



Sunday, September 5, 2021

The Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

St. Mark Lutheran Church

1515 S. Harris Rd.

Ypsilanti, MI 48198

stmarkypsi.com

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.

PRELUDE: Great Hope (CWB 18)

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WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,

help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

**We question your ways when they differ from the ways
of the world in which we live.**

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

We take offense at your teachings and your ways.

Turn us again to you.

Where else can we turn?

**Share with us the words of eternal life
and feed us for life in the world.**

Amen.

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ✙ the bread of life,
you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

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

OPENING SONG: A New Commandment (WOV 664)

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:4-7a

These verses are a word of hope to the exiles in Babylon. Isaiah 34 portrays God's vengeance on Edom, Israel's age-old enemy, which makes the path from Babylon to Zion safe for the exiles' return. The desert itself will flow with water to give drink to the returning exiles.

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;

^{7a}the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 146

I will praise the LORD as long as I live. (Ps. 146:2)

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 LORD loves 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: James 2:1-17

Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip service to God's will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.

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. ¹¹For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

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: Mark 7:24-37

In Mark's gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus' ministry. Here, a conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.

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 Syrophenician 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."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

SERMON

Vicar Kristin McCarthy

SERMON HYMN: Shepherd Me, O God (ELW 780)

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APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith using the words of the 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 THE PEOPLE

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

A brief silence.

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 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.

(A time of silence as we lift up those on our prayer list.)

- † We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Misty Calmeyn, Jim Ohi, Stephanie Pooley, Ian Locke, Carol Hartman, Dolly Collins, Margie Blackwood, Gary Hall, and Augie Wallman.
- † We continue to pray for Richard, Terry, Charlene, Melissa, Sandy, Pam, Chuck, Ted, Dr. Jim, Denny, Mary, Ben, and Dusty.
- † God of great compassion and love, grant comfort and peace to those grieving the loss of their loved ones:
 - † We ask that you comfort Pastor Anna, Monique, and their family as they grieve the death of Pr. Anna's mother, Teresa Cunningham.

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

You support the work of your disciples. Continue to nurture the leadership and ministries of this congregation. 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.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace. You are invited to call or text someone and simply say "peace!"

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.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for your faithfulness in all generations.
Praise to you for claiming us as your children and gathering us
in this worship through sacred story and the presence of Jesus.

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 bread 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 to them, saying:
Drink this all of you.
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.

And now, I invite you to lift a hand of blessing toward those
communion elements that you have brought to this table as we pray:
O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine
which we bring to this worship that they may hold
the presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ,
and so that, through these gifts,
we might be empowered to live
with courage and compassion in this world.

All praise and glory to you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father in Heaven

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COMMUNION

Take and eat; take and drink;
and as you do, know that you are indeed receiving
the body of Christ and the blood of Christ,
transcending time and space,
with divine love poured out for you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray:
Wellspring of joy,
through this meal you put gladness in our hearts.
Satisfy the hunger still around us.
Send us as joyful witnesses,

that your love may bring joy, safety, and peace
to the hearts of all people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERING SONG: We Come to the Hungry Feast (WOV 766)

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OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.
Gather what has been sown among us,
and strengthen us in this meal.
Make us to be what we receive here,
your body for the life of the world.
Amen.

Thank you for continuing to give to the work God is doing through St. Mark Lutheran Church. You can give by mailing your gift directly to the church. You can also give your gift by going online to www.stmarkypsi.com. Your gifts continue to sustain and nourish our ministries here at St. Mark, so thank you.

BLESSING

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
✝ be upon you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: Travelers on the Journey (CWB 106)

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

ENCIRCLED WITH PRAYER

- † Recognizing the power of prayer, please join us in praying at home throughout this week for those whose needs are known to us and those whose cares we do not know.
- † We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Misty Calmeyn, Jim Ohl, Stephanie Pooley, Ian Locke, Carol Hartman, Dolly Collins, Margie Blackwood, Gary Hall, and Augie Wallman.
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Please contact us at office@stmarkypsi.com if you need prayer for yourself or those dear to you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Preaching today will be Vicar Kristin McCarthy.

Worship Services: In addition to our livestream service every week, we offer in-person worship every other week. Today's worship is online. See our website for a schedule of services and further details.

Holy Communion: Each of our services includes Holy Communion. For those worshipping from home, please take a moment to gather communion elements from what you have on hand: bread or crackers, wine or juice, for use later in the service.