

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 8, 2024 - 10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introduction

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 Syrophenician 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 her or his need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

A Table-scrap Feast

The story of the Syrophenician woman is one of the most puzzling in all the gospels. It raises more questions than answers: Why did Jesus turn her down? Was he testing her? Was the human side of him mistaken? Perhaps Jesus was just grumpy? Unfortunately, the gospel writer did not record what Jesus was thinking, only what he said, and those words remain troubling.

But we do know that Jesus was moved by the Syrophenician woman's persistence and faith. She bravely crossed multiple barriers—gender, ethnicity, class, religion—to get the help her daughter needed. In the end, Jesus grants her the mercy she seeks: he heals her daughter and restores their family. The woman had come begging for crumbs and instead received an abundant feast.

Who is the Syrophenician woman today? Maybe she is one of the millions who face daily violence and abuse, or perhaps the countless many who live with addiction or mental illness. She may be an asylum-seeker or refugee, reluctantly fleeing home because it's no longer safe for her family. The woman in today's gospel represents all who are outcast and ignored. This story is a powerful reminder of the inclusivity and compassion at the heart of Jesus' teachings and deeds. It is also a call to action, urging us to open our hearts and extend love and mercy to those who are marginalized or in need, just as Jesus did.

God has this amazing ability to bring about change in astonishing ways, through the most unexpected people. God's work in our lives is always surprising us, shaking up our worldview, and making abundance out of scarcity. Even when all we expect for ourselves or others are scraps, God has a larger vision: a banquet to which we are all invited.

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pr. Bob Swanson

CALL TO WORSHIP

Open Our Eyes, Lord (W&P 113)

D G² G Em⁷/A A⁷

O - pen our eyes, Lord; we want to see

G/D D A/C# Bm D/A GM⁹

Je - sus, to reach out and touch

Em A⁷ G/D D² D

him, and say that we love him.

DM⁷ A/G G Em⁷ A⁷

O - pen our ears, Lord, and help us to

G/D D A Bm⁷ D/A GM⁹

lis - ten. O - pen our eyes,

Em⁷ A⁷ D

Lord, we want to see Je - sus.

OPENING LITANY

Trust in the Lord,

who made heaven and earth;

trust in the Lord,

who loves every part of it.

Trust in the Lord,

who cares for those in need;

trust in the Lord,

who leads us to do the same.

Let us worship God,

who shows us the way.

**** GATHERING SONGS**

The Same Love

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

You choose the humble and raise them high;
You choose the weak and make them strong;
You heal our brokenness inside and give us life.

(Refrain - All)

**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.**

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

You take the faithless one aside
And speak the words, "You are mine";
You call the cynic and the proud, "Come to me now."

(Refrain - All)

**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.
Oh...**

(Music Ministers/**All**)

You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.

**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.**
Oh...

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*Open the Eyes of My Heart*

(Verse - Music Ministers/**All**)

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you,  
I want to see you.

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you,  
I want to see you.**

(**Refrain** - **All**/Music Ministers)

**To see you high and lifted up,**  
Shining in the light of your glory.  
**Pour out your power and love**  
As we sing "holy, holy, holy."

(Verse - **All**)

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you,  
I want to see you.**

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,  
Open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you,  
I want to see you.**

**(Refrain - All/Music Ministers)**  
**To see you high and lifted up,**  
Shining in the light of your glory.  
**Pour out your power and love**  
As we sing "holy, holy, holy."  
**To see you high and lifted up,**  
Shining in the light of your glory.  
**Pour out your power and love**  
As we sing "holy, holy, holy."

**Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
I want to see you.**

**Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
I want to see you.**

**Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
Holy, holy, holy,  
I want to see you.**



*I Lift My Hands*

**(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)**  
Be still; there is a healer.  
His love is deeper than the sea.  
His mercy is unfailing,  
His arms: a fortress for the weak.  
Let faith arise. Let faith arise.

**(Refrain - All)**

**I lift my hands to believe again.  
You are my refuge, you are my strength;  
As I pour out my heart, these things I remember.  
You are faithful, God, forever.**

**(Verse 2 - All)**

**Be still; there is a river  
That flows from Calvary's tree,  
A fountain for the thirsty,  
Your grace that washes over me.  
Let faith arise. Let faith arise.**

**(Refrain - All)**

**I lift my hands to believe again.  
You are my refuge, you are my strength;  
As I pour out my heart, these things I remember.  
You are faithful, God, forever.**

**I lift my hands to believe again.  
You are my refuge, you are my strength;  
As I pour out my heart, these things I remember.  
You are faithful, God, forever.**

