



WOMAN,
GREAT
IS YOUR
FAITH!

MATTHEW 15:28

Sunday, August 16, 2026
12th Sunday after Pentecost



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

PRELUDE

Gavotte

Samuel Wesley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Isaiah 56, 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.

Red hymnal - **ELW** - Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Blue hymnal - **ACS** - All Creation Sings

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

We confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;
ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.
Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

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.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

READING: Psalm 67

The Psalm is read responsively.

- ¹ May God be merciful to us and bless us;
may the light of God's face shine upon us.
- ² **Let your way be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.**
- ³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
- ⁴ **Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations on earth.**
- ⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
- ⁶ **The earth has brought forth its increase;
God, our own God, has blessed us.**
- ⁷ May God give us blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



The holy gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 14:21-33

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.

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² 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.”

²³ 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.” ²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶ He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

APOSTLES' CREED

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

#1 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. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 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. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 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. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for medical staff, health care professionals, and first responders; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. God of grace.
hear our prayer.

We know that all people matter in your eyes and you know their cares and concerns, their hopes and joys. We pray for those whose needs are known to us.

We pray for those who grieve, especially the family and friends of:

- Aileen, co-worker of Lisa M, who died 7/30

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Andy C, nephew of Sue T, who is hospitalized
- Dottie, mother of Alli O, who is hospitalized
- Pr. Amy Walter-Peterson as she recuperates following anticipated hip replacement surgery on 8/14
- Matt S, friend of Chris M, who is recovering from cochlear implant surgery
- Lou K, former member, who has been diagnosed with a brain disease
- Mark F, who is recovering from surgery on 8/5

Hear the names of those we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace
hear our prayer.

Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you, O God, through Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Share the peace in a way that cares for friend and neighbor. If you worship virtually, share the peace through the comments section or text.

OFFERING

Thank you for your offerings that support the ongoing ministry that we share. Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry or scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page.



