

THE 12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 20, 2023



Christ Lutheran Church of St. Catharines, ON

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon
Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com
Parish Assistant: Louise Gondosch (905-329-8579) parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
Business Manager: Karen McCumber business.manager@christlutheransc.ca
Secretary: Pat Kimpel secretary@christlutheransc.ca
Facebook: Lisa Gall www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email: Judy Mason chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKT19c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, always more ready to hear than we to pray and always ready to give more than we either desire or deserve pour down on us the abundance of Your mercy, forgiving us the things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us the good things we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Mark 9: 33-37 Wednesday: Luke 7: 1-10 Friday: Gal. 1: 11-24
Tuesday: 1 Sam. 17: 40-51 Thursday: Acts 12: 18-25 Saturday: Eph. 2: 1-7

Musicians: The Band
Reader: Lorraine Kaija
Greeter: Ralph & Mary Muller

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY AND POT-LUCK: Thursday, August 24th at 5:30 p.m. at the Kuenzel's.
For more information please contact Wendy K. or Louise 905-329-8579.

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR JASON GILLARD: August 27th, 4:00 p.m. at Christ Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Grimsby (**updated location**). Saulo Bledoff will preach. Liturgist - Joel Kuhl, Lector - Richard Juritsch. A dinner will follow the service.



FAMILY DAY "MINI GOLF"

at Brock Mini-Golf

Saturday, September 9, 2:00 pm

FRIENDS ARE WELCOME!

Please sign up in the narthex if you plan to attend !!



LOOKING AHEAD: Watch for details in the Fall for a **WESTERN JAMBOREE**
The Fellowship Committee is planning on hosting a fellowship event on **Saturday, September 30th**. Cost would be only to cover expenses. Live band, pulled pork & beans, photo booth, etc. It should be a lot of fun, watch bulletin for more details as it gets closer.





ONTARIO DISTRICT LWML-C FALL RALLY

“FOLLOW THE ROAD RETREAT”

ONTARIO DISTRICT CHRISTIAN GROWTH RETREAT
CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO

Friday, October 13th and Saturday, October 14th, 2023
Registration is due September 5TH

Friday: Rev. Jim Keller - opening and closing
Rev. R. Orłowski - speaker

Saturday: Morning - Heather Keller, RD, PhD, FDC, FCAHS
Schlegel Research chair in Nutrition and aging at University of Waterloo Kinesiology and Health Sciences

Afternoon - Speaker is the Lion (mystery)
(We will have people acting as Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion)

This is the weekend for us to get together to study God’s word and enjoy the company of old and new friends.

<u>Last Sunday Attendance:</u>		<u>August 13th, 2023</u>		<u>Attn: 10 a.m. – 79</u>	
<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (–)</u>	
Current	297,841.00	5,840.02	2,346.40	136,336.41	(52,678.07)
LCC Missions	17,000.00	333.33	140.00	10,652.00	(136.46)
Property Improvement:			59.00	3,911.00	

FLOWERS have been placed on the altar this morning to the glory of God by Andy & Bette Vasko and Family in loving memory of John Vasko Jr.

2023/2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL: The Christian education of our children is important to all of us. We are looking for people to help "team teach" our Sunday school children this year; September - December; January - June. If you are excited to share God's Word with inquisitive minds, we invite you to speak with our Parish Education Chairman, Brandon Kemp, or Louise.

GREETERS: A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board and we would ask that anyone who is interested in assisting for the coming year to please sign up. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know everyone in the congregation.

POWER POINT VOLUNTEERS: – The Worship Committee is urgently seeking two (2) volunteers to assist with the preparation of the weekly PowerPoint projection. Frequency of PowerPoint preparation would be on a rotating basis and dependent upon the number of helpers. PLEASE give prayerful consideration to serving our Lord in this capacity. For more information, please speak to Kathy Kuhl, Judy Slingerland or Pastor Todd.



