

Worship on the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am August 16, 2026

Minister: The Rev. Brad Childs Music Director: Binu Kapadia

Vocalists: Sam and Ann May Malayang Welcoming Elder: Darlene Eerkes

Children's time presenter: Vivian Houg Reader: Darlene Eerkes

*indicates that those who are able may stand

We gather to worship God

Music prelude

Greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you

P: and also with you

Lighting of the Christ candle

Welcome and announcements

Preparation for worship

Call to worship:

L: Let the nations be glad and sing with joy,

P: For God guides us all with justice and equity.

L: Let the people praise God, for how we have been blessed;

P: Come let us worship and offer all honour and praise.

***Opening praise: 10,000 reasons (Bless the Lord, oh my soul)**

Prayers of approach and confession

Welcoming and Holy God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory,

you make all things new,

justice and right relations have their source in you,

love and peace come from you.

You chose to become one of us in Jesus Christ,

teaching us your ways and calling us to follow his way.

You came to us in the Holy Spirit and your Spirit gives us wisdom, guidance and comfort each day.

And so, we praise you for your love which is great enough to embrace the universe, yet close enough to enter our hearts.

During our worship,

surprise us with your grace

that we, with the rest of the church

and the whole of creation, may praise and adore you,

In recalling all that you are, we confess who we are:

Merciful God,

we confess that we have not lived as you have taught us.

Forgive us those times we have not welcomed others into our community;
and those times we have avoided others
because of our fear and prejudices.
Forgive us the ways we have judged people unfairly.
Reveal to us your ways, and show us how to see your goodness in those who seem
different from us.

Response: *I waited, I waited on you, Lord*

Assurance of God's pardon

While it is true that we have all sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven
through God's love in Jesus Christ. To all who humbly seek the mercy of God, I say,
be at peace with God, with yourself and with one another.

We listen for the voice of God

Song: *Open our eyes Lord*

Children's time: Trust and Persist

Hello, children of God!

Do you like surprises? Sometimes I enjoy being surprised, when there are good
things to enjoy, like birthday presents or a special person coming to visit...but there
are other times when surprises can actually be a little challenging, like if a teacher
gives you a quiz you're not ready for, or you suddenly run out of toilet paper! Well, I
have a little surprise here, and I'd like to share it with you (*hold up paper bag*).

Would you like that? I won't show it to you just yet, but you can trust me: it's a good
surprise. You'll like it. But before we take a peek, I need you to do some other things
for me. First, I'd like you to jump up and down for a minute. Ready, go! (*Let students
hop or do another small activity*). Okay, great. Now, I'd like you to turn around six
times. Okay, spin! Good job. One more thing: can you recite the alphabet for me?
(*Adjust the tasks as you'd like, just make several things that require some small
effort*).

Okay, now you may find out what's inside the bag—but no looking! Shut your eyes
completely, and hold out your hand. I'll put a little surprise into your palm.

Well, that's not a bad little prize, right? Was it worth the work it took to obtain it?
Maybe. But you probably had to trust me a little bit. You had to trust that there was
something good in here, and that I'd give it to you at the right time. You had to
believe that inside the plain paper bag, I had a worthwhile object.

Well, sometimes we have to trust God in similar ways. He might not give us treats
that we can see and hold like this. But, He invites us to ask Him for gifts, and to trust
Him to provide what we need, when it is in His will.

The Gospel story today has to do with this idea. Jesus and His friends were walking
down the road, and a woman came up to Him, begging for help for her sick daughter.
At first, Jesus seemed to just ignore her, which might strike us as strange. Didn't He

come to help people who needed God? Well, He told her that He came to help the children of Israel, of which she was not. In fact, she was a Canaanite, which meant she was from a different group of people than the Jews. Jesus told her that taking His time and attention away from the Jews would be like taking food from children and feeding it to dogs.

