

OSLER MENNONITE CHURCH
Sunday Morning Worship August 16, 2020

Have Mercy On Us!

Worship Leader: Dave Feick Sermon: "The View from Under the Table and The View from the Church Mower" by Patty Friesen and Katherine Penner Sound: Stephanie Siemens Song Leaders: Kathryn Janzen, Loretta Sawatzky Pianist: Naomi Schellenberg Children's Time: Nora Pederberg
Ushers: Lloyd Sawatzky, John Gascho

Prelude
Welcome, Announcements

Call to Worship: Psalm 67

Leader: O God, show us your kindness and bless us, and make your face smile on us!

People: For then the earth will acknowledge your ways, and all the nations will know of your power to save.

Leader: Let the people's praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you! Let the nations shout and sing for joy,

People: for you dispense true justice to the world - you guide the nations of the earth!

Leader: Let the peoples shout and sing for joy; let all the peoples praise you!

People: The land has given its harvest: God, our God, has blessed us. May God bless us and may God be revered even to the ends of the earth!

Hymn: Blue/HWB #521 "Come thou fount" (on the next page)

Children's Time: Nora Pederberg

Offering Prayer and Offertory music

Sharing Joys and Concerns/Prayer of the Church

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 (Inclusive Bible)

Thus says Yahweh, "Do what is right! Work for justice! For my liberation is about to come, and my justice is about to be revealed. And the foreigners who join themselves to me, ministering to me, loving the name of Yahweh and worshipping me - all who observe the Sabbath and do not profane it, and cling to 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 acceptable on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples!"

521

Come, thou fount

NETTLETON 87. 87D

1 Come, thou fount of ev-'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to
 2 Here I raise my Eb-en - e - zer, hith-er by thy
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con -

sing thy grace. Streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for
 help I'm come, and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly
 strained to be! Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my

songs of loud - est praise. Teach me some me - lo - dious
 to ar - rive at home. Je - sus sought me when a
 wan - d'ring heart to thee. Prone to wan - der, Lord, I

son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove. Praise the
 stran - ger, wan - d'ring from the fold of God. He, to
 feel it, prone to leave the God I love. Here's my

mount, I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.
 res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
 heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

44

The love of God

LOVE OF GOD 88. 88. 86. 86 with refrain

1 The love of God is great - er far than tongue or
 2 When an - cient time shall pass a - way, and hu - man
 3 Could we with ink the o - cean fill and were the

pen can ev - er tell; it goes be - yond the high - est
 thrones and king - doms fall; when all on earth re - fuse to
 skies of parch - ment made; were ev - 'ry stalk on earth a

star, and reach - es to the low - est hell. The guilt - y
 pray, on rocks and hills and moun - tains call; God's love, so
 quill, and ev - 'ry - one a scribe by trade; to write the

pair, bowed down with care, God gave his Son to win; his err - ing
 sure shall still en - dure, all mea - sure - less and strong; re - deem - ing
 love of God a - bove would drain the o - cean dry; nor could the

child he rec - on - ciled, and par - doned from his sin.
 grace to Ad-am's race the saints' and an - gels' song.
 scroll con-tain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky.

Refrain

O love of God, how rich and pure! How mea - sure -

less and strong! It shall for - ev - er - more en -

dure the saints' and an - gels' song.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 15:21-28 (Inclusive Bible)

Jesus left there and departed for the district of Tyre and Sidon. It happened that a Canaanite woman living in that area came and cried out to Jesus, "Heir to the house of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is horribly

demon-possessed. Jesus gave her no word of response. The disciples came up and repeatedly said to him, "Please get rid of her! She keeps calling after us."

Finally Jesus turned to the woman and said, "My mission is only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." She then prostrated herself before him with the plea, "Help me, Rabbi!" He answered, "But it isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." "True, Rabbi," she replied, "but even the dogs get to eat the scraps that fall from the table."

Jesus then said in reply, "Woman, you have great faith! Your prayer will come to pass." At that very moment her daughter was healed.

Scripture Response:

The word of God in scripture.

The word of God among us.

The word of God within us.

All: Thanks be to God!