Granny Squares still needed: This is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. Once there are enough, we will make a Caring Squares blanket for whoever may be in need of a hug. On behalf of the Caring Squares, if you have any questions, call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

Scripture & Song Service
THE 12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
August 20, 2023 + 10 AM Worship

GATHERING

BEGINNING SONG: "I Will Sing Of The Mercies"

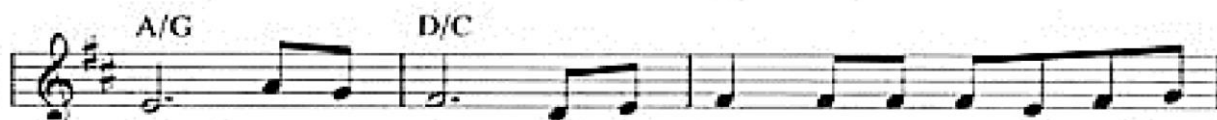
James Fillmore

Psalms 89:1

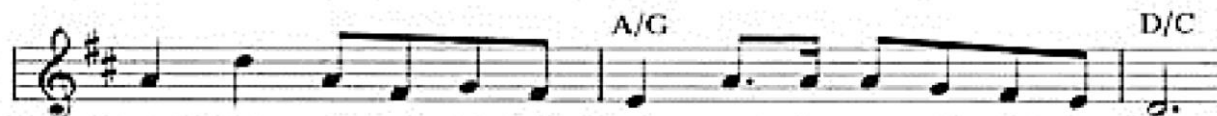
Traditional



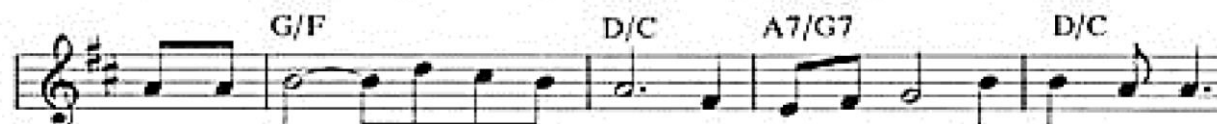
I will sing of the mer - cies of the Lord for - ev - er, I will



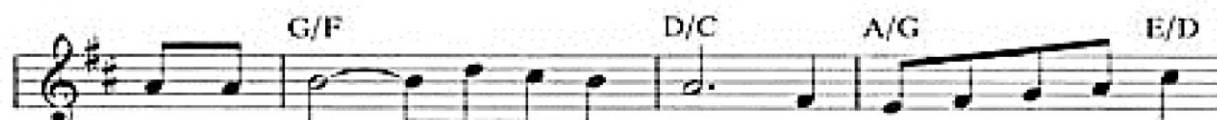
sing, I will sing, I will sing of the mer - cies of the



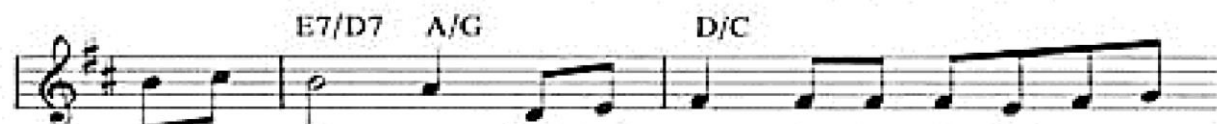
Lord for - ev - er, I will sing of the mer - cies of the Lord.



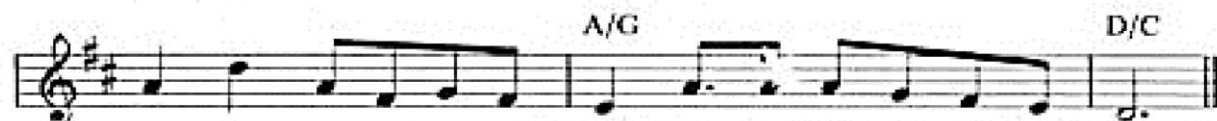
With my mouth will I make known Thy faith - ful - ness, Thy faith - ful - ness,



With my mouth will I make known Thy faith - ful - ness to all



gen - er - a - tions. I will sing of the mer - cies of the



Lord for - ev - er, I will sing of the mer - cies of the Lord.

WE BEGIN IN GOD'S NAME

In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I was glad when they said to me,

Let us go to the House of the Lord!

Unless the Lord builds the House,

In vain do the builders labour.

Surely the Lord is in this place.

This is the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven!

You are gracious and merciful, O God,

Slow to anger, rich in love.

Receive our prayers and worship as You have promised

And uphold us by Your Spirit,

Until all things, mended by Your mercy,

Are made whole and well in You,

Through Jesus Christ

Our healer and our hope. Amen.

