

Hear what the Spirit is saying

Sunday Morning at St. Hugh's in Idyllwild, California

August 16, 2020 | Pentecost +11

Collect for Proper 15

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.** ~BCP 232

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 NRSV

In our opening lesson the Lord exhorts the people to do what is just because the time of righteous salvation is close at hand. The temple will be a house of prayer for all nations. This vision of hope emphasizes the outgoing aspects of Israel's faith. Historically it deals with the fact that after the exile certain non-Israelites had come to live in Jerusalem and serve in the temple. The passage sets the conditions for their participation, but also looks beyond to a day when many peoples will worship the God of Israel.

⁹ ¹ Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.

⁶ 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— ⁷ 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. ⁸ Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 NRSV

In this reading Paul sets forth his belief that God plans to bring Jews as well as Gentiles to salvation. This apostle to the Gentiles continues to wrestle with a difficult question: why is it that so many of Jesus' own people have not accepted him as the Christ? God has not rejected the Jewish people who were foreknown, yet now Jews and Gentiles are equal in that all have been disobedient to God. In the next step the Jewish people will see the mercy shown to the Gentiles and want themselves to share in it in their own way.

¹ 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. ² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their

disobedience,³¹ so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Matthew 15:[10-20], 21-28 NRSV

In our gospel Jesus teaches that the thoughts and intentions of the human heart are paramount. Jesus warns against such blind guides preoccupied with externals. He then travels beyond the boundaries of Israel to the territory of Tyre and Sidon and encounters a Canaanite woman who beseeches him to heal her daughter. The first Christians were unsure whether they were to offer the faith to non-Jews, and the give-and-take in this story may reflect that uncertainty. Jesus sees his own mission as confined to Israel, but the woman's faith causes him to give her the bread she asks for. Symbolically it is the saving food of the gospel which heals her daughter.

[¹⁰ Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” ¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³ He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶ Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”]

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 instantly.

Psalm 67 BCP 675

A prayer for God’s graciousness and saving power, and a bidding of praise by all people for God’s justice and bounty.

- 1 May God be merciful to us and bless us, * show us the light of his countenance and come to us.
- 2 Let your ways 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 upon earth.
- 5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; * let all the peoples praise you.
- 6 The earth has brought forth her increase; * may God, our own God, give us his blessing.
- 7 May God give us his blessing, * and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

Music unquestionably heightens emotional experiences. Can one imagine watching an epic film without its soundtrack? Spiritual experiences are similar: the music enhances the liturgical drama of a particular moment in the service or season. The worshipper is moved by what he or she hears, and—consequently—feels.

Matthew Hoch in
Welcome to Church Music & The Hymnal 1982

When we can again worship in person we may not (for health and safety reasons) be able to sing together. In the quiet of the coronavirus, let us pay attention to the hymns we used to and one day will sing together. I invite you to sing at home. Sing when at work. Sing when at play (or even at rest). In our Service of Readings and Prayer this Sunday we'll use 2 hymns celebrating and giving thanks for God's inclusive grace and love—what we hear in our readings. Feel the words of scripture. ~Fr. Dan

IN CHRIST THERE IS NO EAST OR WEST

John Oxenham, 1852–1941

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

One of the clear teachings of the Bible is that the gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any race or culture. In the past, missionary endeavor has too frequently imposed “our” culture on others while spreading the gospel, often putting native believers in bondage to another culture rather than to Christ and the Scriptures alone.

Written in 1908 by the noted English writer, John Oxenham, this missionary hymn text was part of a script for a pageant at a giant missionary event sponsored by the London Missionary Society's exhibition, *The Orient in London*. It is estimated that over a quarter of a million people viewed this presentation. It was continued from 1908–1914 both in England and in the United States.

An interesting account of the impact of this hymn relates an incident during the closing days of World War II when two ships were anchored together, one containing Japanese aliens, and the other American soldiers, all waiting to be repatriated. For an entire day they lined the rails, glaring at one another. Suddenly someone began to sing “In Christ

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There Is No East Or West.” Then another on the opposite ship joined in. Soon there was an extraordinary chorus of former enemies unitedly praising God with these words:

In Christ there is no East or West, in him no South or North, but one great fellowship of love thru out the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts ev’rywhere their high communion find; His service is the golden cord close-binding all mankind.

Join hands then, brothers of the faith, whate’er your race may be; who serves my Father as a son is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West, in Him meet South and North; all Christly souls are one in Him throughout the whole wide earth.

Words from “Bees in Amber” by John Oxenham

Source: Kenneth W. Osbeck, *Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1996) [January 25]

THERE’S A WIDENESS IN GOD’S MERCY

Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863

But Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. (Psalm 86:15 KJV)

A wealth of truth about the depth of God’s love and mercy is expressed simply but eloquently in this choice two-line hymn text written by Frederick William Faber in the middle of the 19th century. In addition to being known as a man with unusual personal charm, persuasive preaching ability, and excellent writing skills, Faber made his most lasting contribution with the 150 hymn texts he composed during his brief life of 49 years.

Frederick Faber had an unusual spiritual journey. Raised as a strict Calvinist, he strongly opposed the Roman Catholic Church. After education at Oxford, he became an ordained Anglican minister. Gradually, however, he was influenced by the Oxford Movement, which stressed that Anglican churches had become too evangelical—with too little emphasis on formal and liturgical worship. Eventually Faber renounced the Anglican State Church, became a Catholic priest, and spent his remaining years as Superior of the Catholic Brompton Oratory in London.

Faber had always realized the great influence that hymn singing had in Protestant evangelical churches. Determined to provide material for Catholics to use in the same way, he worked tirelessly in writing hymns and publishing numerous collections of them. In 1854 the Pope honored

Frederick Faber with an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in recognition of his many accomplishments. Today we are still grateful for this memorable declaration of the boundless love and mercy of our God to all mankind:

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in His justice, which is more than liberty.

There is welcome for the sinner, and more graces for the good; there is
mercy with the Savior; there is healing in His blood.

For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind; and
the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple, we should take Him at His word; and
our lives would be all sunshine in the sweetness of our Lord.

Source: Kenneth W. Osbeck, *Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1996) [June 9]

Even More information:

Hoch, Matthew. *Welcome to Church Music & The Hymnal 1982*. New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2015 is available on Amazon in a [Kindle Editon](#) (The quote on the handout, p. 5, is from Location 167)

Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions by Kenneth W. Osbeck is available on [Amazon in a paperback edition](#).