

# The Home Sunday Worship Supplement

## Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2020

*Dear Parishioners,*

Today, Kathleen is sharing some photos of the beautiful grevilleas flowering in her garden. These are just two of her many varieties. A great plant to encourage the birds.



Next Wednesday, we are starting a new study on the Gospel of Matthew. We are using the Life Guide Study booklet, so I won't be emailing out my home-produced studies. If you would like a copy of the booklet for study at home, or you wish to join our Wednesday group in Holy Trinity, please email or text me.

As I advised a few weeks ago, our new *Parish of Nambucca Valley* becomes effective from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021. The Parish Profile is on the Diocesan website seeking a Ministry Area Leader (i.e. Rector) to lead you into the future.

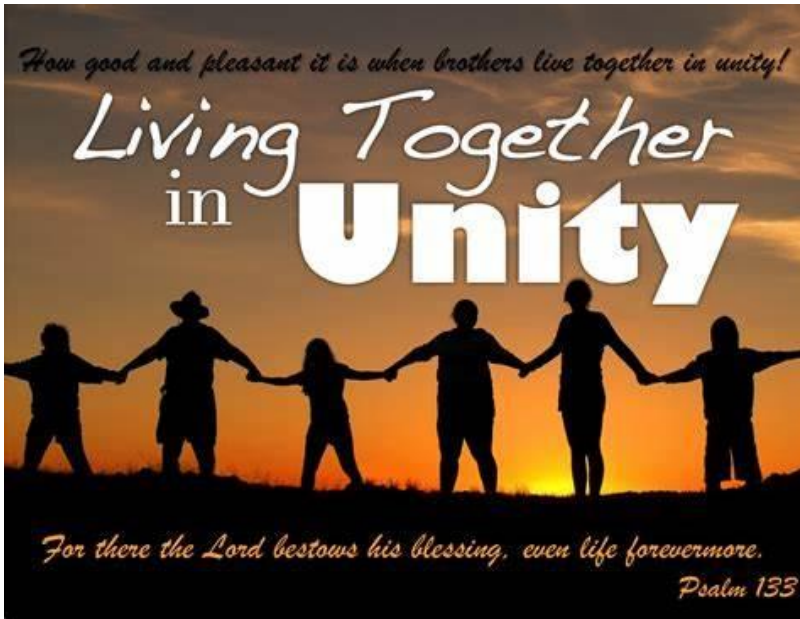
The AGM to enable you to elect folk who will fill administrative positions in the new Parish will be held in February 2021. Meanwhile, an Interim Parish Council consisting of myself, the existing Macksville and Nambucca Heads Churchwardens and any Locum at Nambucca Heads, will be preparing for the 31<sup>st</sup> December changeover. For those of you who normally provide AGM reports, please note that they will be required as soon as possible after 31<sup>st</sup> December.



*Rev Clyde*

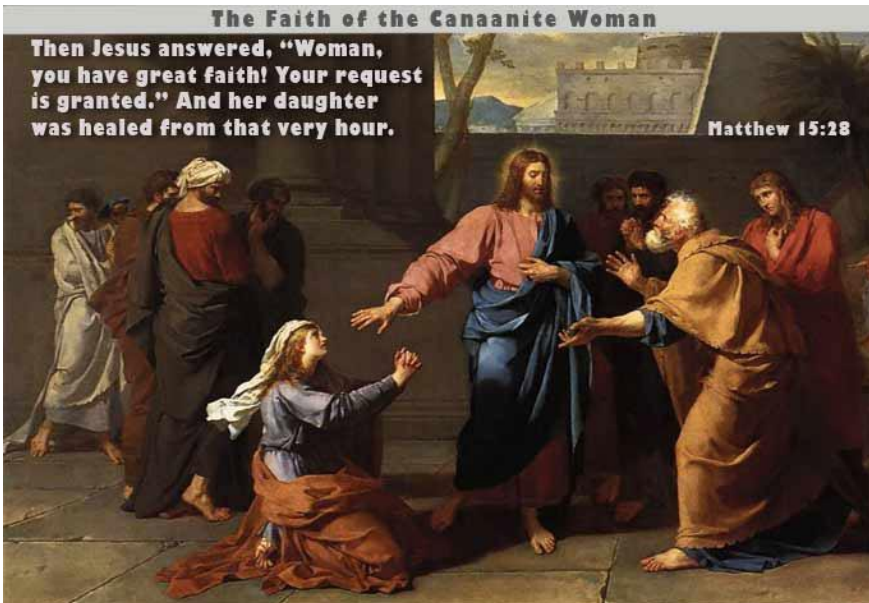
## Psalm 133

- <sup>1</sup> Behold how good and how lovely it is:  
when families live together in unity.
- <sup>2</sup> It is fragrant as oil upon the head,  
that runs down over the beard:  
fragrant as oil upon the beard of Aaron,  
that ran down over the collar of his robe.
- <sup>3</sup> It is like a dew of Hermon:  
like the dew that falls upon the hill of Zion.
- <sup>4</sup> For there the Lord has commanded his blessing:  
which is life for evermore.