Hymn: Blue/HWB #151 "Marvelous grace of our loving Lord"

151 Marvelous grace of our loving Lord

MARVELOUS GRACE 99. 99 with refrain

1 Mar-vel-ous grace of our lov - ing Lord, grace that ex-ceeds our
 2 Sin and des-pair, like the sea waves cold, threat-en the soul with
 3 Mar-vel-ous, in - fi-nite, match-less grace, free - ly be-stowed on

sin and our guilt, yon - der on Cal - va - ry's mount out-poured,
 in - fi - nite loss. Grace that is great - er, yes, grace un - told,
 all who be - lieve. You that are long - ing to see his face,

there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt. Grace, grace,
 points to the re - fuge, the might - y cross. Mar - vel-ous grace,
 will you this mo - ment his grace re - ceive?

God's grace, grace that will par - don and cleanse with - in. Grace,
 in - fi - nite grace, Mar - vel-ous

grace, God's grace, grace that is great - er than all our sin.
 grace, in - fi - nite grace,

Sermon: **The View from Under the Table: Matthew 15:21-28** by **Patty Friesen**

Last week in The Great British Baking Show when Candice won for her asparagus quiche tarts and amazing chocolate cake, she said, “I’m good enough.” I thought that was a rather strange and obvious thing to say - of course she’s good enough - she won Season 4 of The Great British Baking Show. But I wondered if Candice thinks she’s not good enough most of the time and it takes winning a baking competition to feel like she is good enough.

The Canaanite woman tells Jesus that she is good enough to receive healing for her daughter - not on the basis of what she has done or who she is but because God sees her as good enough. Even though Jesus says he was only sent to the children of Israel, she asserts that even the dogs eat the food that the children drop under the table. She claims the generosity of the Hebrew God for herself and Jesus applauds her faith and self-confidence. It is a short and powerful theological tete-a-tete between the two of them that we will dig into a little deeper.

The woman addresses Jesus with the Hebrew language of faith and worship from the Psalms: “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David”. Jesus ignores her, and the disciples are likewise unsympathetic. Jesus responds to their request to send her away, by repeating his restriction that his mission is only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The woman is undeterred, and in the kneeling posture of Christian worship continues to address her psalm-like petition to Jesus as “Lord.”

For the first time Jesus addresses her directly. The crudeness of the analogy that compares Jews to children and Gentiles to dogs presupposes a Gentile setting, since Jews did not typically have dogs as household pets. Seemingly unresentful of the analogy, the woman persists, and within the framework of Jesus’ statement continues to plead her case—not that the “dogs” can eat later, but that they receive “crumbs” even as the “children” are being fed. Continuing to address Jesus as “Lord,” she struggles with his reluctance to help just as the petitioners in the Psalms struggle with the One they addressed as Lord. Such persistent struggle in prayer Jesus designates as great faith (in contrast to 14:31), and immediately heals the woman’s daughter.

Taken as a realistic report, the story raises difficult and inappropriate questions. Why is Jesus so harsh and offensive to this person? Does she finally best him in an argument and get him to do something he did not want to do? How did a Gentile come to have faith in Jesus as “Son of David”? What would it mean for someone

to have (Christian!) faith in this setting? What happened to the woman? Is she now a disciple? Does she participate in a Christian community? Does she now keep the Law, as well as Jesus' teachings, as Matthean disciples are instructed to do? Does Jesus here already rescind his declaration of 10:6, so that the mission to the Gentiles is already opened by this act?

The woman emerges from the story and disappears again into it, to embody and communicate three Matthean points concerning the meaning of God's saving history and the meaning of human faith. 1. God has a plan for salvation history in which salvation is offered first to the Jews (during Jesus' ministry, 10:6; 15:24) then broadened to include all nations after Easter (28:16-20). God is not enslaved by any theology, even one announced by God's Son (see 24:22). Theology, valuable and necessary as it is, need not stand in the way of divine compassion or human faith.

2. Worshipful struggle with the God is not unbelief, but here pronounced to be great faith. The contrast between her "great faith" and Peter's "little faith" only a few verses earlier can hardly be accidental. Had the woman said something like "If you are the Son of David, command my daughter to be healed," she would be in the same category as Peter, even if she had dared to proceed homeward on the assumption that the exorcism had taken place. Matthew has much to teach us on the nature of faith. We tend to assume we know what faith is, our main problem being that we do not have enough of it. Matthew's stories address our false assumptions about the meaning of faith itself.

