



Worship resources Trinity 10

Mercy, blessing and salvation are three words that belong together, that are often associated with Gospel, and yet, that are sometimes viewed completely separately as we wrestle with God's grace and justice. However, to really understand them, and to really grasp the power of God's work in and through them, these words need to be placed together and allowed to inform, define and influence each other. When that happens, we discover that God's gift of salvation, justice and wholeness is offered to all people. Mercy is available to all. And the motivation to participate in God's work, and the result of God's work in our lives and our world, is celebration. It is easy, when wrestling with brokenness and injustice to forget this, but the gift of celebration – blessing – is integral to the Gospel.

May we be reminded of God's mercy, may we embrace, again, God's salvation gift, and may we be led into a life of celebration that draws all people into it as we worship this week.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Genesis 45 : 1-15

Our weekly unfolding of the great sagas of Hebrew history jumps on from Joseph hated by his brothers to Joseph the saviour of his brothers. They find him in a powerful position in Egypt as they seek famine relief, but at first they do not recognise him.

Isaiah 56 : 1, 6-8

As early as 500 BC, some religious thinkers in Israel had begun to see that the God of their people must in fact be the only God, with the whole world in his hands. So the hope for a time of restoration and peace embraces every nation and race. The gospel will tell of Jesus reaching out to a woman of another race.

Psalm 133: A celebration of unity among God's people which brings the blessing of life.

OR **Psalm 67**: A psalm of praise for God's blessings and mercy, which calls all nations to join in praising God for God's saving power.

Romans 11 : 1-2a, 29-32

If God's salvation is now offered to everyone in Jesus Christ, says Paul, does it mean that the Jews who were once God's chosen people are now rejected? Of course not. They too remain within God's mercy, if they will receive it.

Matthew 15 : 10-20, 21-28

The Hebrew prophets had a vision of the breadth of God's love reaching far beyond their own race. Matthew here shows us Jesus confronted by a non-Jewish woman who begs his compassion. Perhaps he is surprised by her, or perhaps he presents a challenge to her.

[http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=%0AGenesis 45: 1-15%0A%2BOR%0AIsaiah 56: 1, 6-8%0Acw Psalm 133%0A%2BOR%0APsalm 67%0ARomans 11: 1-2a, 29-32%0AMatthew 15: \[10-20\], 21-28](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=%0AGenesis 45: 1-15%0A%2BOR%0AIsaiah 56: 1, 6-8%0Acw Psalm 133%0A%2BOR%0APsalm 67%0ARomans 11: 1-2a, 29-32%0AMatthew 15: [10-20], 21-28)

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Let thy merciful ears, O Lord,
be open to the prayers of thy humble servants;
and that they may obtain their petitions,
make them to ask such things as shall please thee;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

Let your merciful ears, O Lord,
be open to the prayers of your humble servants;
and that they may obtain their petitions,
make them to ask such things as shall please you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In peace let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For the house of the Lord that it may be a place of prayer and that we may be a people of prayer, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For the welcome we extend to the strangers in our midst, that we may receive others as God has welcomed us in Christ, with the open arms of His mercy, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For the Church, the people whom God has called and gathered through the voice of the Word, joined to Christ in the waters of Baptism and given the Spirit that we might believe, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For the unity of the Church, for true unity in the faith for all Christians everywhere, and for an end to conflict and dissension, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For the nations and all who make, administer, and judge our laws, that we may walk in the path of justice and be responsible in the exercise of liberty, and for peace to rule the nations and all the people, let us pray to the Lord,

Lord, have mercy.

For families and children, especially for the orphaned and those in need, that we may extend to them the love and care of Christ, let us pray to the Lord,

Lord, have mercy.

For the noble character of work, for the unemployed and the underemployed, that everyone may have opportunity to supply honest labour and receive fair return for all they do, let us pray to the Lord,

Lord, have mercy.

For the sick and those who suffer in any way [including, *individual names spoken here*], that according to God's good and gracious will they may find healing, comfort, and peace, let us pray to the Lord,

Lord, have mercy.

