

Woden Valley Uniting Church



16 August 2026
(12th Sunday after Epiphany)

THE CANAANITE WOMAN'S FAITH: ALL ARE WELCOMED INTO GOD'S LOVE

WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

The Gong is struck three times. *The gong calls us to gather, to be present in this time of worship.*

Prelude *(a time for quiet preparation).*

Acknowledgement of First Peoples

Lighting the Community Candle

Call to Worship

Song TiS 107 Sing praise and thanksgiving, let all creatures living
(Please stand to sing as you are able)

Welcome and Introduction

Prayer of living attentively

Holy God, you welcome us into your creation
too vast and wonderful to understand.

Jesus, you welcomed and ate with those who were
friends and those who didn't even like you.

And now you still welcome us into your love and
presence as we share with the Spirit.

As we come together today, old or young, sure or uncertain,
peaceful or troubled, hopeful or
doubtful, we give thanks that you welcome us into
your-self and into your love.

Forgive us for our acts that mean we are less than open to you.
Forgive us for our ways, open and hidden, where we do not welcome others.
Forgive us that we find it hard even to acknowledge
within ourselves that we are loved and welcomed.

Silence

We say together:

Thankyou Lord for enduring love.

Thankyou that you always welcome us.

Thankyou that you already forgive.

Passing the Peace

The peace of God be always with you.

And also with you.

You are invited to share the peace of God with those around you

Song: We are many, we are one (Colin Gibson) Tune: Hamilton

(Please stand to sing as you are able)

We are many, we are one,
and the work of Christ is done
when we learn to live in true community,
as the stars that fill the night,
as a flock of birds in flight,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine;
as the branches of a tree,
as the waves upon the sea,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine.

All division is made whole
when we honour every soul,
find the life of God in every you and me,
as the fingers of a hand,
as the grains that form the sand,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine;

as the threads upon a loom,
as a field of flowers in bloom,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine.

We will join creation's song,
make a world where all belong,
build as one in peace and loving harmony,
as the voices of a choir,
as the flames within a fire,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine,
as the snowflakes in the snow,
as the colours of a bow,
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine

WE REFLECT ON WORDS FOR OUR TIME

Wisdom from Religious Traditions

Prayer before the readings:

Into this day will break moments of awareness,
tiny shards of light that illumine
the whole reality of existence.

May these readings be such a moment

And may we be blessed by their gift. (*Gretta Vosper*)

A quote from John O'Donohue:

“Wisdom is not just special knowledge about something. Wisdom is a way of being, a way of inhabiting the world.

The beauty of wisdom is harmony, belonging and illumination of thought, action, heart and mind.”

Psalm 67



May God be gracious and bless us

May God's face shine upon us.

Let God's way be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.
Let all the people praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
Let nations be glad and sing for joy,
you judge with equity, and guide nations on the earth.
Refrain

The earth has yielded its increase;
for God, our God, has blessed us.
May God continue to bless us;
the ends of earth pay tribute.
Refrain

Matthew 15: 21-28

Reflection: Word around the Bush (video)

Questions for conversation

- What do you think about the suggestion in today's message that Jesus' initial response to the woman was grounded in Jesus as a man?
- What else did you hear in today's message, that was either affirming or unsettling?

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

Song In this familiar place (*Colin Gibson*)

Please stand as you are able, to sing

In this familiar place
I know the mystery of your grace.

Refrain:

*For the love that I receive,
for the truth that I believe,
I praise and thank you;
for this here and now.*

In halting song and word
the music of your voice is heard

Refrain

Among these friends of mine
I taste the company divine.

Refrain

Within this narrow sphere
I learn that you are everywhere.

Refrain

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Offerings and Offering Prayer

Prayers for Others

The Care Candle is lit

Prayer concludes with the Lord's Prayer in contemporary words:

**My creator, our comforter and source,
we know you as Holy and celebrate our relationship.**

**Your reign on earth is, and yet, is still to come.
Your will guides us in this universe and beyond life itself.
We try to live by your way.**

**May we have enough food and love to see us through today.
And please help us to be kind, careful not to hurt other people
or speak ill of them.**

**Help us forgive others that have hurt us, or offended us intentionally,
or by some slight. Let us be gracious.**

**May we avoid temptation today.
And keep us safe.
For the realm of God is everywhere, in everyone
and never ending. Amen. (Jean Shannon)**

Song Nothing is lost on the breath of God *(Colin Gibson)*

Please stand as you are able, to sing

Nothing is lost on the breath of God,
nothing is lost for ever;
God's breath is love, and that love will remain,
holding the world for ever.
No feather too light, no hair too fine,
no flower too brief in its glory;
no drop in the ocean, no dust in the air,
but is counted and told in God's story.

Nothing is lost to the eyes of God,
nothing is lost for ever;
God sees with love and that love will remain,
holding the world for ever.
No journey too far, no distance too great,
no valley of darkness too blinding;
no creature too humble, no child too small
for God to be seeking, and finding.

Nothing is lost to the heart of God,
nothing is lost for ever;
God's heart is love, and that love will remain,
holding the world for ever.
No impulse of love, no office of care,
no moment of life in its fullness;
no beginning too late, no ending too soon,
but is gathered and known in God's goodness.

WE RETURN TO THE WORLD

Blessing Words

The community candle is extinguished

Sharing & Notices

Acknowledgements: Candle prayer: <https://www.rexaehuntprogressively.com/pentecost11a130823>;
Saltbush - Uniting the Scattered Community: 20260816-pentecost-12-matthew-1521-28.pdf; Offering
prayer: Aaron Harper in St James Liturgy Collection (adapted); CCLI Licence 546647