3. It should not be lost that the example of such victorious faith is a Gentile woman, doubly an outsider. The story serves to challenge the sexism and racism of readers, ancient and modern, who tend not only to consider those of different gender and ethnicity as "the other," somehow more distant from God and the divine order and plan than our own group. Readers, ancient and modern, tend to identify with Jesus and his affirmation of God's order and plan. The story invites readers to place themselves in the role of the other, to struggle not only with God but also with our own perceptions of the other, and pronounces such enduring struggle to be great faith.

I love this little story from the perspective and view of those under the table, on the margins and in places of humility that Jesus raises up as those closest to the kingdom of God. Katherine Penner has an

interesting view from the humble position of the church mower where she spent the summer volunteering for our church and she will fill out the application of this biblical story....

“The View from the Church Mower” By Katherine Penner

When I arrived home in April after my semester of school was unexpectedly cut short, I was not feeling optimistic about the summer or my so-called holiday. I feared that being home would be terribly painful without the normal opportunities to connect with my various communities in Saskatchewan. Drawing on Patty’s words, I felt that my 5 months at home were not going to be good enough. However, while I did not return to my previous summer job, which I had been rather looking forward to, I did find enough to fill my days and it turns out that enough isn’t necessarily as disappointing of a word as it is often used.

My schedule of “enough” has included volunteering at the Warman Thrift shop, babysitting a delightful one year old, and mowing the lawn here at Osler Mennonite Church with the help of my brother. Although these tasks have not filled my time or my bank account quite to the degree that other jobs may have, the whole thing was in fact enough. When I agreed to take on the responsibility of mowing at church all summer, I did not think of this weekly task as being very much, and certainly not as really church work in the same way that I’ve seen many others working diligently to keep our church community connected and flourishing despite being apart. Mowing seemed to be a necessary job but one of a lower importance than the many others that also needed to be completed. Over the many weeks of mowing however, I have increasingly found more value in the task and grown to appreciate the time I spend on our yard each week.

While not everyone in our congregation has visited church in person this summer, many of you that either live in Osler or have stopped by the church have also stopped to say hi while I work or have complimented the appearance of the lawn. These interactions have been incredibly meaningful to me and have affirmed that though a humble job, the mowing is noticed and appreciated. Furthermore I have found that the time I spend provides space for quiet and reflective thinking, like a sort of meditation practice. While it may seem odd, I’ve grown to feel that mowing the church lawn is an act of worship. While the mower itself is extremely loud, the repetitive movements and the muscle memory developed over many passes of the yard free up space in my mind to notice things like the beautiful mushrooms that grow under the trees on the north border

and to contemplate the many ways the people of OMC have shaped my life and given me many opportunities. While remaining physically distant from my church family, I have certainly not felt spiritually distant. And thus I can say that the view provided to me from the church mower has been a good enough way to spend my summer.

Sung Benediction: Blue/HWB #76 “Praise, I will praise you Lord” (on next page)

Spoken Benediction: O God, show us your kindness and bless us, and make your face smile on us! For then the earth will acknowledge your ways, and all the nations will know of your power to save. Amen. Go in peace.

Je louerai l'Éternel

PRAISING/ADORING

(Praise, I will praise you, Lord) 76

F C7 Dm B^b C7 F

1 Je loue-rai l'E - ter - nel de tout mon coeur, je
 1 Praise, I will praise you, Lord,
 2 Love, I will love you, Lord with all my heart. O
 3 Serve, I will serve you, Lord

B^b C A/C# Dm Gm G G7

ra - con - te - rai tou - tes tes mer - veilles, je chan - te - rai ton
 God, I will tell the won - ders of your ways, and glo - ri - fy your

C sus4 C F C7 Dm B^b C7 F

nom. Je loue-rai l'E - ter - nel de tout mon coeur, je
 name. Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart. In

B^b C A/C# Dm Gm⁹/B^b C7 F

fe - rai de toi le su - jet de ma joie. Al - le - lu - ia!
 you I will find the source of all my joy. Al - le - lu - ia!

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