KYRIE--PRAYING FOR MERCY

John Newton, 1779

arr. Edwin O. Excell (1851-1921), alt.

Have mer - cy on Your peo -- ple, Lord; have

mer - cy Je -- sus Christ; have mer --- cy on Your

peo --- ple, Lord; have mer - cy grant us peace.

The musical score consists of six staves. The first two staves are the vocal line, with the lyrics 'Have mercy on Your people, Lord; have' on the first line and 'mercy Jesus Christ; have mercy on Your' on the second line. The next two staves are the piano accompaniment, with the lyrics 'people, Lord; have mercy grant us peace.' on the third line. The final two staves are the vocal line, with the lyrics 'people, Lord; have mercy grant us peace.' on the fourth line. The score is in G major and 4/4 time.

CONFESSION OF SINS & FORGIVENESS

To You, O Lord God,

All hearts are open, to You all desires are fully known. We come to You, moved by Your Word and Spirit, as sinners, confessing our sins. Forgive us in Your mercy. Remember us in Your love. Show us Your way, teach us Your path, lead us in truth and faithfulness, for the sake of our neighbour and for Your sake, O Lord God, in the hope of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

By water, Word and Spirit, our God gives you new birth and through the death and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in His name and in His stead, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

When the Son sets you free, you are free indeed! **Praise be to God!**

HYNM OF PRAISE

“He Is Lord”



He is Lord, He is Lord! He is ris - en from the
dead and He is Lord! Ev-'ry knee shall bow, ev-'ry
tongue con - fess That Je - sus Christ is Lord.

He Is Love, He Is Love!

**He has shown us by His life that He is love;
And all people sing; with one voice they bring,
how Jesus Christ is love!**

He Is Life, He Is Life!

**He has died to set us free and He is life;
And He calls us All to live evermore,
for Jesus Christ Is Life.**

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Hear my prayer O Lord; **listen to my call for help.**

Merciful Father and God of all people, Your arms reach out to embrace all who call upon You. Teach us as followers of Your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that Your name may be known through the earth; we ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

The New Testament Reading: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.... And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered. This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

The Epistle: Romans 11: 1,2a, 28-32

[St. Paul writes:] I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew... for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all. This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SPOKEN GOSPEL VERSE:

Alleluia! Great is your faith! May it be done for you as you believe! Alleluia!

The Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 15: 10-28

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 15th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

Then [Jesus] called the crowd to him and said to them, 'Listen and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.' Then the disciples approached and said to him, 'Do you know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard what you said?' He answered, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.' But Peter said to him, 'Explain this parable to us.' Then he said, 'Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from

the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile. Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly. This is the Gospel of the Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED:

God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess the faith.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL SONG:

“Living Hope”

Phil Wickham and Brian Johnson

INTRO

VERSE 1

♩ = 72 Eb Ab2 Eb Ab2 Eb

1. How great the cha - sm that lay be-

6 Bbsus Ab2 Cm7 Bbsus Eb

tween us. How high the moun - tain I could not climb. In des - per - a - tion I turned to

10 Bbsus Ab2 Bbsus Eb Ab2

heav - en and spoke Your name in - to the night. Then through the dark - ness Your lov - ing-

14 Eb Cm7 Bb(4) Eb

kind - ness tore through the shad - ows of my soul. The work is fin - ished, the end is

VERSE 2

18 Bbsus Ab2 Bbsus Eb Ab2 Eb

writ - ten. Je - sus Christ, my liv - ing hope. 2. Who could im - ag - ine so great a

23 Bbsus Ab2 Cm7 Bbsus

mer - cy? What heart could fath - om such bound - less grace? The God of

26 Eb Bbsus Ab2 Bbsus Eb

ag - es stepped down from glo - ry to wear my sin and bear my shame. The cross has

30 $A\flat 2$ $E\flat$ $Cm7$ $B\flat(4)$
 spo - ken; I am for - giv - en. The King of kings calls me His own. Beau - ti - ful

34 $E\flat$ $B\flat sus$ $A\flat 2$ $B\flat sus$ $E\flat$
 Sav - ior, I'm Yours for - ev - er. Je - sus Christ, my liv - ing hope. Hal - le -

CHORUS

$A\flat 2$ $E\flat$ $B\flat$ $Cm7$ $A\flat 2$ $E\flat$
 lu - jah, praise the One who set me free! Hal - le - lu - jah, death has

41 $B\flat$ $Cm7$ $A\flat 2$ $E\flat$ $B\flat$ $Cm7$ $E\flat/B\flat$
 lost its grip on me! You have bro - ken ev - 'ry chain. There's sal - va - tion in Your name. Je - sus

44 $A\flat 2$ $B\flat sus$ $B\flat$ $E\flat$ $A\flat 2$ $E\flat$ $B\flat$ $Cm7$
 Christ, my liv - ing hope. Hal - le - lu - jah, praise the One who set me free!