However, this did not deter the woman! She told Jesus that at least dogs still received table scraps. Jesus was impressed by her faith and perseverance. Not only did she keep asking without giving up, she truly believed in Him and she knew that He could do miracles. So, He granted what she requested, and healed her daughter.

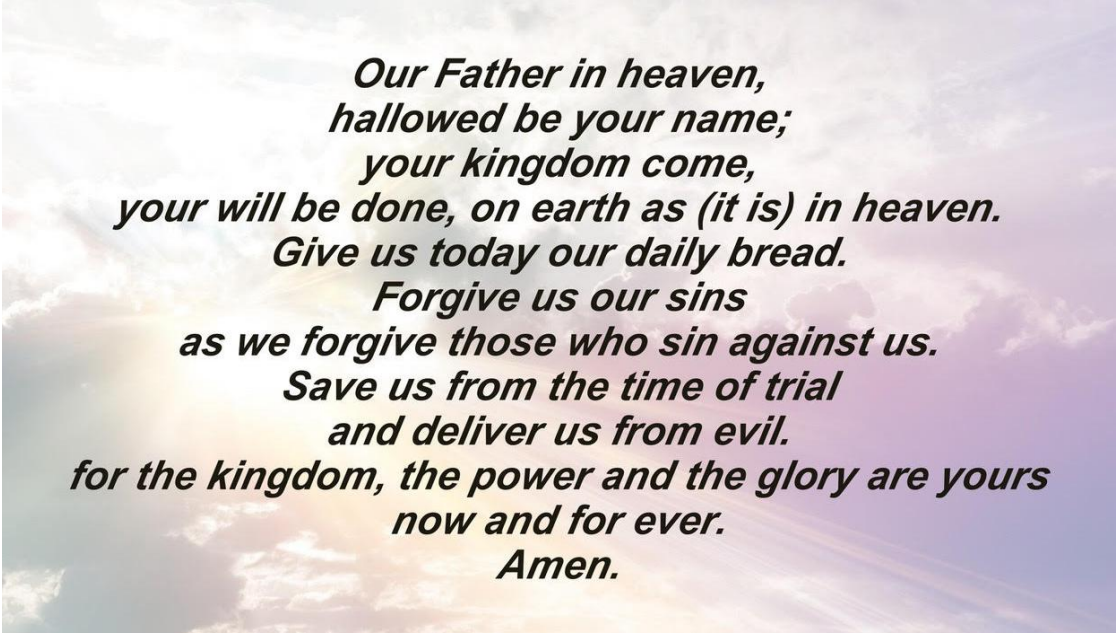
This story isn't necessarily about the woman, or the girl, or the disciples. It's not about calling people dogs or being selective with who we might or might not want to help. This story reminds us that we can have faith and trust in God. He didn't come just for the Jews, but for everyone, and He proved that by dying for everyone.

Sometimes, we ask God for things, and He might seem silent. Maybe we don't receive what we wish right away. Perhaps we have to wait for things, and it might feel like we wait a long time. Sometimes, we might not get what we think we want at all, because God has greater plans for us. But we can put our faith and trust in knowing He has our best interests at heart. God knows what we need and promises to provide it. We might not receive our first choice, but we will get what's best for us. We can trust that God loves us, cares for us, and will continue to grant us what we need. All we have to do is ask!

Children's repeat-after-me Prayer Moment

Dear God,
Thank you for providing what we need every day
Help us to be patient
Even when you seem far away
Help us to trust in you always
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
In Jesus name, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer



*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as (it is) 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 for ever.
Amen.*

***Song:** *All people that on earth do dwell*

Scripture readings: Isaiah 56:1,6-8 and Matthew 15:10-28

Response: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet*

Message: Alienated

The woman in this story comes to Jesus because her daughter is suffering.

She begs him for help.

And Jesus appears to ignore her.

She keeps asking.

Then Jesus says something that makes us uncomfortable: the children's bread shouldn't be thrown to the dogs.

