



Johnsville United Methodist Church

Union Bridge, MD

Our mission is to nurture the members of the congregation in developing a personal relationship with God and to share His word and His love with the larger community.

PRAISE, WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION

August 16, 2020

WELCOME

PRELUDE

“We’ve a story to Tell to the Nations” (Nichol)

* OPENING HYMN

“There Is Something About That Name”

UMH 171

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!
There’s just something about that name!
Master, Savior, Jesus!
Like the fragrance after the rain.
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!
Let all heaven and earth proclaim:
Kings and kingdoms shall all pass away,
but there’s something about that name!

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Remember the many acts of God’s faithful Love.

People: We believe the promises of the eternal One and sing praises to God.

OPENING PRAYER

Self-revealing God, we have come to know more of you even in the contemplation of the stories we have heard before in our childhood. We come not only to hear your word but to seek the gifts of the Spirit to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Let It Start in Me” (Gaither)

Sherry Hohl, soloist

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Gracious Lord, we long to be forgiving people, but often we let our anger and resentment get in the way of becoming your instruments of mercy. We long to see in the Canaanite woman a child of God worthy of mercy and compassion. But we fear our own deep seated prejudices might lead us to dismiss her out of hand, as Jesus did before us. We want our hearts open, O God, to those who are different from ourselves. We want our hearts open when you call us into a detour to expand your mission. Open us and pour your spirit of peace into us, wash us clean and place in us a right, and clean spirit. We ask for healing for our loved ones, neighbors, and friends. We ask for your Spirit of peace to go into the world and bring calmness and hope where there is unrest. Be with those in leadership all over the world that they will lead as you call them to lead. We pray all these things in Jesus name who taught us to pray by saying these words...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Amen.

* HYMN

“I’m So Glad Jesus Lifted Me”

TFWS 2151

1. I’m so glad, Jesus lifted me,
I’m so glad, Jesus lifted me,
I’m so glad, Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

2. Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,
Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,
Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

3. When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
when I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
when I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

EPISTLE LESSON: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

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.

²God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

²⁹for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

³⁰Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience,

³¹so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

³²For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 15:10-28

Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.”

¹²Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?”

¹³He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.

¹⁴Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.”

¹⁵But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.”

¹⁶Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding?

¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?

¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles.

¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander.

²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

²²Just 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.”

²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.”

²⁴He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.”

²⁶He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”

²⁷She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”

²⁸Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

This text contains stern instruction from Jesus. The Pharisees and religious scholars walked all the way from Jerusalem to criticize and question Jesus' ministry. He must have become quite the threat to them at that point for them to make the trip. His popularity was growing. They questioned the reason for his disciples "playing fast and loose with the rules." (*The Message*, by Eugene H. Peterson, Matthew 15:1-2) Jesus gave it right back to them pointing out, that they had played it fast and loose with God's commands.

Matthew 15:10-12, "Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: ¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." Jesus was sent by God on a mission to teach us the way. He was not messing around. His time was limited. This sets the stage for today's lesson about a true underdog, Jesus and the underdog.

The story starts out with Jesus having just finished talking with a crowd of people, including the Pharisees and religious scholars. He left that place to go to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Tyre is actually an island off the Mediterranean coast with a siege ramp built by Alexander the Great which leads back to the main land. Sidon is north about 22 miles.

They have not gotten comfortable when the Canaanite woman, not far from that area came running up to them shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' Jesus didn't pay any attention to her. He just kept walking. He was on a mission. This woman was considered more than just 'bad news.' She was thought of as vile! Israelites truly looked down on Canaanites. They believed in pagan agricultural gods like: Baal - giver of rain; Mot - god of death and sterility. If you were sterile in that society it was like being dead, because you could not reproduce. You were of no value! Canaanites were judged very harshly because they practiced sexuality as a cult. Israelites regarded Canaanites as abominable!

Even though Jesus did not answer her, she kept running after him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' The disciples wanted her gone! They urged Jesus to send her away. Jesus answered by saying, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Jesus understood his ministry at that point to be with God's chosen ones from the House of Israel who until now lacked leadership. Jesus promoted the biblical doctrine of the elect, those who are chosen.

