






**FUMC PORTSMOUTH
A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated in worshipping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ’s message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement “Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors”. We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



New England Annual Conference Tri-State District
The Rev. Sudarshana Devadhar, Bishop
The Rev. James McPhee, District Superintendent

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801
Office Phone 603-436-6038 office@fumcportsmouth.net
Pastor office hours - Tuesday and Thursday 9 am - 12 pm
[call to ensure availability]
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Check out our website at www.fumcportsmouth.com
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**July 14, 2019
FUMC Portsmouth, NH**

We Gather for Worship

Prelude & Entrance of Christ's Light

Celebrations

***Call to Worship**

L: We worship you, amazing God, with anticipation and hope.

P: Hear our prayers and songs and praise.

L: Enter our minds and hearts and open us to the power of your Holy Spirit.

P: We worship you with joy and with confidence in your loving presence.

***Hymn:** "Alleluia, Alleluia" UMH #162

A Time for the Child in all of Us

Prayer (unison)

O God, sometimes when we pray, we are afraid you might ignore us, like Jesus did with the woman whose daughter was possessed by a demon. Help us to remember that you promise to hear all our prayers and answer them, and then help us to accept that your answer isn't always what we expect. Remind us that we can trust you to do what is needed in order to bring healing, hope, and assurance to our lives. May we persevere in prayer as we continue following you faithfully. Amen.

Sung Response: "I Love You, Lord" TFWS #2068

Ministry of Music

We Proclaim the Word

Reading the Word: Matthew 15: 21-28

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

Message: "Those People"

We Respond to God's Word

***Hymn:** "We Need a Faith" TFWS #2181

Concerns and Joys

Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Gratitude Moment John VanReenen

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

***Doxology:** (Please join in singing the following:) UMH #94

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

Generous God, you have provided us with many opportunities to serve you. May we recognize your call to give of our time, talents, and treasure to help others. Amen.

We Go Forth to Serve

***Hymn:** "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" UMH #430

***Choral Benediction** (Congregation encircles the Sanctuary)

May the Lord, gracious God bless and keep you forever. Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and seek His face, and His grace forever. May the Lord, mighty God bless and keep you forever.

***Pastor's Charge**

Postlude

**Please stand as you are comfortable*

*TFWS = The Faith We Sing UMH = United Methodist Hymnal
Large print bulletins are available from the greeters*

Welcome!

Whether you are joining us for worship for the first time or after many years of attending here at First UMC, we want you to know that you are welcome!

We are an inclusive community that invites everyone to be part of our church fellowship. Thank you for being here, and we hope that you have had a meaningful experience of worshipping our God so you leave this place feeling that you have been blessed to be a blessing. Please join us again!

Rev. Deb Hanson



Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson
Pastor's Assistant - David Richards
Liturgist - Yvonne Griffin
Lay Leader - Susan Sarosiek
Acolyte - Dave Richards
Director of Music - Bevan Bloemendaal
Greeters - Silanpaa Family
Ushers - Ken Young & Ken Westbrook
Sound Tech - Sue Sarosiek
Worship Service Tech - Sue Richards
Photographer - Dave Atkinson

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER...

Gayle Gardei
Marion Collinshaw
Sue Goodhue
Hunter Pinkley
Sylvia Bartlett
Brian Thompson
Malia Broe
Gil Stebbins
Rev. Bill Gardei
Woodie Lange
Roseanne
Rev. David Kerr
Jim New
Dan Hislop and family
Bobbie Noble
Pastor Sue Ellery
Judy Doyon
Charles Gilman
Diederich Family
Aunt Karen (PennySue)
Our Church Family
Barbara & Jim Slater
Barbara Sylvester
Pauline Boynton
Barbara Millar
Irene Derosier
Barbara Clement
Joette MacKenzie
Vicky Fernandez
Alissa Fernandez
Jessie
John Richards
Dotty Prince
John Erickson
Maria Fernandez



Come join us for coffee hour
after church service in
Sanborn Hall.. We'd love to
catch up with you and see
how your week has gone.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Sunday School

Sunday school will continue for the summer. The children will be watching DVD's on the "Ten Commandments" as well as learning about some of the biblical stories we will be focusing on during our worship time. All are welcome, and if there are those who would be willing to give the regular teachers a break, even if it is for one Sunday, please let Rev. Deb know.