Okay. Most people in the pulpit will never let someone read that verse before a congregation, let alone talk about it.

But that is just my bag.

I always add in the parts the lectionary cuts out. Those are the best parts. You don't need the same sermons on repeat every three years. Sometimes we need to talk about the things that strike us odd.

I Love Phyllis Trible's *Texts of Terror*. It is certainly the most impactful work I have largely agreed with among late second-wave literary feminist reviews of scriptures. And I really can't argue my point well with her because she is so much smarter than I am; I sort of have to agree. I love Princeton Theological Seminary's long-standing genius, F.F. Bruce. Bruce's students kindly helped assemble an entire book based on questions that students stayed after class to ask and then also recorded the answers the professor gave. I also love his work, "Hard Sayings in the Bible," where

he addresses just these verses. So... just so you know... I will pilfer and steal from their works from this point on. And don't blame them for what I get wrong.

Seriously though - What exactly is Matthew trying to show us?

I think this story is about much more than whether Jesus will heal a woman's daughter.

I usually try not to be too blunt. But honestly, this story is perhaps a bit more about, or at least also about, what happens when the people closest to Jesus decide someone else doesn't belong. And **I suspect that I**, and also perhaps WE, do that kind of thing all the time without noticing it, and likely sometimes intentionally, while also feeling justified and proud about it because we are cursing "evil" as we understand it this year.

Who is the outsider we want to keep OUT?

Who "deserves" to be alienated?

Who isn't "worthy" to be at the table?

Who doesn't even deserve the crumbs???

That question makes this story uncomfortable—not just because of what Jesus says, but because of what the disciples say.

The woman comes to Jesus and says:

"Have mercy on me."

The disciples see her and say:

"Send her away."

And I think Matthew wants us to notice the difference.

Because the woman is not the only person being tested in this story.

The disciples are being exposed, too. And so am I, and I believe so are we!

Jesus has just been in this confrontation with the Pharisees over what makes someone clean or unclean.

The Pharisees are concerned about external religious practices—washing hands, following traditions, maintaining boundaries and being visibly different from the "sinners" around them by how they did their hair or makeup or covered their hair or faces or walked or who they walked with or ate with or what they ate, how they spoke, what they spoke about and so on. And like little kids tattling on the other children in class, they come to the teacher (Jesus) to point out that Jesus's friends forgot to wash their hands before they ate lunch.

Eww, people say, "They eat with their hands instead of cutlery," or today's Western manners or whatever silly thing they can come up with at the time to separate themselves and feel superior to their neighbours.

By the way, Ethiopians make some of the best food in the world precisely because they didn't have much to work with. If anyone here ever wants to have Ethiopian food, please let Maddie and me know because we will be there in a millisecond. Just know that we will need to eat with our hands.

As a side note: I am rather convinced that the most delicious foods in the world come from the basic meals available to the poorest people in the places with the least diversity of options. Pakistan's food isn't great because it has the best available proteins; it's great because people learned how to make the least attractive foods delicious over thousands of years of development.

Back to Matthew:

It's a trap, and the Pharisees don't really care that much about the particular custom at this point. They simply intend to embarrass others for being different and less "sophisticated".

So Jesus tells these tattle tales that what truly defiles a person comes from within: the evil things that come out of the human heart through the mouth, and not what goes in. Truly awful things happen not because we eat the wrong way or the wrong food, but because we think and therefore eventually also say mean things to and about other people that we shouldn't.

Then Matthew immediately takes Jesus into Gentile territory.

Jesus withdraws to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

These were Gentile cities north of Galilee, in what is roughly modern-day Lebanon.

For a Jewish audience, this was foreign territory. And these people were both viewed as dirty and unruly, but the people in the land Jesus and the disciples visited... those people also viewed the Hebrews as silly country bumpkins. This is a clash of cultures taking place.

