



KNOX CHURCH, DUNEDIN

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

10am – Sunday 16 August 2020

Music to prepare us for worship “*Entrée-Messe Basse*” Rene Vierne (1878-1918), “*Prelude*” Cesar Franck,
“*With Jesus I will travel*” music by Mons Leidvin Takle played by Karen Knudson

The bell sounds, quietness, welcome

Music of approach “*Amarilli*” Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612) Alex McAdam/solo

Call to worship (based on Psalm 67)

Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou. May God be with you.

Ma Ihowa koe e manaaki. May God bless you.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,

for you judge the peoples with equity

and guide the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you!

Hymn

(tune Westchase) CH4 134 - Brian Wren

1 Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory,
living, loving God:
Hail and Hosanna!
Bring many names!

2 Strong mother God,
working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation,
genius at play:
Hail and Hosanna,
strong mother God!

3 Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
saying no to falsehood and unkindness,
crying out for justice,
giving all you have:
Hail and Hosanna,
young, growing God!

4 Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing,
everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna,
great, living God!

Prayer, assurance of forgiveness –

E te whanau, in Christ we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

Kia tau te rangimarie o te Karaiti ki runga i a koutou. May the peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Children

Hymn

Desmond Tutu

Goodness is stronger than evil;
love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness,
life is stronger than death.
Victory is ours; victory is ours
through God who loves us.

Readings – Listen for God's Word to us ...

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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church **Thanks be to God**

Music and art

"In the bleak Midwinter" text Christina Rossetti, music Bob Chilcott sung by Alex McAdam
The Canaanite Woman asks for healing for her daughter, Ilyas Basim Khuri Bazzi Rahib;
Woman of Canaan, Sadao Watanabe; *Canaanite Woman*, Cerezo Barredo

Matthew 15:21-28

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 Jesus Christ **Praise to Christ the Word**

Reflection “Jesus the outsider reminded of his purpose”

There has been much discussion about the extent to which COVID-19 will change how we live. Can the pandemic prompt us to live more justly and compassionately? Will it help us care and connect more? Many commentators are trying to understand what is happening in terms of generational shifts. The conformism of the 1950s that moved into the freedom and liberation of the 1960s, that promised a more open society. Such a society also seemed to produce an individualism, that became more extreme, embodied in economic approaches that emphasised individual opportunity and individual achievement. Some suggested that 60 years of such individualism weakened our sense of community and our capacity to act together. Such individualism became so troubling that a quiet rebellion began to emerge, a rebellion that began to emphasise connection and interdependence and community - an emphasis fed by the need to address major global challenges like climate change and the relocation of millions of people. So, perhaps, COVID-19 is not bringing fresh change, but deepening an emerging rebellion, highlighting interdependence and the need for collaboration.

I have noticed these commentators make no reference to the influence of indigenous cultures, with their emphasis on community and connecting with the earth, with each other and with Atua. I wonder if that has been part of why New Zealanders have been able to act together better. We have learned that trust is precious, trust in each other to respect the safety of the other, trust in government to lead sensibly, trust in scientific advisors. What is our role as Christians in this time? What might our faith contribute? We have a store of wisdom and centuries of experience that speak of community, of how community is built, and what community looks like. We have a resource of stories that inspire inclusion and proclaim equity, highlighting the plight of people who are vulnerable. And we have a living Christ whose Spirit empowers us to live his way day by day.

Let's dig into the wisdom of the ages in the spirit of Christ. The story of the Canaanite woman. A startling story because it seems to present a misogynistic and racist Jesus. Jesus was entering foreign territory, passing from his Jewish homeland of Galilee to the predominantly Gentile non-Jewish territory of Tyre and Sidon. This is the only encounter Jesus has with a non-Jew apart from the centurion whose servant is paralysed. In this era, a close encounter with a foreigner, especially a foreign woman in a public meeting, would defile Jesus. Just before this reading, Jesus has taught his disciples that only what proceeds from the heart can defile. And in this territory, Jewish people were poorer and less numerous than Gentiles. So in this encounter Jesus is the outsider, the foreigner and the woman is the insider, the one who knows. She was desperate. Her daughter was unwell. She had heard that Jesus healed. And we know how deeply compassionate Jesus could be. Yet when she cried out Jesus did not answer her at all saying that he had only come for Jewish people, not Gentiles. So she knelt down and asked again – “Please help me.”