$A\flat 2$ $E\flat$ $B\flat$ $Cm7$ $A\flat 2$ $E\flat$
 Hal - le - lu - jah, death has lost its grip on me! You have bro - ken ev - 'ry chain.

$B\flat$ $Cm7$ $E\flat/B\flat$ $E\flat/G$ $A\flat 2$ $B\flat sus$ $B\flat$ Cm
 There's sal - va - tion in Your name. Je - sus Je - sus Christ, my liv - ing hope.

$E\flat/G$ $E\flat/B\flat$ $A\flat 2$ $E\flat/B\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat$
 O God, You are my liv - ing hope.

MESSAGE

OFFERINGS are gathered

OFFERING SONG.

“Give Thanks”

Henry Smith © 1978

**Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One;
give thanks, because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son.
Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One;
give thanks, because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son.
And now let the weak say ‘I am strong’,
let the poor say ‘I am rich’,
because of what the Lord has done for
us;
and now let the weak say ‘I am strong’,
let the poor say ‘I am rich’,
because of what the Lord has done for
us.
Give thanks...give thanks-----!**

<https://www.music-ministry.org/hymns/give-thanks-with-a-grateful-heart/>

PRAYERS

The Canaanite woman came to Jesus, trusting that he would hear and help her. Let us turn to our heavenly Father, praying for ourselves and our world.

O Lord, bless this congregation. Help us remain a house of prayer and a place where prayer becomes a source of healing and help.

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

O Lord, inspire Your Holy Church around the globe, that she always proclaim Your free gift of grace, that all who have need receive the Gospel mercy and all who hear be grafted into Jesus Christ, the true vine.

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

O Lord, bless all work and occupations, and help us use well the fruits of our labours. Give us generosity for those in need. Bless the gifts, serving, talents and offerings that accompany our worship and praise.

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

O Lord, move by Your will the government and those who protect us that justice, honour and peace be regarded for all of us living in Canada; may our example assist other nations struggling with peace and instability, especially Russia, Ukraine, China and North Korea;

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

O Lord, care for those who cry to You, whether overwhelmed with grief, sorrow, pain or trouble [especially _____]. Be pleased for Christ's sake to answer them according to Your will.

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

O Lord, bless all who receive Jesus' body and blood this day. May these wondrous crumbs from Your table strengthen us in faith and love, united with You and our neighbours.

Hear us, dear Lord, **Your mercy is great.**

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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. 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

CLOSING PRAYER FOR THE WORD:

Blessed Lord God, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Help us so that we may hear, read, mark, learn and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Who with the Father and Spirit You rule and reign as one God, now and forevermore. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. May you hear His voice and keep His Word.

Amen, thanks be to God.

Jesus is the Pathway that leads to life. May You follow in His narrow way.

Amen, praise be to God.

Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches. May you be rooted and grounded in His Word and love.

Amen. Glory to our God.

May the Almighty God, the Father, Son + and Holy Spirit, bless and keep you now and always.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

"Lead Me, Guide Me"

E C#m7 F#m7 B7 F#m7

Lead me guide me a - long the way; for if you

6 B7 E A E E E7/G#

lead me I can-not stray. Lord, let me walk each

11 A Am E B7 E

day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me

17 E C#m7 F#m7 B7

I am weak and I need thy strenth and pow'r
 Help me tread in the paths of righ - teous - ness
 I am lost if you take your hand from me,

22 F#m7 B7 E A E

to help me o - ver my weak - est hour
 be my aid when Sa - tan and sin op - press
 I am blind with - out thy light to see.