It's a little like someone from Singapore visiting the Deep South of Mississippi and assuming the worst for no reason other than a regional accent or preconceived notions they hadn't ever experienced but still automatically believed, and also labelling them as "evil" because they had never really talked.

These were not their people.

These were not the people of the covenant.

These were outsiders.

And into that territory comes a **woman**. Across these cultures, women were almost always abused. Both sides share, or at least should share, a certain amount of shame about how they were thought of. And these are people of their time and region!

Matthew deliberately calls her a **Canaanite**.

That's a strange word because by Jesus' day, "Canaanite" wasn't really a current ethnic designation.

Matthew is reaching back into Israel's history and using a name associated with the ancient enemies of Israel. Matthew is making a point! He is trying to make it clear

that these two groups meeting together were not the same – instead, they were historically enemies!

Mark, on the other hand, tells the same story. And in Mark's version, Mark calls her a Syrophoenician woman, which is a much more accurate description for the time. She was one of many ethnic groups living in the area just north of Israel. In this case, like with many, Mark and more often Luke is giving history, and Matthew and John are left trying to explain why it matters.

Matthew, however, refers to her as a Canaanite, making sure the audience understands that she is... like eating with unwashed hands, equally gross to the Hebrews, like Jesus and the disciples just were to the religious-elite Pharisees of the day.

Either way, Matthew wants us to understand something about his life when the event took place. BUT Matthew also wants us to understand the lessons he learned along the way as he became more like Christ because he notes in his own gospel that he is one of the “bad actors” who didn't really understand what was happening in the story at the time it took place – later, he seems to get it.

BUT... At the time

She is just an outsider to Matthew.

She isn't one of **them**.

She isn't **Jewish**.

She **doesn't** belong to the people Jesus has come to minister to **first**.

And yet she comes to him.

And if you were her, YOU WOULD TOO!

Any parent in the world would do what she does!

ANY!

Every parent would do this, embarrass themselves, cross cultures, try a silly long shot, experiment, read over, think through and ultimately seek out a miracle???

Every parent would! Every single one.

And so... every parent here understands the basics of this story.

This hurting, tear-filled person has a daughter who is suffering terribly.

Matthew writes that this woman claims her child is being tormented by a demon. We should be careful about trying to force that ancient description into one of our modern medical categories. The ancient world didn't have our distinctions between psychiatry, neurology, epilepsy, and other conditions. I don't say this because I don't believe in tormenting spirits, I do actually, but I say thing because things are not always that which we see them to be and to be quite clear, I don't want to tell you

about things the bible doesn't say, just what it does and I don't want to tell you to believe exactly what the people in the bible believed, but rather why they learned about God because of what they believed. In any case... we don't need to settle that question to understand the heart of the story. It is largely immaterial to the point.

Her child is suffering.

And she is desperate.

She has heard about Jesus.

Maybe she has heard stories about the things he has done.

And so she comes to him.

She cries out:

“Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Think about how remarkable that is.

A Gentile woman is calling this Jewish teacher **“Lord”** and **“Son of David.”**

She is asking Israel's Messiah for mercy.

And then Matthew gives us one of the strangest sentences in the Gospel:

“But Jesus did not answer her at all.”

He says nothing.

Have you ever prayed and heard nothing?

Not “no.”

Not “wait.”

Just...

nothing.

That's where this woman is.

She cries out, and Jesus is silent.

Now, we don't know exactly why Jesus is silent.

There are different ways Christians and scholars have understood this passage. Perhaps the silence is drawing out her faith. Perhaps it allows the disciples' attitudes to become visible. Perhaps Matthew is showing us the tension between the particular priority of Jesus' mission to Israel and the eventual universal scope of that mission.

But Matthew doesn't give us an explanation. There is no interpolation where the bible add “an Jesus di this because...” It just tells us what it tells us.

So we shouldn't pretend that we know more than the text tells us.

What we do know is this:

Jesus doesn't send her away.