## Matthew 15:21-28

<sup>21</sup> Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup> A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, ‘Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.’ <sup>23</sup> Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, ‘Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.’ <sup>24</sup> He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.’ <sup>25</sup> The woman came and knelt before him. ‘Lord, help me!’ she said. <sup>26</sup> He replied, ‘It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.’ <sup>27</sup> ‘Yes it is, Lord,’ she said. ‘Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.’ <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.’ And her daughter was healed at that moment.



## **Reflection on Matthew 15:21-28**

From Rev Clyde

What is the basis of salvation? The Jewish people of Jesus' time, and apparently Jesus' disciples, thought that it was based upon nationality. They thought that being a Jew gave you an automatic right of entry into the Kingdom of God because the Jews were God's chosen people. Certainly, a Canaanite woman would not have qualified in their judgement.

The Pharisees looking on believed that being born a Jew and practicing their traditions kept them connected to God. They believed in the correctness of their approach. They were blind to the harm done to individuals when the law excluded them from community.

But our passage for today reminds us that the basis of salvation is not nationality or tradition. Salvation comes from something else. We cannot assume an automatic right of entry based upon nationality, or tradition.

Jesus' disciples, and the Jewish onlookers, did not understand the ethic of love that motivated Jesus to place people's needs before religious practice. They had to learn this lesson. So, when the Canaanite woman came begging Jesus for healing for her daughter who was possessed by demons an opportunity arose for Jesus to teach this lesson.

At first, Jesus ignored the woman's cries. Matthew's account doesn't tell us why. Perhaps the human Jesus first had to overcome a barrier of tradition-bound prejudice built by history.

By the conventional standards of the disciples, this woman would have been unclean and untouchable. Her sick demon-possessed daughter would have been reviled as embodying evil. Or perhaps Jesus did not, at first, answer a word to draw attention to the lesson that he was about to teach.

Eventually the disciples got sick of the ruckus and told Jesus to send her away. But then the woman knelt before him and begged him to grant her plea. Jesus began to question her as to why she should receive any of the blessings that he had to give. His words verbalized the outright contempt and prejudice against ‘her kind’ that would have been in the minds of the onlookers.

They would have been thinking: “Why should this Canaanite woman receive Jesus’ help? She is only a despised Gentile, a dog, not a citizen of Israel. She is not one of the chosen people of God.”

There are various theories among the Bible Commentators as to why Jesus at first treated the woman so harshly. Some say that he was testing the sincerity of her humility and faith, others say that he was just playing with her and that this is lost in the translation; yet others say that he was reacting out of disappointment against being asked to give to foreigners what he could not give to his own people. But I tend to agree with those commentators who suggest that he was wanting to teach his followers a lesson.

Regardless of our view on this, Jesus responded to the woman’s shameless audacity. The barrier of ethnic exclusivity was

broken. Jesus no longer treated the woman as an impure nuisance but as a human being of dignity and deep faith. Through this transformed perception, mercy was extended to the woman and her daughter.

And the reason why he did this was made very clear. There is no argument over this! We read it in verse 28, '*Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith!" ...*'

The basis for receiving Jesus' blessings was, and is, faith. Even though the Jews were the first chosen people of God, Gentiles like this woman and you and me can also share, through faith, in the blessings that God has for his people. You might recall that 'faith', the faith of Abraham, was also the basis for the blessing of the Jewish nation in the first place. So, Jesus saw the faith in the heart of the Canaanite woman and granted her the healing of her daughter.

Physical healing, such as Jesus granted for the woman's daughter, is just part of the whole package of salvation. My Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms defines salvation as,

'A broad term referring to God's activity on behalf of creation and especially humans in bringing all things to God's intended goal. More specifically, salvation entails God's deliverance of humans from the power and effects of sin and the Fall through the work of Jesus Christ so that creation in general and humans in particular can enjoy the fullness of life intended for what God has made.'

So now we can answer the question that was posed at the start of this reflection. “What is the basis of salvation? The answer is “Faith” – not nationality, tradition or anything else, but faith. Jesus looks into the heart of all people with loving compassion and enables them to draw near in faith regardless of who and what they are. As our doctrine expresses it, salvation comes through God’s mercy, by the grace of God, through faith.

---

## Collect

God of freedom,  
you have broken the tyranny of sin  
and sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts:  
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,  
that all people may know the glorious liberty of the  
children of God;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### **The next Home Supplement**

Will be Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.  
Keep an eye on your email on Thursday.



*‘Joseph said to his brothers,  
"Come closer to me." And they  
came closer.’* (Gen 45:4)

Genesis 45 is a story about forgiveness, reconciliation and rebuilding of relationship. Can you see parallels with what the bible tells us about God and humankind? God invites us to “come closer”.

## NOTICES

### **Church Online**

Perhaps you are missing live church on a Sunday morning and would like to tap into a church service being streamed via the internet? If so, click on the link below to see which Anglican Churches are live streaming or recording services.

<https://www.graftondiocese.org.au/ministry/ministry-resources/online-church/>

### **Christmas Bowl**

Donations are being accepted for Christmas Bowl this year. The best way to send donations would be direct deposit, with reference as “Christmas Bowl” so we know to mark it suitably. If you need the bank details again, please contact us.



**Christmas  
Bowl**