POST COMMUNION

O God,
as we are strengthened by these holy mysteries,
so may our lives be a continual offering,
holy and acceptable in your sight;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS

Holy One of Israel, covenant-keeper,
you restore what is lost,
heal what is wounded,
and gather in those who have been rejected.
Give us the faith
to speak as steadfastly as did the Canaanite woman,
that the outcast may be welcomed
and all people may be blessed. Amen.

God of the foreigner and outcast,
your arms reach out to embrace
all those who call upon you.
Teach us as disciples of Christ
so to love the world
that your name may be known
throughout the earth. Amen.

Eternal God,
you are present with us throughout our lives,
even when others plot to do us harm.
May we learn to live together in unity,
that in all we do,
we may sing your praises now and forever. Amen.

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
www.churchnewsireland.org

that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.
Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbours. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures. Amen.

Life-giving God,
heal our lives,
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds
and offer you thanks from generation to generation
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

Genesis 45:1-15:

- This is a great story of forgiveness. Is it a story of redemption too? After all, though Joseph is quite moved to see his brothers, the only word we get about how they feel is "dismayed." OK, he did trick them over Benjamin and stealing, but they sold him into slavery and said he was dead! Overall, Joseph's forgiveness seems quite impressive, and it is never asked for by his brothers.
- Anyway, I think that forgiving those we love the most, or we had expected the most form, is the hardest kind of forgiveness to give. But the most needed. What enables you to be ready to forgive, even when those you must forgive aren't ready to repent?

Psalm 133:

- Short and sweet?! Check out [Chris Haslam's notes](#) on this Psalm. The image of Aaron's beard dripping with oil signifies total consecration to God.

The Tenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR A August 20, 2017

- Haslam also notes the connection between this Psalm and our Genesis text in that verse 1 here declares, "how very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity."

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

- "for the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." That is a powerful verse. irrevocable=irreversible, can't be taken back, or taken away. That means that God does not un-gift us or un-call us. We are gifted, and we are called. We can wish we
 - were not connected to God in this way. We can reject our gifts, ignore our call, but we can't get rid of them.
- "so that [God] may be merciful to all." Paul's logic here is ... interesting. He suggests that God 'imprisons' us in disobedience so that God can show us mercy. I'm not sure I agree with Paul on his take of God's motivations. But I like his inclusive vision of God's mercy - it is for all.
- Paul is interested in showing God's continued special relationship with Israel (the irrevocable relationship) at the same time as he wants to convince his Gentile audience that they can have a special relationship with God too.

Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28:

- What comes out of our mouths and not what goes in that defiles. We forget this one, even today. We may not follow kosher food laws today, but we are worried in different ways. Sometimes Christians want to shelter themselves from the 'evils' of the world, and especially from others judged unclean, instead of examining *themselves* for right hearts.
- The second part of this text is one we have a harder time dealing with. "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs," and "he did not answer her at all." - These are hard sentences to construct in a way flattering to Jesus. I don't have good answers. I don't want to explain away Jesus' words by trying to translate the Greek differently. Was Jesus just joking with the woman? I don't see it. What I see is a woman who is as persistent as the widow Jesus tells a parable about elsewhere in the gospels, and she receives her reward. And what I see is a Jesus who is focused on the mission he sees: to the Jews - who lets his own vision be expanded. The woman shows him a way to spread more grace.
- Even with his resistance, we can be comforted that Jesus heard her out, despite his apparent skepticism: the disciples wanted to send her away, but Jesus heard her, and really listened, until he recognized great faith in one whom he did not expect to find it.

By Beth Quick

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

Three ingredients come together to create a celebratory mix in this week's Lectionary: The first is God's salvation (expressed in terms of justice and mercy); the second is God's blessing given to those who are saved; and the third is the inclusion of "foreigners" and "outcasts". In Genesis, Joseph expresses his conviction that he is called by God to bring God's salvation and blessing to the Egyptian people, and others who come to Egypt to escape the famine. In Isaiah, God promises the people that God comes to them and rescues them, but also those who are not usually considered God's people – foreigners and outcasts. In the light of this, God calls people to lives of justice. Psalm 133 reflects on

