**Worship Plan for Sunday, September 5, 2021**

15th Sunday after Pentecost

**Introduction to the day**

James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophoenician woman in today’s gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don’t deserve the goods meant for God’s children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: Wrestling with God**

At first glance, the gospel this week rankles a bit. What is Jesus doing to this poor woman in his interaction with her? Is he insulting her, calling her and her daughter “dogs”? Is he practicing racism, holding out the people of Israel as more deserving of his attention? Is he making her “earn” her daughter’s healing and salvation? Certainly not. The scriptures clearly testify that Jesus is without sin (Hebrews 4:15). But scripture also testifies to several instances when individuals wrestle with God, the promises God gives, and the faith needed to trust them. Jacob (Genesis 32:22-32), Job, Mary and Martha (John 11:1-44), and Peter (Acts 10:9-23) are but a few examples of individuals in the Bible who tussle with God and God’s call on their lives. This week’s passage is similar. Jesus does not mock the Syrophoenician woman; rather, he engages her. He pushes back against her initial request in order to draw out of her an even stronger confession of faith. She is no longer just a desperate mother hoping against hope, but a woman of faith who knows deep in her soul that all people—even Gentiles, even her daughter, even she herself—are beloved and fed by God.

We too can have experiences like this woman, and the others throughout scripture, did. We live through events or seasons that force us to confront the God who loves us, who has created and redeemed us. At times you may have found yourself wrestling with God, demanding blessings, challenging truth, promising devotion, fighting for every last ounce of faith to get you through. These situations are not always immediately pleasant. But take heart—the Holy Spirit promises to bring you through to the other side, faith intact and blessings bestowed. May you be “astounded beyond measure” (Mark 7:37) at the works of the Lord.

**Gathering**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Greeting**

Welcome to worship today, we are glad to have you with our Faith Lutheran Church community.

This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Announcements**

In light of the recent dramatic increase in positive COVID case rates in the city and county, we would like to ask those of us who are vaccinated to wear your mask, if you are unvaccinated, we need to you wear your mask. And the ushers will provide one if you need it, just raise your hand.

Wednesday: Mary Circle meets at 10:00 am in person and on Zoom

Thursday: With Pastor John being out of town, there will be no Bible Study on the 9th. The next Bible Study will be on the 23rd.

Friday: Al-Anon meets at 10:30 in the Fellowship Hall

Other:

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office. Thank you!

**And now please turn to page 858**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Gathering Song*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* (ELW 858)**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:**

A reading from Isaiah.

4Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.” 5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; 7athe burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PsalmODY: PSALM 146**

1Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

2**I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

3Put not your trust in rulers, in mortals in whom there is no help.

4**When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.**

5Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the Lord their God;

6**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;**

7who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The Lord sets the captive free.

8**The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lordloves the righteous.**

9The Lord cares for the stranger; the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

10**The Lord shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

**Second Reading:**

A reading from James.

1My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? 2For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, 3and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Have a seat here, please,” while to the one who is poor you say, “Stand there,” or, “Sit at my feet,” 4have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? 6But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? 7Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? 8You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 9But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. 14What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? 15If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, 16and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? 17So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel:**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

24[Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice,25but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. 26Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” 28But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” 29Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” 30So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. 31Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. 34Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” 35And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**And now please turn to page 612**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day*Healer of Our Every Ill* (ELW 612)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**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.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

Made children and heirs of God’s promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Holy One, you bring your people together in worship. Enliven your church. Guide all evangelists, preachers, prophets, and missionaries who seek to share your love through word and deed. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You provide water for thirsty ground and sunshine to feed hungry plants. Bless all who advocate for healthy forests, unpolluted air, and clean waterways. Inspire all people to show care for the world you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You show no partiality. Increase justice in all nations. Encourage leaders and governments to work with one another for the good of our common world. (Especially as we celebrate Labor/Labour Day,) unite us in seeking the health, safety, and dignity of all. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You accompany those who are most in need. Shelter all fleeing violence or persecution, protect any who are in danger, and sustain them through uncertain and unstable times. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You support the work of your disciples. Continue to nurture the leadership and ministries of this congregation (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

You embrace all who have died in the faith and brought them into your glorious presence. We thank you for their example and rejoice in their lives. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Prayer List**

Boss Anderson; Gloria Anderson; Julie Chevraux; Daniel Conner; Vicki Crow; Sally Duncan; Joni Gray; Bill Hallahan; Kally Homchick; Marlon Jay; Francis Key; Patsy Loughboro; Sandra Miller; Carol Morris; Pat Myers; Sheila Neal; Ron Neumen; Tina Peteroski & family; Andrew Quinn; Edy Rose; Dee Seel; Jan Simon; Earlean Wagner; Ken Wall; Diana Ward; Bernie Weston; Mary Yturralde; the homebound; the Emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery/tests. We especially pray for those affected by COVID-19 and those who have lost loved ones.

At this time we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts.

If you would like your name added to our prayer list, please contact the church office.

**Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship.

This month we are highlighting the ministry of WOMEN OF THE ELCA (W-ELCA) and the spiritual gifts of Faith, Giving, Exhortation and Service.

In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul says “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

The apostle Paul describes Spiritual Gifts in 1 Corinthians saying: “There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone."

Your offering, gathered in praise of God, helps this ministry and deeper than that, you are practicing your faith in a very real way by answering God's call to participate and activate the ministries of this congregation which we all love so much!

Thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Meal:** God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

Now, I invite you to gather bread and drink for communion and share with anyone in your household.

As a note, it helps to take the wafer off first then the juice separately afterward.

Gathering at Christ's table, we trust in God's all-reaching power and grace to provide each one of us the complete and total sacrament in these extraordinary times.

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.

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

**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**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**And now please turn to page 719**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song*Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life* (ELW 719)**

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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