And in what seemed an utterly ethnocentric comment, Jesus said - but what is for Jewish people is not meant for Gentiles. Then comes her winning retort – “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.” She was effectively saying - “Well, you might save the food for Jewish people but can you at least give me crumbs.” And so she converts Jesus, opens him out, turns him around, reminds him of who he is and the scope of his calling. “You are Lord, the son of David.” And in that moment, through her intervention, we see a door open in how we can relate to God, a door that all we Gentiles have been able to walk through ever since.

In this foreign land with who was for him a foreign woman, with strict rules of separation, when Jesus was the outsider, his eyes are opened to the breadth of what he is called to. The reign of God excludes no one. This is the gospel, and it's been there for a while. It's there in Isaiah – “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.”

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Let me turn quickly to speak of the church. One of the saddest outcomes of secularism, the separating of the realm of religion from the wider society, is congregations which have turned in on themselves and focused on the people who already belong. Forty years ago when I was first a minister, I had on average 35 funerals and 16 weddings a year. At least half of

those were in the church building. So the congregation never imaged, the church building was their preserve. As that interaction has dramatically dropped, I have noticed congregations imagine that they own their building, that it is for them, and what is said of the building can also be said of other aspects of the church's life. We are only stewards, managers. The words of Isaiah are forever – my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. And when the society around us tries to build moats, cutting us off, we need to keep filling them in, so people come and go, freely and our calling is to express the overflowing love of God, called grace. Even when we feel out of place, foreigners here.

Over the last week, two groups have thanked us for being able to use “your building”, and have been surprised when I said – it's not our building. It's your building. We are looking after it for you. And so we stand against our society's ideology of individualistic private ownership. We gain comfort from a Jesus who himself needed to be converted to such openness. He needed help to see his bias. And it happened when he was reminded of who he was and what he was for, just as we need constant reminding that the house of God is a house of prayer for all peoples. The New Testament describes a journey of people learning how to be open, of being turned from ourselves, from confined company, towards the inclusion and honouring of all God's people, continually overcoming prejudice. What a gift the life of Jesus. What a gift the Canaanite woman.

Hymn

(tune Slane) - Carolyn Gillette

1 She came to Jesus from outside the fold —

Canaanite woman! Persistent and bold!

Looking to Jesus, she wanted to see one who would help her and set her child free.

2 Claiming a blessing, a touch of God's grace,
she knew God's love was not bounded by place.

Jesus, you listened, debated — then healed —

for in her asking, her faith was revealed.

3 God, you still bless those who seek you in prayer.

You welcome dreamers who faithfully dare.

In Christ, now risen, your mercy extends:

those on the outside are welcomed as friends.

Prayer for others and the Lord's Prayer

Anglican prayer book

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

For the kingdom, the power, and the

glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tōu Ingoa.
Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.
Kia meatia tāu e pai ai
ki runga ki te whenua,
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.

Hōmai ki a mātou āiane
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.
Murua ō mātou hara,
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.
Āua hoki mātou e kawea kia
whakawaia;
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:
Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha,
me te korōria, Āke āke āke. Āmine.

Minute for Mission – Kate Bonnè

Hymn

(tune Angelus) CH4 717 - Frederick Pratt Green

1 O Christ, the healer, we have come
to pray for health, to plead for
friends.

How can we fail to be restored,
when reached by love that never
ends?

2 How strong, O Lord, are our desires,
how weak our knowledge of
ourselves!
Release in us those healing truths

unconscious pride resists or shelves.

3 In conflicts that destroy our health
we diagnose the world's disease;
our common life declares our ills:
is there no cure, O Christ, for these?
4 Grant that we all, made one in faith,
in your community may find
the wholeness that, enriching us,
shall reach the whole of humankind.

Dedication of offering – *Please place your offerings in the offering bags held out for you at the door as you leave. Please do this as soon as you are able.*

Blessing

Music for our leaving “*Finlandia/ Be still my soul*” Opus 28, Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

played by Karen Knudson

Serving today

Leader of worship – Kerry Enright

Children and youth ministries – Jordan Redding

Organist and Choir Director – Karen Knudson
Reader – Rachel Tombs
Leader in prayer – Peter Wishart
Welcoming team – David Richardson’s team
Counting team – Howard Smith’s team

There is a **hearing loop system** for people with hearing aids.

Notices have been emailed to people for whom we have email addresses. They are also shown on the screens at the conclusion of the service. For those who have not received the emailed notices, printed copies can be uplifted from the table at the rear of the church.

In relation to your monetary offering, you may:

- *Make regular automatic payments (which are tax deductible) - contact Helen Thew at plannedgiving@knoxchurch.net*
- *Give online to the Church’s bank account at 03 0903 0016425 00 - our charity number for tax rebate purposes is #CC52318.*
- *Give at the conclusion of the service.*

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