

Worship at Home – 19th June – Father’s Day

Key: Scriptures: Luke 8:26-39

Call to Worship:

Children of God, give praise to our God who loves us. All who are broken and bruised, glorify our God who will grant us peace. All who are healed and restored, stand in awe of our God who has and will transform our lives. Come now and worship.

Hymn: In an age of twisted values

In an age of twisted values
we have lost the truth we need;
in sophisticated language
we have justified our greed;
by our struggle for possessions
we have robbed the poor and weak –
hear our cry and heal our nation:
your forgiveness, Lord, we seek.

2. We have built discrimination
on our prejudice and fear;
hatred swiftly turns to cruelty
if we hold resentments dear.
For communities divided
by the walls of class and race
hear our cry and heal our nation:
show us, Lord, your love and grace.

3. When our families are broken;
when our homes are full of strife;
when our children are bewildered,
when they lose their way in life;
when we fail to give the aged
all the care we know we should –
hear our cry and heal our nation
with your tender fatherhood.

4. We who hear your word so often
choose so rarely to obey;
turn us from our wilful blindness,
give us truth to light our way.
In the power of your Spirit
come to cleanse us, make us new:
hear our cry and heal our nation
till our nation honours you.

Prayers:

Almighty, powerful God, who is full of compassion, who rescues us from danger, who strengthens the weak, who feeds the poor:

We bow down and honour your name.

Almighty, powerful God, who brings hope and healing, who hears our cry, whose heart feels our pain, who heals us inside and out.

We bow down and honour your name. Amen.**Confession:**

Lord, how the world needs your healing. We think of the blight of plastic polluting our rivers and oceans, or the distress of creatures on the verge of extinction, the scars of climate change and the sufferings inflicted by conflict. Forgive us if we unwittingly play any part in these things. Show us what we can do to help bring change in the world. Lord, hear us.

Lord, mercifully hear us.

Lord there are so many forms of pain and suffering. How we need your healing hand. Forgive us: when the pull of social media is so great that we stray into wrong territory; for pain we inflict by choosing to follow our own paths and schemes; or when we think of ourselves to be better than others or allow differences to separate us. Your healing hands are always open. Forgive us when we ignore them, whether through fear ignorance or self-will. Lord, hear us.

Lord, mercifully hear us.**Assurance:**

There is so much sin and pain in our broken world. But when we journey with Jesus, we find forgiveness and healing. We are all one in Christ Jesus, who has forgiven our sins and leads us into eternity with him.

Amen.

Reading: Luke 8:26-39 - Jesus Heals a Man with Demons

²⁶ Jesus and his disciples sailed on over to the territory of Gerasa, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ As Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a man from the town who had demons in him. For a long time, this man had gone without clothes and would not stay at home but spent his time in the burial caves. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he gave a loud cry, threw himself down at his feet, and shouted, “Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? I beg you, don’t punish me!” ²⁹ He said this because Jesus had ordered the evil spirit to go out of him. Many times, it had seized him, and even though he was kept a prisoner, his hands and feet tied with chains, he would break the chains and be driven by the demon out into the desert.³⁰ Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is ‘Mob,’ ” he answered—because many demons had gone into him. ³¹ The demons begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss. ³² There was a large herd of pigs nearby, feeding on a hillside. So, the demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he let them. ³³ They went out of the man and into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ The men who had been taking care of the pigs saw what happened, so they ran off and spread the news in the town and among the farms. ³⁵ People went out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were all afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told the people how the man had been

cured.³⁷ Then all the people from that territory asked Jesus to go away, because they were terribly afraid. So, Jesus got into the boat and left.³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged Jesus, "Let me go with you." But Jesus sent him away, saying,³⁹ "Go back home and tell what God has done for you." The man went through the town, telling what Jesus had done for him.