OFFERING OF MUSIC

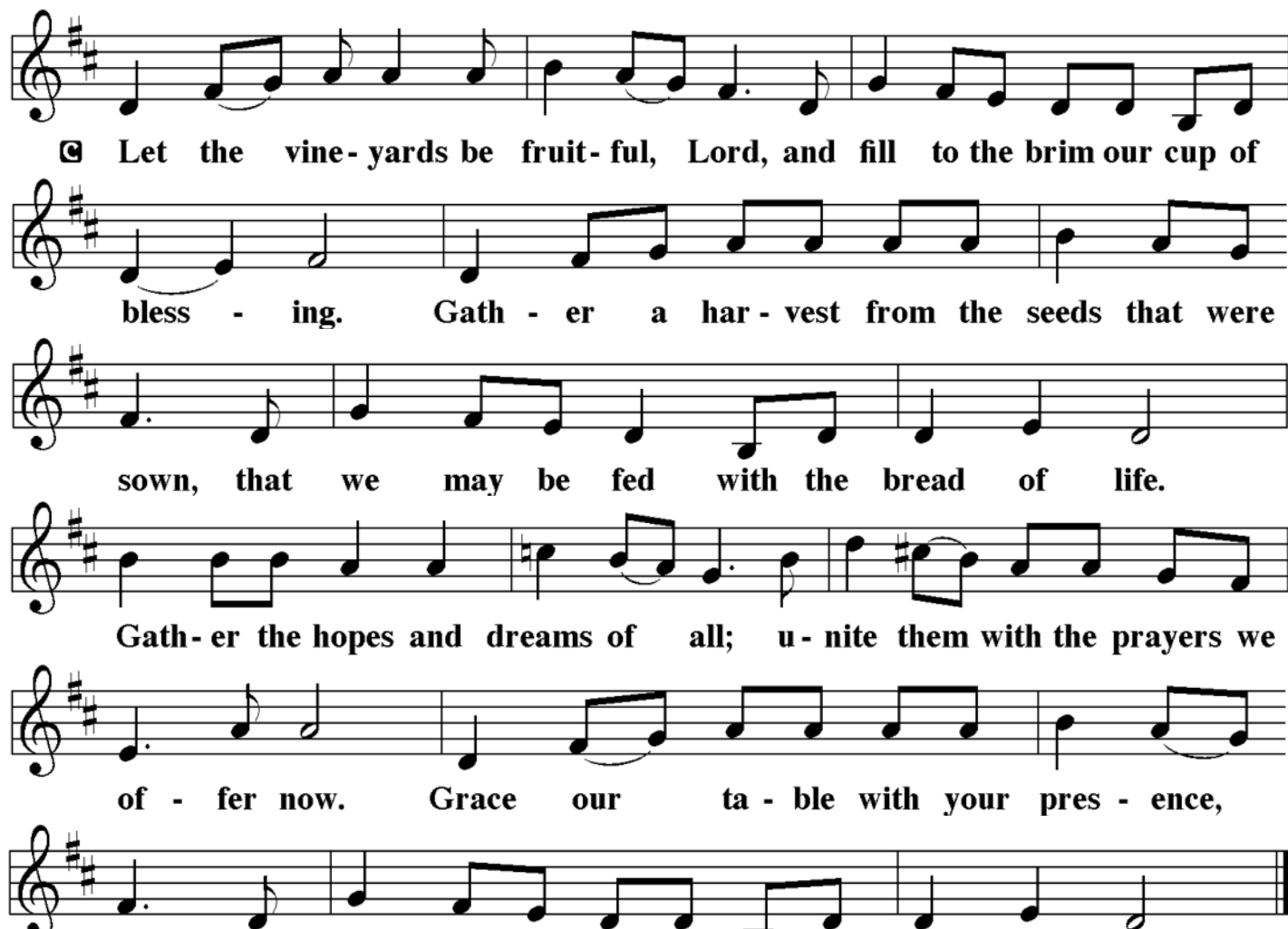
“Forever”

with “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Chris Tomlin / arr. Carol Tornquist

William M. Runyan / arr. C. Tornquist

OFFERTORY



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Loving God,
we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and
share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We
ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and
forever. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