the blessings that come through the unity of God's people, and Psalm 67 expands this even further to include all nations in the praise of God and in the blessing God gives. Paul reflects on God's mercy emphasising that both Jews and Gentiles are included in God's blessing. Finally Jesus, after pointing to the importance of the heart, demonstrates, in what some scholars interpret as a point of learning & growth in Jesus' own understanding of his ministry, that even outcast Gentiles (Canaanites, who were a particularly disliked group) are included in God's plan of salvation. The focus, then, of this week's worship is on God's coming to us, welcoming all people, and including all people in God's mercy, salvation and blessing, while also calling all people to lives of justice.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: The work of justice and compassion is often framed in negative and alarmist ways. Poverty is a problem because of the deaths it causes; climate change could destroy us; war brings about tremendous grief, trauma and social ills. It is right that these realities should cause us outrage. It is also good, though, to emphasise the blessings that mercy and justice offer, if we will only embrace them. Here is where the Lectionary speaks powerfully to us this week. God's welcome – and the diverse communities that we discover as we share it – brings great gifts of creativity and growth, and so we can be inspired to be people of inclusion who welcome all people, including "foreigners and outcasts". God's salvation – God's gift of wholeness and mercy – does not just save us from our sin and brokenness and injustice. It also leads us into a life of vibrancy, abundance and fulfilment. If the motivation for seeking God's reign and working for justice is only our fear and our outrage, we will easily find ourselves falling into despondency, despair and bitterness. When, however, we remember, along with our outrage, the blessing (to use the word from our readings today) that God offers through God's salvation and justice, this dream inspires, energises and encourages us in ways that can sustain us when dark times come. So, the challenge for us this week is to reflect on the world and celebrate both the blessings of God that we see and experience already, and also to celebrate the possibilities that await us as we gather all people, and together open ourselves to God's saving work. As hard as justice and inclusivity can be, they give us many reasons to rejoice and they give us many blessings to be thankful for. Let's take time to focus on these this week.

LOCAL APPLICATION: Two problems plague the Church when it comes to our common views of God's mercy and salvation. The first problem is our tendency to see salvation as an exclusive work of God given only to some in which those who are "outside" of the people of God are beyond God's interest or care. This means that in our communities live many people who feel both judged and excluded by the very people that God has called to love and serve them. And within many churches are those who do not really feel welcomed and who wonder whether, if others really knew them, they would be considered to belong among the "saved". The second problem is that we have proclaimed God's salvation and mercy to be primarily a rescue from sin and evil. This forces our evangelism (our reaching out) to take the form of convincing people that they are sinners and then trying to get them to 'buy' a solution that they didn't know they needed (and may well not want). It also means that we end up framing our ministry, our proclamation and even our liturgy in negative terms, focussing on our lack, our need and our weakness, and viewing God almost exclusively in terms of rescue, of working outside of our lives and resources, and as completely separate and "other" than us. The result of all of this is that we lose sight of the power of celebration, of acknowledging God's image and glory within us and others, and of working with God in bringing wholeness and justice to the world. Perhaps, in our liturgy this week, we can celebrate the Christ who includes the outcast and the foreigner, and whose salvation and justice remind us of our goodness and glory and call us to be our

The Tenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR A August 20, 2017

best selves. This is not to deny the important work of acknowledging our sin. It is simply, in what has been an overbalance on the negative, an attempt to see the Gospel as an attractive vision that calls us to God's promise of blessing and not just as a "fire escape." Perhaps this week in our liturgy we can expand our celebration to include the "foreigner" and "outcast" – celebrating the diversity of those who look, think, speak, act, love and even believe, differently from us, without feeling the need to separate ourselves from them or cast them as 'outsiders'.

SERMON OUTLINE

Matt 15:21-28 the Canaanite woman

Jesus & the disciples had journeyed some 30 miles NW of Capernaum to the region of Tyre & Sidon - mod. Lebanon.