The conversation continues.

And eventually, Jesus praises her faith.

So I don't think Matthew wants us to read the silence as evidence that Jesus simply doesn't care about her.

Instead, the silence creates a question:

Will this outsider be turned away?

And the answer is ultimately:

No.

But before we get there, we have to deal with the disciples.

The woman keeps crying out.

And the disciples say:

“Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

Notice what they don't say.

They don't say:

“Let's help her.”

They don't say:

“Her daughter is suffering.”

They don't say:

“Jesus, can you do something?”

They say:

“Send her away.”

That's revealing.

For the disciples, the problem isn't the suffering child.

The problem is the woman.

She's a Gentile.

She's a woman approaching a man in public.

She's persistent.

She's loud.

She is causing a scene, and she is uncontrollable

She's outside their religious and cultural boundaries.

And she's making them uncomfortable.

So they want her removed.

And this is where the story starts getting very contemporary.

Because we can do the same thing.

We may not say, “Send them away.”

We might say it differently.

“We're not really their kind of church.” Or more likely present ourselves that way without saying it.

“They wouldn't fit in here.”

“They don't understand how we do things.”

“They make people uncomfortable.”

“They have too much baggage.”

“They're too political.”

“They won't be able to contribute.”

“They're too wealthy and they will want to control things.”

“They don't dress right.”

“They don't talk right.”

“They don't worship right.”

“They don't believe exactly what **we** believe.”

We might never say, **“Send them away.”**

But sometimes we can communicate exactly that.

And the uncomfortable thing about this passage is that the people saying “Send her away” are not the Pharisees.

They're the disciples.

They're the people closest to Jesus.

The woman is not the only person being tested here.

The disciples are being exposed, too.

Jesus finally speaks.

He says:

“I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

This is an important statement.

Jesus is describing the priority of his earthly mission.

Israel had been waiting for the Messiah.

Israel had received the promises.

Israel had been preparing for this moment throughout the story of Scripture.

Jesus' mission begins with Israel.

But that doesn't mean Gentiles don't matter.

Matthew's Gospel eventually ends with Jesus telling his disciples:

“Go and make disciples of all nations.”

And Matthew is not (within him self) worried about gentiles. His whole book is written to the jews about how Jesus is a better Moses because he is the promised one.

So there is a movement here—from Israel to the nations.

The mission begins with Israel, but it does not end with Israel.

And this woman somehow finds herself standing right in the middle of that tension.

She has been told, in effect, that the mission is not directed toward people like her.

And she refuses to walk away.

Then comes the hardest part of the story.

Jesus says:

“It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs.”

We shouldn't pretend this isn't uncomfortable.

It is.

Jesus is using an image in which the **children represent Israel** and the **dogs represent Gentile outsiders**.

The word Jesus uses is a term for household dogs rather than the harsher imagery of wild or scavenging dogs which is how the Hebrews generally referred to no Hebrews.

And... That distinction **matters**. **But** it doesn't erase the tension. At least it doesn't for me. It will probably always rub me the wrong way. There is still an insider-outsider distinction. Still, the woman doesn't deny it.

She doesn't argue:

“I'm not an outsider.”

She doesn't demand: “You have no right to say that.”

Instead, she takes Jesus' own analogy and turns it around.

She says: **“Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.”**

That's extraordinary.

She doesn't need the whole meal.

She doesn't demand to take Israel's place.

She simply believes that there is enough mercy in a cup that overflows that it means that Jesus is also there for her too.

And that's when Jesus says:

“Woman, great is your faith!”

And her daughter is healed.

Do you see what has happened?

The woman who was supposed to be the outsider becomes one of the great examples of faith in the Gospel.

And the insiders?

They're the ones saying:

“Send her away.”

The people who thought they belonged are the ones struggling to recognize the heart of the God they claim to follow.

The woman came to Jesus because she knew she needed mercy.