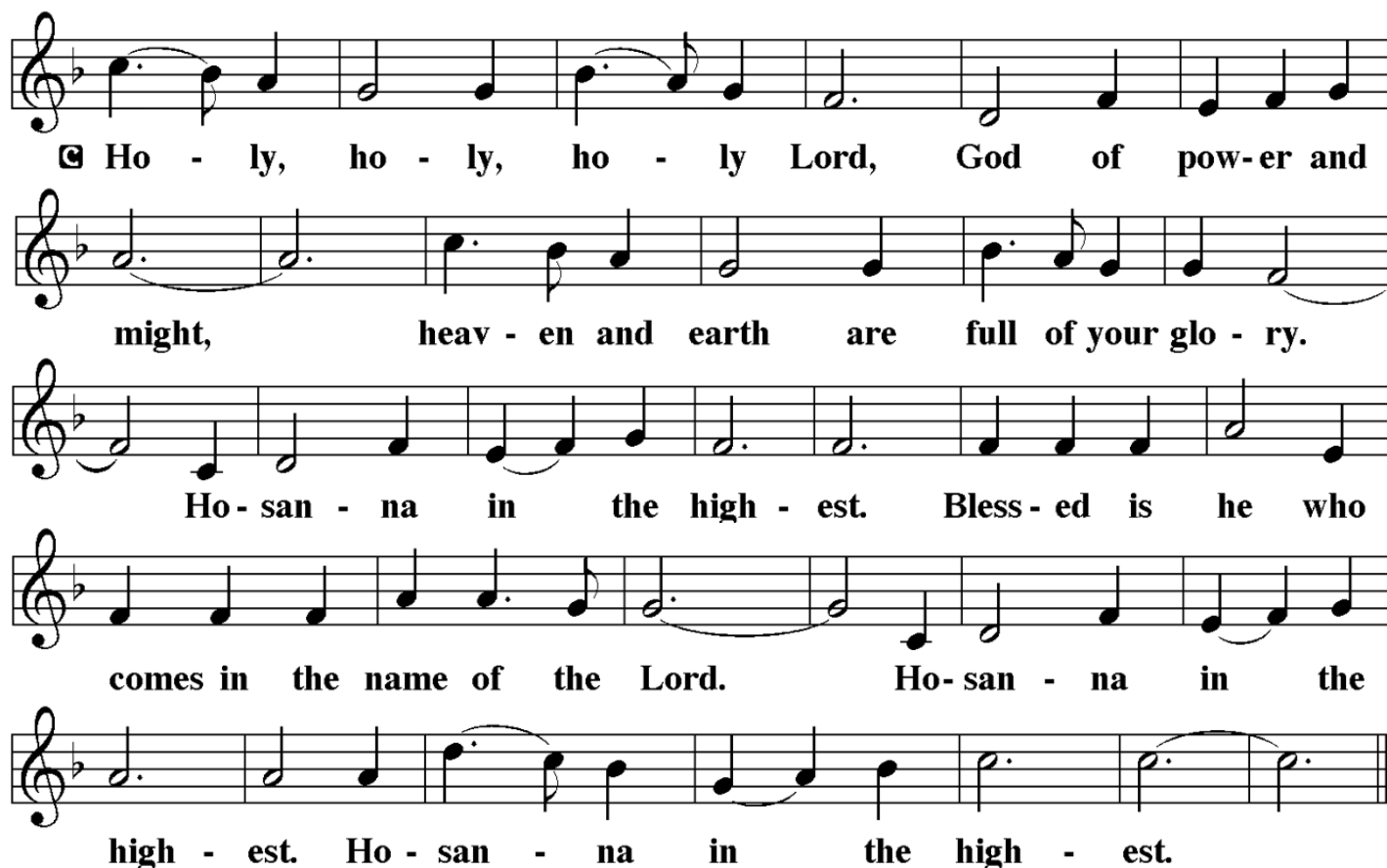
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant.

THE COMMUNION



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

HYMNS FOR COMMUNION

Let Justice Flow like Streams

ELW 717

Healer of Our Every Ill

ELW 612

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Go, My Children, with My Blessing	ELW 543
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Nordic Song, op. 68, no.41

Robert Schumann

from *Album for the Young*, op. 68, no.41



The flowers today are given . . . in joyful celebration of George Feths' 95th birthday (August 17th) & George & Nancy's 69th wedding anniversary by Sue & Tom Dunn.

BLC Pastors

The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Chrisanne Gates, Chancel Choir Director

Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers

Additional musical leadership provided by:

Marsha Gerhardt, piano

Special Thanks to the **Rev. David Gerhart** for providing worship leadership and **Michael Koncilja**, organist/pianist, for leading our music today.

Thank you to all those who participated in worship this Sunday! Want to learn more about what roles are needed in worship or sign-up for a pre-scheduled role? Talk with one of the pastors following worship or send an email to volunteersupport@blcfairport.org and we'll follow up!

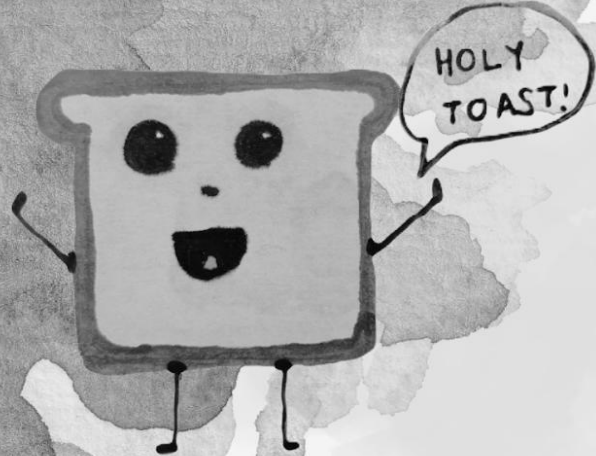
Communicate with us: Share more about who you are, request further information, or leave a prayer request or comment through our website - <https://blcfairport.org/share-in-worship/> - scroll down the page to request or share information.

