bulletin Cover: Craig Gillin

Readings for Next Sunday: Isaiah 51:1-6; Matthew 16:13-20

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Our Savior Lutheran Church Staff

Rev. James R. Kruse, *Transition Pastor*
Shari Lundberg, *Parish Administrator*
Dr. Jiyoung Lee, *Parish Organist*

Scott Hafso, *Director of Worship & Music*
Kate Gagnon, *Lay Visitation Minister*



Flowers for this service provided by Dianne Tanner.

Additional worship resources:

Readings: Psalm 67; Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32

Suggested Hymn for Listening: *Healer of Our Every Ill* — Text & Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Prayer is putting our faith into action. We invite you to include these people in your daily prayers. You can make prayer requests via email at office@oslcissaquah.org. All written requests will remain on this list for 4 weeks.

Scott safety, health and help. (Karen Hansen)
Gwynn and Don peace. (Karen Hansen)
Delores Bakamus "Dee" strength and healing for pneumonia and heart condition. (Dar Boni)
Jeremy healing broken legs after a motorcycle accident. (brother to Diane Murff)
Henrik & Patty Christopherson comfort and support after experiencing a house fire. (Dianne Tanner)
Vern Lindquist peace and comfort.
Safety and peace for communities being torn apart during these difficult times. (Karen Hansen)
Mike Golick continued recovery and safe travel to an assisted living facility in Anchorage, Alaska. (brother-in-law to Patty Gerde)
Mike special ops military unexpectedly called up. (nephew of Dave and Marilyn Carlson)
Pattie Rutten, peace and strength as she recovers from a broken femur and the loss of her husband. (aunt of Mark Howe)
Paul Salazar continued recovery from a heart attack. (step-father to Cheryl Hauser)
Lyle Bentley successful radiation treatment. (Don Robertson)
Dave Carlson continued strength, healing and comfort following kidney transplant surgery.
Emily Gacek acquired COVID19 from a caregiver, healing and strength. (Connie Fletcher)
Guests of the Community Meals Program safety, health and peace of mind. (Connie Fletcher)
Sonja 3 years old undergoing treatment for cancer. (granddaughter of Henrik & Patty Christopherson)
Nicole DeCamp healing and strength. (Ken DeCamp and Cheryl Leiter)
Josee Jordan peace of mind as she faces health challenges. (Dianne Tanner)
Jeannie Lindquist continued healing and strength.
Healing and peace of mind: **Evy Sneva** (Karen Hansen), **Marian James; Douglas Mandt** (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Gregory** (nephew of Joanne Suttmeier); **Doug Patur; Katie Moeller; Margot Inman; Ken Acker** (son of Lucy Acker); **Marilyn Carlson; Taufik Hidayut** (Ken Konigsmark); **Don Wilkinson** (husband of Gwynn Wilkinson); **Rebecca Thomas; Tanisha Foote**

(Marilyn Carlson); **Dorothy Soland; Randi Strom; Jeanne Kuipers; Talton Johnson; John Pass; Florence Kinnune; Carol Harbolt; Sandy Aldworth; Jen Winslow; Larry Pruitt.**

Undergoing cancer treatment: **Amy Aldworth** (daughter-in-law of Sandy Aldworth) **Les Carlson** (father of Dave Carlson); **Harold Mandt** (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Chris Howe** (brother of Mark Howe); **Peggy Scalise** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Eileen Letts** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Keith DeCamp** (brother of Ken DeCamp); **Barbara Jones** (mother of Ron Sordahl); **Doug McVety** (Helen Nychay); **Al Batt** (Connie Fletcher); **Larry Harbolt** (Ray Harbolt); **Gerald Welch** (Vern and Jeannie Lindquist); **Joe Martin** (father of Stacy Smith); **Christy Williams** (Bill Bergsma); **Diane Powis** (Paul Tolo); **Dana Mancini** (Jan Setterlund); **Greg Petersen** (Wes Collum); **Barry Donker** (Joan Parish); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Kathryn Aitcheson** (Gerrie Hendrickson); **Yuko Takiguchi** (Teiko Soland); **Barb** (Janette Singley)

Living with cancer: **Liz Kidd** (Bob Beck); **Duane Jacobson; Mary Lewis** (sister-in-law of Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Mark Becker** (uncle of Paula Seeger); **Barbara Krogh Jarvis** (sister of Steve Krogh); **Suzanne Lewis** (daughter-in-law of Lyle & Alice Lewis); **Mira Bergsma**

Mourning the death of loved ones: For peace and comfort during this time of grieving for the family and friends of: **Marlene Braun** (sister to Cheryl Neeb); **Nikki** (niece to Doug & Dianne Tanner); **Richard "Dick" Birdsall** (Dianne Tanner); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle & Alice Lewis); **Bob Gray** (Doug & Dianne Tanner); **Fran Hildebrand** (Karen Hansen); **Joe Rutten** (uncle of Mark Howe); **Don Brannon** [former member of OSLC] (Rowan Hinds); **Don McWhirter** (Rowan Hinds)

Members and friends serving in the military; fire & police departments, & emergency rooms.

Global Missions and Missionaries: For peace in Hong Kong. (Global Missions). Congregations in Chiclayo, Peru: **Pepe** at Las Brisas, **Merci** in San Antonio and **Harold** at Las Lomas. **MaaSae Girls Lutheran Secondary School** in Tanzania.