

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 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 a need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

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.

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us.

We confess that we have honored you with our lips, but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.

The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes.

In our desire to be first we make distinctions among ourselves.

We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last.

In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.

Draw near to us with grace in time of need, and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God promises to forgive our iniquity and to remember our sin no more.

By grace you have been saved.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, the source of eternal healing, your sins are forgiven.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Christ, Be Our Light”

#715 vss 1-3

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.

Reading – Isaiah 35:4-7a

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.

Gospel – Mark 7:24-37

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,²⁵ but 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.”

The Gospel of Our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon “There is a LOT to be Learned from Dogs”

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN

If you own a dog, or have ever owned a dog, you know how keenly aware they are at meal time, and who it is that they should sit at the feet of, to clean up the greatest amount of crumbs that they can.

We have a 10.5 week old GoldenDoodle at home named Olive, and in the 3.5 weeks that we have had her, she has learned quite well the cues that she is going to get some goodies. Whether it is us sitting at the table, or a hand going into a bag of chips, or one of us standing at the stove, or the crinkle of her treat bag or the opening of the garage door to get to where her food is, she knows when, where, and how it is that she is going to get some deliciousness. Whether that’s crumbs from the table or the dogfood or treats that we have for her, she doesn’t care. She simply knows.

Jesus, in our Gospel text for today, references this knowledge, though perhaps not as he initially intended. He has gone away to a region where there wouldn’t have been many people of Jewish faith. Perhaps he was sensing that it was Jewish folks who were a part of his (rapidly growing) following, so to truly get away he needed to get out of that region to one with a more gentile population. Or, perhaps he knew full well what he was doing.

But, we hear that he goes to the region of Tyre and enters a house. We don’t know whose house but he didn’t want anyone to know he was there. Yet, if you can believe it, people recognized that he was there. And in this recognizing who it was that had entered their midst, a woman came with her daughter who had an unclean spirit, and she DEMANDS that he make her well.

Jesus tries to cast her off. For more than one reason, I believe, Jesus does this. One, she is a gentile woman and he is Jewish man. Two, he really just wants to get away. And, three, it would seem as though he is not wanting to get discovered.

But, he tells her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” The word *children* here is doing a lot of work. Perhaps Jesus is referring to the Children of Israel, those of Jewish faith. And dogs, then, would mean those who are not. There is that societal distinction at play.

However, in a moment of pure faith, that one could argue changes Jesus’ perspective on who it is that He has come to save, this woman demands his attention. Whatever it is that Jesus means by the use of the terms “children” and “dogs” – this woman knows (and demands) that the dogs get to eat, too, even if it is just the crumbs.

AND, she knows the difference just a morsel of God’s grace can make in her life. She doesn’t come demanding the full meal. She doesn’t come demanding that she get EVERYTHING that the children (whatever that actually means) get. She would be just fine with the crumbs. And she knows it. And, she demands it.

So often in our world and in our churches, we think that we need the full meal. We need the full experience. We need it all. When the truth is, it would do us well to see the value in the crumbs. But, more than that, to see who it is in our midst that we are denying even the crumbs.

This experience changes Jesus, and it ought to change us, too. Jesus goes from here, returns to relatively more familiar land, and it is there that a deaf man is brought to him. Because of his inability to hear, this man also has a speech impediment, which we later here that he is essentially mute. But Jesus, having been changed by his encounter with the Syrophenician woman, takes the man aside, into private. Looking up to heaven, he sighs, almost to say, “this is how it is going to be, this is what I am here for,” and says, “Ephphatha” – be opened. And the man can hear and speak.

And Jesus tells him to tell no one. Imagine, if you will, for a moment, being healed of whatever it is that burdens you, and you are told not to tell anyone about it. Jesus knew what he was doing. He knew full well that the more he told them not to tell, the more zealously they would.

That is the power of the crumbs! In a world of thinking we need to have it all, we can learn a lot from those who long for the crumbs and can’t wait to tell anyone who will listen when they get them.

Jesus initially, it seems, refers to the woman’s child as a “dog” as an insult, but the truth is, we can learn a lot from dogs. They are smart. They know where to go to get what they need.

The question is, are we going to give it to them?

In a world filled with those whom we so often define as “less than scavengers” longing for a taste of that same meal that we so gloriously enjoy, are we going to give it to them? Or are we going to blame them for how they got their in the first place.

In a world where we look at those longing for crumbs, and instead of giving them some ask how come they lost their spot at the table, are we going to pull up a chair? Or are we going to make sure our crumbs don’t fall?

I know my answer, and hope your answer is the same. Thanks be to God. AMEN

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Awaken in our communities of faith a spirit of radical hospitality. Encourage our churches to celebrate and embrace people of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. Deepen our commitment to ecumenical and interreligious partnerships (*local partners may be named*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring forth water to nourish plants and animals in places suffering from drought. Renew our commitments to protect rivers, lakes, and streams, and make us good stewards of water in our homes and communities. Preserve wetland habitats and the creatures that make their homes there. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire leaders of cities, nations, and tribes to lead with wisdom and humility. Bring peace among peoples in conflict (*especially*) and strengthen global commitments to nonviolent solutions. Guide all who seek refuge from war to a safe haven. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort all who live with chronic illness. Surround them in your tender embrace and sustain all who provide ongoing care and support. Bring hope and healing to people struggling with addiction and nourish the spirits of all who are in recovery. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nurture in all people the gift of your creating Spirit. Inspire artists and musicians, woodworkers and quilters, poets and dancers. Revive those whose artistic wells have run dry and enliven all who doubt their creative talents. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give you thanks for all who have died and now find their rest in you. May their faithful witness guide us in our daily life with you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Peace

Offering

Offertory 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.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Lord's Prayer

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

Post Communion Prayer

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.

Blessing

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

Sending Hymn **“Christ, Be Our Light” #715 vss 4-5**

Sending

Go in peace. Follow Jesus!
Okay! We will! Thanks be to God.
And all of Good Shepherd said,
“AMEN”

Your Generosity in Action:

LCGS at the Kiwanis Golf
Outing last week.
As hole sponsors, we
also got to have a team
compete!



We also had many
members helping out as
part of Kiwanis and
others who were on
sponsoring teams.
It was a great day!

THANK YOU!!

Monthly Financials to date:	Total Revenue	Total Expenses	Difference
	\$4,344	\$6,222	-\$2,122
	2023: \$20,393	2023: \$21,677	

BUILDING TOGETHER

for Generations to Come



Capital Campaign Events for YOU!

September 22 - Campaign Kickoff

September 29 - Front Porch Visits

October 18 - Congregation Event
at the Children's Theater - 5:30 pm

October 23 - Appetizers Potluck and
Hymn Sing at Church

October 27 - **COMMITMENT SUNDAY**



**CHOIRS HAVE
STARTED, JOIN US
ON WEDNESDAYS!**

BELLS- 6:15

CHOIR 7:30

**ALL ARE WELCOME
TO JOIN.**