What's happening at BLC this week? Visit the Calendar of Events at www.blcfairport.org. Zoom links for virtual meetings are also found there. If you would like to schedule a meeting or event, please email the church office at office@blcfairport.org or visit <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/>

Church office hours: Sandy Squires holds office hours on Wednesdays from 9-1 and is responsive to phone and email Monday through Friday during usual business hours. Please communicate your needs through the church office by phone (585) 223-0634 or by email office@blcfairport.org. Our co-Pastors are available Sunday – Thursday and on-call for emergencies. Contact them directly to schedule an appointment either by calling the church office or emailing pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org or pastor.amy@blcfairport.org

Sunday Table – September 13th

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR FOR
KICK OFF SUNDAY!



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“Glory to You, God”, All Creation Sings – Holy Communion, Setting 12, Text: Susan Palo Cherwien
Music: J. Bert Carlson, © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

With One Voice - Holy Communion, Setting Five, Music: Jeremy Young, © 2000, Augsburg Fortress
Gospel Acclamation: “Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”, Text and Music: Handt Hanson
© 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.

“Come to the Table”, Text: Claire Cloninger, Music: Martin J. Nystrom

© 1991 Integrity’s Hosanna! Music; Juniper Landing Music (adm. Word Music)

“Gavotte”, Music: Samuel Wesley, Editor: Rollin Smith, © 2004 Dover Publications

“Forever with Great Is Thy Faithfulness”, Music – Forever: Chris Tomlin

Music – Great Is Thy Faithfulness: William M. Runyan, Arranger: Carol Tornquist
© 2001 Worshiptogether.com/Songs (ASCAP) and Sixsteps Music (ASCAP)
(adm. EMI CMG Publishing)

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”, Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, Music: William M. Runyan
© 1923, ren. 1951 Hope Publishing Company

“Nordic Song” – from Album for the Young, op. 68, no. 41, Music: Robert Schumann
© 2002 Belwin Mills Publishing (adm. Alfred Publishing Co.)

We Are Beggars, This Is True

"We are beggars; this is true." These are reported to be Martin Luther's last written words. Christians are "beggars" for God's grace, undeserving but graced nonetheless. A beggar's faith focuses not on what is given or accomplished or believed, but on what is received: the healing and sustenance desperately longed for and needed.

In today's gospel, the Canaanite woman is such a "beggar" for Jesus' healing for her daughter. She is denied a place at the table at first, but she will accept even "crumbs" in the faith that Jesus' healing power and love are intended even for her. As a gentile, she inhabits the margins of Jesus' mission "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). Jesus' eventual response to her beggar's faith reveals that the love of God even encompasses the margins.

Marginalized or not, we are all beggars before God, as Paul reminds the Romans—all "imprisoned . . . in disobedience" (Rom. 11:32) and dependent on God. Thus, our sense of "insider" and "outsider" crumbles in the face of our common need and God's abundant mercy to all. Instead of dividing those who have a place at the table and those who get crumbs, we have an opportunity to share hospitality with our fellow beggars.

It can be challenging to see ourselves as beggars. Today the Canaanite woman becomes our model, as she persists with both humility and audacity. As disciples of Jesus and "beggars" for God's grace, we live the same paradox of humility and audacity, boldly coming to Jesus and humbly acknowledging our need. Even though crumbs from God's table would be enough for us, we are offered instead the abundance of Jesus' own self in bread and wine and invited to share this abundance with insider and outsider alike.