27 E E7/G# A Am

Help me through the dark-nes thy face to see
 I am put - ting all my trust in thee
 Lord, just al - ways let me thy ser - vant be

32 E B7 E

lead me, O Lord, lead me

REV. TODD HOEFFS

Pentecost 12

Matthew 15:10-28

"Faith Is Great When It's Gone To The Dogs"

August 20, 2023

Overeating was encouraged in my house growing up, almost a rule. "Todd, you don't finish your potatoes you don't get cherry pie?!" said Mom. And of course, I wanted the cherry pie. Dad's rule was always having clean hands before eating. Then my pastor would joke that the one good thing about our Lutheran faith is that we can do everything – in moderation. LOL Overeating and washing hands are all about what Jesus is saying ISN'T important? Right? Well, yes and no. Washing hands doesn't prove there's a clean soul any more than overeating proves the food is good. It's not what goes into the body that's the problem. The heart, the attitude, the human nature, the seat of who we are, where all thoughts and ideals and emotions whirl around, That is the problem place.

In the Hebrew sense, If the heart wasn't right, the mind will not be right.

It's not the fault of cherry pies or 35 buffalo chicken wings I ate in one sitting [true] or the tasty apple fritter Tim Horton's donut's fault either -- not the fault of the food that I carry too much around the middle. Food consumption and hand washing are constant concerns in our culture still. In the religious leaders' eyes these topics sealed your fate in Heaven or in Hell. God ordained such common-sense health procedures not only for preparation for worship But to keep them alive from bacteria and sickness. Those had never been meant to keep people away from God. Nor a standard for real faith.

Our English Bibles call this "defiled hands" but Matthew's choice in the Greek really means ordinary or plain hands. Not dirty hands, just hands which may have been quickly wiped or rinsed. Like jeans verses tuxedo pants. These unimportant matters must never be standards. What benefit is there Is holding these kind of rules? No one should be so afraid of offending God that we keep people away from His presence! God knows the heart. We can't know who's in with God and who's out. The Temple pecking order worked like this: Men from the House of Israel with wealth and reputation sat at the top. Then the young boys 13 and older of those households. Then other young boys of Israel. Then married women of the wealthy men.

Then the regular women. Then single or widowed and young girls. Then the OTHERS.

Gentiles. Anyone not of the House of David--So Imagine how low a Canaanite woman was on the ladder? The title Canaan means "low", as in humble, and people of low-lands.

On the other side of the Jordan River near Palestine. Their ethnicity is a wide mix of Jew, Arab, Syrian and Greek. Talk about an enemy ethnicity! It's easy hating. Loving and friendship, that's harder and more time consuming. God is so much more than just good behaviour and proper etiquette. Living differently or not having perfectly washed hands isn't a failure in God's eyes. Rather, it's that selfish pride, welling up from every sinner's heart, to put the self first; to ignore or dislike or treat as non persons our neighbours instead of loving them, accepting them, helping them.

At its worst our selfishness gives rise to all those ugly things Jesus mentions: murder, unhealthy lusting, stealing and speaking unkindly of others. God sees what lies concealed inside us, He has all our DNA at His fingertips, Also our history, culture and what our hearts get attached to. We might fool each other, but we can't fool God. Imperfection is the great leveler for every person of the world. This Canaanite woman is many things, but not naïve. Everyone knows the children of Israel focus on the Great Messianic afterlife feast at the wedding banquet of the Saviour. Primarily, for them and no one else. Grudgingly, the children of God know the Gentiles get into Heaven somehow too. [Isaiah mentions it a few times] This Canaanite woman knows she's also invited to God's Table. Otherwise she wouldn't go to such public lengths to get her share. She speaks correctly – "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David!" That's formal Temple language. Lord. She sees him as the heir of King David. She begs for mercy. She is persistent. She shouts, she raises her voice, she refuses to give in. What mother, what parent, wouldn't do the same? If you know someone could save your child, would you ever quiet down? Because women in ancient times just did not do that. And not an outcast outsider. No woman at that time yelled out loud or approached a man. Parents never stop advocating for their children. A parent is the voice for their voiceless babies. Especially one troubled by demons. Just imagine the condemning looks about that situation. What did THEY do wrong to cause a demon to attack a little girl? Demons had been as misunderstood then as now. Superstitiously and with great fear. Satan knows Jesus is making His rounds to crush the serpents' nasty and vile head. Contrast this to the woman's great need and her great faith. Great faith grows from great need. There are lots of people who know that they need something. But they don't know exactly what they need. Some goes for you and me, too. Try this, try that, like haphazard cooking, but nothing seems to satisfy. Most attention is just focused on what can fill some kind of need. But the truth is that there's a hole in the heart of our world only be filled by Jesus. Yes, great faith thrives from deep within great need. And, yes, our world has a great need. The Canaanite woman has faith, not just because she's desperate for help, but because she trusts Jesus as her ONLY help. Great faith is great because it recognizes our own great need, which comes with the Spirit's inner working. In this great faith we stay close to our Saviour time and time again. In fact it comes through life almost unconsciously, often when we think we're alone. Knowing we have need and trusting in Jesus to bring about what is needed. That's repentance. That's humility. That's great faith. So, why does Jesus seem to brush this Canaanite woman off? Why not welcome her in with open arms? He tells her He's about helping His own people 1st. Then compares her to a dog!/? Now, this isn't necessarily a nasty term here. Dogs didn't have the elevated status they do in our world now. But households did have pet dogs who ate the leftovers from the dinner table. Exactly what this woman is asking for! Licking up Crumbs from God's table! Jesus wants this to be said by this outsider in public for His OWN PEOPLE to hear! He welcomes her the best and most valid way by letting HER WORDS display her GREAT FAITH. Jesus loves this unique courageous woman. Her life shows us all that worthiness has nothing to do with faith. She is not worthy. The people around Jesus that day aren't worthy. The disciples aren't worthy. We are not worthy.