1. Great Desperation 21-22: *A Canaanite woman came to him, crying out, Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me. My daughter is suffering from demon possession - a terrible affliction - under the power of Satan - only He could help!*

2. General Disgust 23: of the disciples - *Send her away - she's only a nuisance - keeps crying after us - undesirable for a woman to be seen talking to a rabbi – scandal!*

a) no compassion for her - in spite of her obvious distress..

b) no compassion for her daughter - despite her great need

3. Gentile Dog 24-26: in Jewish eyes - Jesus says that he was *sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel - the Jews*. She has no claim on him and then as she persisted he said: *"It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs" (26) – worthless dirty street scavengers... Children = Jews; bread = salvation; dogs = gentiles.... Gentiles didn't deserve the good things reserved for God's people - Jews.*

4. Genuine Desire 27-28: She refuses to be put off - *"Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table (27) - all that she could hope for were left-overs - crumbs of comfort! But she was rewarded! "Woman, you have great faith. Your request is granted (28) and her daughter was healed from that very hour. Persistence & faith has their reward - regardless of class, culture or creed! Still the same today as we come to Jesus with our prayers, requests & needs....*

By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

["Who are the chosen?"](http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/07/28/10-pentecost-proper-15-a-2014/) the Katerina K. Whitley, *Sermons that Work*, Episcopal Digital Network,
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/07/28/10-pentecost-proper-15-a-2014/>

["The Table Scrap Feast,"](http://day1.org/5967-the-table-scrap-feast) Rev. Cuttino Alexander, *Day 1*
<http://day1.org/5967-the-table-scrap-feast>

Day One - Listening in love. The writer is Dr. Jan Love, the dean and professor of Christianity and World Politics for the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. She relates the values of the Psalm to the situation of the Canaanite woman. Dr Love deals with the conflict in the situation between Jesus and this persistent, annoying woman.

www.churchnewsireland.org

She states, "This story provides insight into engaging conflict well. Jesus and the woman stay locked in a conversation listening deeply to one another, even when what the other has to say is not pretty and not at all easy. One of the reasons that the conversation continues as long as it does is that the woman is just so remarkably stubborn. She won't go away. She's desperate to find help for her daughter, and although the exchange becomes tense, Jesus hangs in there with her. He recognizes and rewards her extraordinary faith.

"How well do we as Christians listen to each other when we disagree with one another? How well do we listen to members of our family when we have a dispute with them? How well do we listen to our neighbors, or our friends, or even our enemies?"

"Listening deeply to those who have tough, unpleasant things-or new and different or old and hackneyed things to say to us can be a strange, awkward, but good exercise and a giant leap of faith for those willing to try it. Genuine, careful, heartfelt listening often is. Winston Churchill, once said that "Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."

http://day1.org/1108-listening_in_love

CHILDREN

Worshipping with children - Excellent advice, as always, on what pitfalls to avoid in some Bible passage when talking with children. Two good addresses based on the Old Testament lesson and the Gospel.

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/07/year-proper-15-20th-sunday-in-ordinary.html>

Sermons4kids - Two talks.

A clean heart - needed: A basin of water, a bar of soap, a towel, and a banana.

http://www.sermons4kids.com/clean_heart.html

Crumbs - needed: A picture of a dog, or a well behaved one!

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/crumbs.html>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

[O For A Thousand Tongues](#)

[And Can It Be](#)

[Jesus, United By Thy Grace](#)

[There's A Wideness In God's Mercy](#)

[Blessed Assurance](#)

[Your Grace Is Enough](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Mighty To Save](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Everyone Belongs](#)

[You Are](#)

[With Kindness](#)

1st Reading Genesis 45: 1–15

563* Commit your ways to God

649* Happy are they, they that love God

www.churchnewsireland.org

The Tenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR A August 20, 2017

522* In Christ there is no east or west
525* Let there be love shared among us
527* Son of God, eternal Saviour
531 Where love and loving-kindness dwell

Psalm 133 [E2B/Pr7B/Unity]

518* Bind us together, Lord
522* In Christ there is no east or west
525* Let there be love shared among us
438* O thou who at thy eucharist didst pray
507 Put peace into each other's hands
661* Through the night of doubt and sorrow

1st Reading Isaiah 56: 1, 6–8

522* In Christ there is no east or west
342 Sweet is the solemn voice that calls
285* The head that once was crowned with thorns
343* We love the place, O God

Psalm 67 [E6C/1–25]

695* God of mercy, God of grace

2nd Reading Romans 11: 1–2a, 29–32

218* And can it be that I should gain
9 There's a wideness in God's mercy

The Gospel Matthew 15: (10–20) 21–28

324* God, whose almighty word
716 Kyrie eleison
433* My God, your table here is spread
104* O for a thousand tongues to sing
514* We cannot measure how you heal

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title