

2nd Sunday after Pentecost
June 7, 2026
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Hosea 5:15-6:6 Psalm 50:7-15 Romans 4:13-25 Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Dear friends, we are in the season of green- the color of growth, freshness, and new life; a season that will last us all the way to Christ the King Sunday (with a few festival Sundays exceptions). Liturgically, this green color reminds us of the Holy Spirit. Whereas the color of red (from Pentecost) reminded us of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, green reminds us of the life of the Holy Spirit among us as we hear passages of Jesus' ministry and teaching.

This past week was the first week where my children are at day camp and my house is quiet. And when my house is quiet, I listen to familiar movies in the background while working. One movie that was playing this week was *The Sixth Sense (1991)*. The movie is about a young boy with a unique gift. He kept telling Bruce Willis' character, a child psychologist, "I see dead people. They do not know they are dead. They're everywhere." As you can imagine, it was a very frightening experience, for the boy not only knew who was going to die, but how they were going to die. Hearing this movie in the background, I was stuck on an interesting thought, "Could Jesus, just like the little boy in movie, seeing what others cannot see?"

As we look at our Gospel reading, we have two sections to pay attention to as we kick off the ordinary season. Our first section we find Jesus walking into the town of Capernaum seeing Matthew sitting in the tax booth collecting taxes. What Jesus does next was almost unbelievable, for tax collectors in Jesus' time were despised. Tax collectors worked for the oppressive Roman government and made their living by overcharging and cheating the people they collected the taxes from, and for Matthew it was his neighbors and friends. We heard Jesus walked up to Matthew and instead of looking the other way or making crude remarks, Jesus says just two words to him, "Follow me." Matthew's life was changed forever. Jesus had chosen him to be a disciple. Matthew gets up and followed him with no hesitation, just an instant response to Jesus' invitation. Jesus sees something in Matthew; something that the community does not see.

In our second section of the gospel today, we are given a glimpse of a day in the life of Jesus, a possible calling to what a life as a disciple of Jesus looks like, through stories of healing. Each is healed from a different illness, and each is healed in a different way. But with all of them, Jesus is directly involved.

The first is a leader in the community of Capernaum. He is grief stricken that his twelve-year-old daughter has died. According to Luke's account of this story his name was Jairus, and he of course has heard Jesus teach – possibly witnessed many miracles or at least heard of many miracles of Jesus. So, he seeks Jesus out – he's desperate. He says something that reveals his incredible faith: "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." Later Jesus arrives at the home where all the neighbors and relatives are grieving. They know she is dead and that's the end, or so they thought. There is no faith in their hearts. So, Jesus sends them out, takes the little girl by the hand and calls her to arise.

The second healing involves a very different person – a woman who had suffered from a flow of blood for twelve long years. She was separated from society because she was unclean and not allowed near the temple or the synagogue. She must touch no one, and no one can touch her. No husband, no children, no connection with the community. It must have been a very lonely life. In a moment she sees Jesus passing through the crowd. This is her last shot, to touch the fringe of his cloak and be made well. And just before she does, Jesus turns to her and affirms: Your faith HAS made you well! And she is made well.

Jesus calls us all and acts in unique and different ways. He calls us through our baptism. He calls through our worship and each time we hear God's Word. He calls us each time we take communion to receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation. He calls us when we serve in our communities and help our neighbors. He calls us into a life of faithfulness in times when having faith is hard. But we see how Matthew trusted Jesus. He got up from his booth, left his life, and followed him. Jairus trusted Jesus with his daughter when all other things have failed him. The woman had trusted the word of people in Jesus to heal her. We are to be just like all these ancestors of faith, to leave behind our life of sin, baggage, and brokenness behind us and trust in Jesus and the ministry of love that we are called to be apart of in this time and age.

Let's be honest with each other dear friends. When God calls you and you respond, you will still have temptations to put your needs first before others. To work too many hours, while neglecting others. To ignore the call and wait for a better time in your schedule. We may even put yourself over God and live life as the walking dead, numb to the life and new opportunities to engage God's creation and people. But just like Jairus and the woman from our gospel today, we have the good news that God continues to offer mercy, healing, and forgiveness time after time again when we mess up. You are never too despised, and God will always see the good inside of you. Jesus knows each of you, accepts you with all your blemishes, and along with the Holy Spirit, will advocate for you. Jesus will make you, as I saw in a bakery in New Braunfels a few weeks ago, "I make the best of the worst." Amen.