And that's the point of NOT trying to live in a selfish style. Worthiness [which is being good enough on your own] doesn't matter. Great faith doesn't require us to be worthy. Because great faith comes from the ONE who makes us worthy. That's what makes Jesus so amazing! He refuses to honour the discriminations religious people expect. He refuses to let the outer appearance and behaviour be the pedigree for love and acceptance. Jesus comes from the house of David and yet got scoffed at for coming from Nazareth, He ate with sinners and got called a glutton. He doesn't make His disciples follow the rules And NOW says a Canaanite woman with a demon infested daughter has GREAT FAITH! Nowhere better will Jesus give us GREAT FAITH than on Calvary's cross. While suffering and dying He will fully exposes the wicked twisted hearts of every person of the world. All of the evil is exposed in Jesus' vulnerable crucified body, It is wiped away in His Blood. All of it, gone.

The One Who dies an outcast and a criminal outside the city gates of His own holy city brings all nations together as ONE family in His Body. All people become His people in His shed Blood. Everyone baptized into Him are baptized into His Blood-soaked cross and Receive GREAT FAITH. Great faith keeps us in the one who died and we are worthy to stand before Him. We are worthy to stand in His place as His Body in the world.

We stand there with the Canaanite woman and her daughter healed of demons.

With her we eat the crumbs from the Master's Table.

Every time we dine at the Holy Communion rail.

Every time we share a meal with family, friends or strangers.

Every time we help someone who needs help.

Every time we show the face of Jesus in a hope-filled manner of living.

We are a people of peace and hope and faith – we are inheritors of grace and eternal life.

This gives us the confidence to ask God anything.

Ask Jesus for help every moment of every day.

His help is there anyway, but prayer keeps the conversation going coming from a mouth that reveals our forgiven heart that trusts with great faith.

And nothing we put into our bodies can change that.

Amen.

fall harvest

Z A A J D K I K O U G X F Z Z D X
N C M B M S N P U M P K I N O E E
W O W Y Z U Q U W E N F E A I E T
O R H O M X Y R L C L O Y P C S T
R N N P L T D I G X O O H P H E T
B T I B V L P X C Z O T X L I L H
N H H X N F E V U C H B I E L P I
C R S T A I H Y N M C A Y B L P P
K B A E R M N Z M X S L K T Y A I
M E L K W S E V A E L L W T X Y T
Z H N N E U F R O S T K E L B N W
T G N I K C I P E L P P A V D N A
Q H R R V J R E D A E L R E E H C
V Z E F K S N H S I A I R B Z O X
V J D I X A H W O Q Q M I Z D J O
R N X E G N A R O I U L M C G N H
O A U T U M N V H I B E R N A T E

chipmunk

yellow

apple picking

cheerleader

school

frost

football

leafpile

hibernate

acorn

brown

red

orange

rake

leaves

johnny appleseed

chilly

autumn

pumpkin

apple