**(Music Ministers/All)**

**Let faith arise, let faith arise.  
Open my eyes, open my eyes.  
Let faith arise, let faith arise.  
Open my eyes, open my eyes.**

**(Final Refrain - All/Music Ministers)**

**I lift my hands to believe again.  
You are my refuge, you are my strength;  
As I pour out my heart, these things I remember.  
You are faithful, God. You're faithful, God, forever.  
Let faith arise, let faith arise.**

## **CONFESSION**

It is only by the power of God that we are able to stand against evil. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin. **You love us with open arms, O God. Forgive us when we do not put your love into practice:**

**when we do not challenge the injustice around us;  
when we are not generous with the gifts we have to share;  
when we are slow to compassion and quick to judgment;  
when we contribute to the brokenness of the world  
instead of helping to make it whole.**

**Forgive us, O God, for the ways we fall short. Strengthen us to live in your example, and let your love lead the way. Amen**

## **FORGIVENESS**

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.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*Assistant Minister*

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.**

## **THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**



# WORD

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

## 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.*

A reading from the book of Isaiah.

Say 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." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then 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; 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

**Psalms 146**

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

Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

**I will praise the Lord as long as I live;**

**I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

Put not your trust in rulers,

in mortals in whom there is no help.

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

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

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

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

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

The Lord cares for the stranger;

the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

**The Lord shall reign forever,**

**your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

## SECOND READING

**James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17**

*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.*

A reading from the book of James.

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For 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, and 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," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, 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? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [For 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. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.] What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and 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? So 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.*

The holy gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He 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." But she answered him, "Sir,

even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They 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.**

## **YOUTH MESSAGE**

### **MESSAGE**

*Pr. Jamie Vannoy*

### **\*\* 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 power of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
[he descended into hell.](#)**

**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 COMMUNITY**

### **GATHERING OF GIFTS**

### **OFFERTORY**

## OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, source of every gift of your creation. By these gifts and with our lives, help us to serve one another and all in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## MEAL

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

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples 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."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another .

## LORD'S PRAYER

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**

Jesus welcomes you to this table. Come, here is your God.

### **COMMUNION** - *Receiving the Lord's Tangible Presence*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*Each person may respond **Amen**.*

**Communion Statement** ~ *If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.*

*NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request. For those choosing to remain in the pews, there are communion all-in-one cups containing grape juice available in the Narthex.*

## **REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION**

*As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ, and reflect the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.*

### **\*\* TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace.  
**Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Holy God, you have welcomed us to this meal and fed us with dignity at your table. Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

# SENDING

**\*\* BLESSING**

God all mighty, God most merciful bless you, keep you, and give you peace. **Amen.**

**\*\* SENDING HYMN**

*They'll Know We Are Christians*

(Verse 1)

We are one in the Spirit,  
We are one in the Lord.  
We are one in the Spirit,  
We are one in the Lord,  
And we pray that all unity  
May one day be restored,  
And they'll know we are Christians  
By our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians  
By our love.

(Verse 2)

We will walk with each other,  
We will walk hand in hand.  
We will walk with each other,  
We will walk hand in hand,  
And together, we'll spread the news  
That God is in our land,  
And they'll know we are Christians  
By our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians  
By our love.

(Verse 3)

We will work with each other,  
We will work side by side.  
We will work with each other,  
We will work side by side,  
And we'll guard human dignity,  
And save human pride.  
And they'll know we are Christians  
By our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians  
By our love.

(Verse 4)  
All praise to the Father,  
From whom all things come,  
And all praise to Christ Jesus,  
His only Son,  
And all praise to the Spirit  
Who makes us one,  
And they'll know we are Christians  
By our love, by our love.  
Yes, they'll know we are Christians  
By our love.

**\*\* DISMISSAL**

*Assistant Minister*

Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

**Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.  
Hallelujah! Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

**“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two  
Make a commitment to not only worship each week  
but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation  
and seek out a way to serve our community.**

**YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD**

## **Upcoming Commemorations**

**Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654**

**Monday, September 9, 2024**

Born into Spanish nobility, Claver became a Jesuit missionary, and served in present-day Colombia. His ministry was focused on the enslaved people who arrived there. He gave them food and medicine, learned their dialects, and taught them Christianity.

**John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407**

**Friday, September 13, 2024**

John was a priest in Antioch and an outstanding preacher. His eloquence earned him the nickname “Chrysostom” (“golden mouth”). Appointed bishop of Constantinople, seat of the empire, he criticized corruption in the court. As a result, he was exiled by the empress.

**Holy Cross Day**

**Saturday, September 14, 2024**

Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus’ crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord’s victory on the cross.

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