

12th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, August 16, 2026

Introduction to the day

In Isaiah we hear that God's house shall be a house of prayer for all people and that God will gather the outcasts of Israel. The Canaanite woman in today's gospel is a Gentile, an outsider, who is unflinching in her request that Jesus heal her daughter. As Jesus commends her bold faith, how might our church extend its mission to those on the margins of society? In our gathering around word and meal we receive strength to be signs of comfort, healing, and justice for those in need.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

The prophet calls upon Israel to do justice in view of God's imminent intervention to save. Righteousness and obedience define who belongs to the Israelite community—not race, nationality, or any other category.

PSALM: Psalm 67

Let all the peoples praise you, O God. (Ps. 67:3)

SECOND READING: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

God has not rejected Israel. Rather, the call and gifts of God are irrevocable so that, while all have been disobedient, God has mercy upon all.

GOSPEL: Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus teaches his disciples that true purity is a matter of the heart rather than outward religious observances. Almost immediately, this teaching is tested when a woman considered to be a religious outsider approaches him for help.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - Breaking Boundaries

Jesus did not stay within the boundaries of his time, much to the frustration of authorities. He broke through not just geographic boundaries but religious, ethnic, and social boundaries as well.

Jesus intentionally broke geographic and ethnic boundaries in visiting the Canaanite communities of Tyre and Sidon. Canaanites and Jews had often been in conflict, so it was not that surprising when the disciples attempted to prevent a Canaanite woman from seeing Jesus. She was breaking boundaries herself in asking that Jesus heal her child. Jesus' first response seems harsh, but as the woman persisted and acknowledged him as "Lord" (something the disciples had been slow to grasp), he healed her child.

In this encounter, Jesus demonstrated that God's love cannot be held back by boundaries created by humans based on who we are, where we are from, what we have done, our background, our position in society, and more. God's grace and restoration are available to all, with no exceptions.

And yet, history is filled with accounts of bias, discrimination, oppression, segregation, persecution, and genocide. Tragically, this continues today in a multitude of ways and a multitude of places.

As present-day disciples, we are called to follow Christ in breaking boundaries, challenging biases, and welcoming all to celebrate God's love at the font and the table. So, what boundaries do we need to break to work for peace and proclaim the good news? How are we and our congregations fighting bias, discrimination, oppression, and persecution wherever we can? How are we persistently asking Christ to heal and restore fractured communities and nations around the world?

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

For believers around the world who stream to your holy mountain, that all be united in faith and harmony in the body of Christ. Let your church on earth be a witness to the beloved community of your heavenly kingdom. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For your wondrous creation, that it thrives and flourishes as you intend. Raise up wise stewards to defend the natural world against carelessness and destruction. Safeguard endangered species and their habitats. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For the nations of the world and all in authority, that they heed the cry of the outcast and ensure care for the most vulnerable. Give wisdom to leaders of countries, congregations, and communities that they lead and serve justly. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For all who are lonely, grieving, or struggling with chronic pain, that they find comfort, community, and hope. Send relief to all who struggle with illness of any kind especially Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Claude Jeannotte, Lillian Jeannotte, Glenda Panke, Cheryl Renaud, Joanne Robinson, Bernadette Schueneman, Adam Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell, Roy Zadow, those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For this congregation, for visitors and those new to this faith community, that all may recognize the presence of Christ in each new face. Draw this community together in love and strengthen it in unwavering faith. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For the saints before us whose work is done, that their faithful example continues to direct your church. May their witness remind us that your gifts and calling are irrevocable, whether in life or death. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 182)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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 and ever. Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

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Announcements:

Sunday, August 16th – 12th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Grace – Holy Communion

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: Brenda Collins;

Reader: Haylee Felhaber

Communion Assistants: Carl and Rachel Dittburner

Bell Ringer: Zig Mintha; **Elevator:** Claude Jeannotte;

Head Usher: Zig Mintha

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Holy Communion

Monday, August 17th

9: 00 AM to 3:00 PM - Quilting at Grace

Tuesday, August 18th

10:00 AM – Bible Study

7:00 PM – Property Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 19th

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM – Cuddles and Hugs Quilting.

11:00 AM – Grace Cemetery – Burial – Roy Raeder

Saturday, August 22nd

1:00 PM - Worship at Fairfields

Sunday, August 23rd – 13th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Grace – Service of the Word

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: Marc and Angela Mercier;

Reader: Victoria Neuman

Bell Ringer: Robert Pape; **Elevator:** Claude Jeannotte;

Head Usher: Zig Mintha

10:30 AM – Bonnechere – Service of the Word

Cemetery Service

Information for the September GAB is due this week. The week of August 17th.

St. John's, Bonnechere's Cemetery Service on August 23rd, 2026 (4th Sunday) followed by a potluck luncheon. As usual the service will be in the church and members can go up to the Cemetery before or after the service.

Fellowship - August 30, 2026

The Ladies Aid would like to invite everyone to an "**End of Summer Potluck Social**" on August 30, 2026, in the Fellowship Hall following the 9:00am church service. Hot dogs and condiments and refreshments will

be provided. Please bring your favourite salad or dessert or any other food item you might like for this event. The Ladies Aid will be at the church prior to the service to receive your potluck items and to put them out to share for this social time. Everyone is welcome. Please join us on this fifth Sunday in August.