Reflection:

- Today is Father's Day.
- A difficult day for some perhaps.
- Those whose relationships with their fathers have not been great.
- Those who have lost their fathers
- Or those who didn't even know their fathers.
- Perhaps it is a Day when we can take a moment to think about our Heaven Father who always wants the best for us and is always, loving and kind and compassionate.
- With him there are no barriers or borders, and all are loved, welcomed, and valued for who they are.
- Despite what other people, or culture or sociality says there is always a welcome in in the Heart of God.
- Our reading this morning shows that God in Christ is willing and prepared to cross all manner of barriers in order to restore, heal and bring wholeness and freedom to all.
- Luke stresses significant boundaries evident in human life, not only for the man in the story, but for us as well.
- Some of those boundaries are geographical, religious, and social.
- Firstly, Jesus crossed the sea into Gentile territory.
- He crossed a physical barrier into unknown and a potentially hostile district.
- If you like he steps out of the comfortable and enters something new.
- We too are asked to overcome physical barriers, maybe stepping outside the walls of our church building into the community is a barrier that we are being asked to cross?
- While he is there, he encounters things that make him, as a Jew, ritually unclean.
- He meets demons and tombs where the dead are laid, and pigs, unclean animals in the eyes of the Jewish people at that time.
- Maybe we too are sometimes asked to do and encounter things or people that may us feel uncomfortable, maybe even a little scared.
- But Jesus has promised that if we follow his example then he will walk right alongside, so maybe we should try it.
- The man in the story is completely isolated by his condition, unable to enjoy normal social interaction.
- During the Pandemic we all grew an understanding of what it meant to be isolated and not to be able to have normal interacting with family and friends.
- This man's life was a constant isolation, with no reprieve until Jesus came along.

- Then, everything changed.
- Jesus not only healed him, but he freed him from his demons, he made him whole again and he reinstated him into the society of which he was a part.
- Jesus can free us too, for all that binds us up, from and that chains and enslaved us, for all that hemmed us in.
- Whatever that might be.
- Jesus wants to heal us, to free us to restore us and to set us back in our rightful place as children of God.
- Not only that, then he wants us to be a part of his team.
- Offering that same love and acceptance to all those that we meet.
- He is wanting us to tear down the barriers and clear a path that leads right to the gates of heaven.
- Yet we have to remember that freedom can be scary and a challenging place to be.
- Jesus was not welcomed in Gerasa, as he changed things, he challenged the status quo, he turned everything on its head, not only for the man but for the whole community.
- Jesus is willing to cross every imaginable boundary, to enter a damaged and divided world and heal one of its most vulnerable victims.
- We too are encouraged to follow Christ's example as one who serves.
- We too are invited to cross the borders and the boundaries to reach out to the most vulnerable in our society and show them the way for love.
- Remember, that as we go, God goes with us and we can become for others what Christ has become for us.
- Our brother, teacher and friend.
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit living within us, we too can offer a welcome to all.
- Amen.

Prayers:

Loving God, Three in one, and One in Three, we pray for the breaking down of barriers between people: barriers of race, of culture or tradition.

Silence

We belong to Christ: **make us one in him.**

Loving God, Three in One and One in Three, we pray for the breaking down of barriers between people: barriers of class, of income or power.

Silence.

We belong to Christ: **make us one in him.**

Loving God, Three in One and One in Three. We pray for the breaking down of barriers between people: barriers of gender, of age, of sexual orientation. Of physical and mental ability.

Silence

We belong to Christ: **make us one in him.**

Amen.

Hymn: All Are Welcome

Marty Haugen

Let us build a house
Where love can dwell
And all can safely live
A place where
Saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive
Built of hopes and dreams and visions
Rock of faith and vault of grace
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions
All are welcome, all are welcome
All are welcome in this place

Let us build a house where prophets speak
And words are strong and true
Where all God's children dare to seek
To dream God's reign anew
Here the cross shall stand as witness
And a symbol of God's grace
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus
All are welcome, all are welcome
All are welcome in this place

Let us build a house where love is found
In water, wine and wheat
A banquet hall on holy ground
Where peace and justice meet
Here the love of God, through Jesus
Is revealed in time and space
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us
All are welcome, all are welcome
All are welcome in this place

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Marty Haugen