The disciples were close to Jesus, but they had forgotten that **they needed mercy too**.

And that may be one of the most uncomfortable things about discipleship – for them and for us!

You can be very close to Jesus and still be far from his heart.
You can know the Scriptures.
You can belong to the church.
You can know the songs.
You can know the traditions.
You can know all the right answers.
And still look at somebody else and think:
“Send them away.”

So this story forces us to ask some uncomfortable questions.
Who makes us uncomfortable?
Who do we wish would stop making things difficult?
Who is the person whose presence changes the atmosphere in the room?
Who is the person we would rather serve from a distance than sit beside?
Who is the person we secretly think would be better off finding another church?
Who doesn't look like us?
Who doesn't speak like us?
Who doesn't worship like us?
Who doesn't vote like us?
Who doesn't come from our background?
Who carries a history we don't understand?
Who have we quietly decided **doesn't belong at the table?**
Because that is the question this story leaves with us.
Not simply:

“Who is Jesus willing to help?”

But:

“Who are we willing to welcome?”

And here's the thing.
Before we decide who belongs at the table, we need to remember how we got there.
None of us came because we were good enough.
None of us came because we belonged more than somebody else.
None of us came because we had the right background, the right history, the right family, the right beliefs, or the right record.
We came because of mercy.
We came because we were invited.

We are all here because someone made room for us.

The woman in this story knows that.
She doesn't come demanding her rights.
She comes asking for mercy.
And Jesus commends her faith.
So perhaps the final question isn't:
“Who is the Canaanite woman in our world?”

Perhaps the more uncomfortable question is:

“Who are we tempted to send away?”

Because the person we want to send away may be the very person through whom Jesus is teaching us something about faith.

The outsider may see something the insiders have forgotten.

And if Jesus has made room for us at his table—

we had better be very careful about telling someone else there isn't room for them. Amen.

***Song:** *Sometimes a healing word is comfort*

We respond to serve God

Our time of giving

HOW TO SUPPORT DAYSPRING'S MINISTRY & MISSION

1. Place a donation in the Offering Plate as you leave the Sanctuary via the centre door. Use the Yellow envelopes (add Name & Address) or your numerically identified personal Offering Envelope if you want a tax receipt.
2. Use Pre-authorized remittance or e-transfer (call the Church Office on Wed or Thurs for info).
3. Click the Donate button on our website (bottom right at www.DayspringChurch.ca).
4. On Sundays, ask the Media Team how to use the machine in the Media Room.

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession

Living God,

people of all places and times have reached out to you in times of desperation, with so many different needs.

You have compassion for each one,
and we thank you for the depth of your love.

This day we set before you our many different hopes and concerns.

Fill us with your compassion as we pray from the breadth and depth of our lives:

We pray for all that we are and all that we do,
all we wish we could do and all we long for....
(silence for 10 seconds ...)

We pray for everything we work for in our church and community,
and everything we hope for in the face of so much change.....
(silence for 10 seconds)

We pray for the choices we face in our country and community,
in our homes and workplaces,
and for all the responsibilities we bear in our different roles...
(silence for 10 seconds)

We pray for the troubles that weary us, the situations that puzzle us
and the uncertainty that surrounds us...
(silence for 10 seconds)

We remember before you each situation that worries us
and each person we care about....
(silence for 10 seconds)

Living Christ, you are the source of peace and new possibility for us all.
Help us trust in your grace for today and tomorrow.
Fill us with the strength and hope we need to walk with you, united in your love.
Amen.

***Song:** *Love divine, all loves excelling*

Sending out with God's blessing

It is good and pleasant when God's people live in unity.
So go with the conviction that we can serve together to do good and find pleasure in
Jesus' name.
And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and unity in the Holy
Spirit be with you now and always. Amen.

Response: Go forth into the world

Music postlude

Most of the hymns are from the 1997 *Book of Praise* of the Presbyterian Church in
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