The Canaanite woman ran to Jesus, knelt at his feet, saying, "Lord, please help me." This was an extremely human moment in Jesus ministry. Let us keep in mind, that he was fully divine, but also fully human. In this human moment Jesus answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' We might wonder why Jesus would answer in such a way. He refers to himself in this response as the children's food, the bread of life. This response makes reference to the feeding of the 5,000 at the miracle meal which was a sign of the final banquet when God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven. But at this moment, Jesus only sees himself as the bread of life for the children of Israel not all of God's children. Never the less, it would not be fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs!

She was very much considered lower than a dog - she was an "underdog!" This woman was not only a Canaanite woman, which would put her at a disadvantage, but she was also a woman who

did not have a husband. If she did, she would have not been called the Canaanite Woman, but instead So-in-So's wife. This woman doesn't have any relatives that we know, except her daughter. The reference Jesus made to her being a dog was more of a slanderous comment than we understand in this age. The word dog designates an animal that Jewish folk, did not keep in their homes. The only dogs they might have had, were wild dogs that wondered around having no purpose. The term dog was used in a gentile area, where they did keep dogs in their homes, so that the word could have been used to describe her, as a household animal, but it is doubtful.

It is amazing that she shows no anger or resentment at being referred to as a dog. She answered with wisdom, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' There is something quite odd about this account compared to the others surrounding it. The usual pattern is, that Jesus receives a comment or question from someone in the crowd, often a hostile or opposing question regarding his identity. Then Jesus responds proving who he is and whose he is.

This story is so different, because it is not someone from the crowd who responds in a hostile, or opposing manner, but instead, it is Jesus himself. The response of wisdom comes from this nobody, this underdog who knows just who Jesus is. She proves this by calling him "Lord." She knows that he is the master incarnate, and refers to him as 'Master.' It is this Woman who sheds insight as to God's mission through Jesus.

Matthew 15:28, said, "Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish. And her daughter was healed instantly. Great was her faith!" She should not have had faith coming from her background. But this woman, demonstrated her faith by using the language of the Psalms to address Jesus.

This woman emerges from nowhere to highlight three points:

1. God has a plan for salvation!
This story proves that the grace of God's salvation will be extended to all God's creation, and for some it will be in a mysterious way, just like it was for the woman of Canaan.
2. This woman's faith was indeed great! Unlike doubting, "Prove it to me - Peter."

She did not question Jesus identity.

She believed in him without ever seeing him before that moment.

This is an example of God's plan for salvation that even those who have not seen Jesus might believe. Folks this is us!

3. This is a story that challenges the sexism, racism, and prejudices of all types including political, economic and ethnicity!

God's divine plan for the salvation of God's creation is design for inclusively not exclusivity!

We need to challenge ourselves to discover whom it is that we might unconsciously refer to as "others", or "those people." We need to understand that there is a bigger picture of God's salvation that extends to all of our brothers and sisters and we are called to participate in that

plan. Our Christian discipleship is a verb not a noun. We are to include and extend God's grace to all God's creations even folks outside the margins of our society. We have work to do inward and outward. Let us pray for the courage and wisdom to live out our discipleship as God will it! Amen.

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Many thanks for your faithfulness in supporting the ministries of the church.

As an act of worship, please consider keeping current in your tithes and offerings. Even though the church building is closed, we still have financial obligations we need to meet. The mailbox will be checked daily. The address is: Johnsville United Methodist Church, 11106 Green Valley Road, Union Bridge, MD 21791

* DOXOLOGY

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, you are our help in the midst of need and danger. Bless our gifts, tithes, and offerings this day, that they may find their way to those who feel hopeless and without resource. May our gifts be a sign of your hope and love, and may the people we help find their way to safety. Amen.

* CLOSING HYMN

"We Are All One in Mission"

TFWS 2243

1. We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.
A single great commission
compels us from above
to plan and work together
that all may know Christ's love.

2. We are all called for service,
to witness in God's name.
Our ministries are different;
Our purpose is the same:
To touch the lives of others
By God's surprising grace,
So every folk and nation may
Feel God's warm embrace.

4. Now let us be united,
and let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel
for God's redeeming Word.
We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.

* BENEDICTION

Let us go forth looking and listening for the ways that Jesus is calling us to expand the mission and ministry for His glory. Amen.

* POSTLUDE

"Go Tell It on the Mountain" (Afro-American)