Camperships are available for children and youth who would like to attend Wanakee! We pay part of the cost. Contact David Richards if you are interested.

Church Council meeting on July 23, at 6 pm in the church office.

SPRC will meet after worship July 28, 2019

The **Finance Trustees** and **Church Council** will have a combined meeting on August 13, at 6 pm in the church office.

11th Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Weds., September 11 at Pease Golf Course. For more information check in the office or this months Beacon.

Just a friendly reminder, please try to keep your pledge up to date so we can meet our financial obligations as a church. Thank you for your faithful giving!

CRASE (Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events) will be held on Saturday 8/24 at FUMC. The Portsmouth police department is conducting training for businesses, schools, churches, and community members for direction what they should do if confronted with an Active Shooter event. it provides strategies, guidance, and a plan. This is a church -wide training. All are encouraged to attend.



Memorial Service for Fred Pettigrew on July 20th at 11am here at the church. All are welcome.



Flowers this Sunday are in honor of our church family members that are in Senior Living



SERMON TRANSCRIPT GIVEN BY
REV. DR. DEB HANSON

“Those People” – 7/14/19
First UMC – Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 15:21-28

THEME: God welcomes ALL people.

Her daughter was sick – possessed by a demon, and she would do anything to have her healed! She had heard about a Jewish rabbi named Jesus who healed the sick, and even without thinking, she sought him out. When she finally found him, she began to call, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” Nothing. He didn’t even flinch, didn’t respond, said nothing. The only sound she heard were his disciples urging him to send her away – she wasn’t, after all, “one of us.”

Wow! This doesn’t sound like Jesus, at least not the Jesus we have read about in the gospels or the Jesus who has been presented to us throughout Sunday school and in sermons. We are used to Jesus who is accepting of everyone, and who welcomed sinners, women, children, and even foreigners. What is going on here?

In the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 15 falls at the first part of Jesus’ ministry. He had just barely chosen the disciples, but he had been healing and teaching and performing miracles. He also had been accosted by the temple and synagogue leaders who challenged his teachings about God and criticized him for breaking the religious rules, such as not washing hands before eating or plucking grains of wheat on the Sabbath.

In verse 6, he told them, “. . . for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God. You hypocrites!” And in verses 10-20 he goes on to talk about the things that defile a person are not external, but what comes from the heart. All this is to defy the religious leaders, and we discover in the verses we heard read today that, at least at that point in his ministry, Jesus believed that he was called to “straighten out” Israel.

I was reminded about churches whose regular mantra is, “We’ve never done it that way before,” which means they don’t want to try it now either. Some of my colleagues have heard, “Well, we tried that once, but it didn’t work, so we’re sure it won’t work again.” Church growth leaders say that those two statements mean that the church cannot and will not grow because the people aren’t open to new things, to change, to hearing things differently.

Recently, my husband Dave was telling me about something he read somewhere that is a good illustration. We can add many numbers in different ways to reach the number nine. $1+8=9$, $2+7=9$, $3+6=9$, and on and on. In other words, there are many ways to reach the same conclusion, not just one formula or process. At that point in his ministry, it would appear that Jesus was focused only on one goal – to reform the nation of Israel and its religious leaders.

The Canaanite woman was annoying to the disciples, and apparently to Jesus. While the disciples whined and complained about her. She was “one of those people” and should be sent away. Jesus just ignored her, and when he finally DID acknowledge her, he insulted her. “It’s not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” Um – dogs? Really, Jesus? Was he so set on his mission to bring change to Israel that, at that point, he had no room for someone who was different, an outsider, one of “those?”

Admittedly, this Canaanite woman had many strikes against her. First, she was a woman, and men were not supposed to talk with women in public during Jesus' day. Secondly, she was a foreigner. Third, she was considered unclean because she was the first to touch Jesus and probably had touched her sick daughter. And lastly, she was an enemy of Israel – a Canaanite and a gentile. Israel had conquered the land of Canaan in order to occupy the promised land. The disciples would not have seen Jesus' response – or lack of response to her – as anything but proper.

But this woman was not to be deterred. She didn't care what anyone thought of her. Her daughter was sick. Here was the man whom she believed would heal the girl. She would not give up for her daughter's sake. Many people have fought to help their children, even giving their lives for them.

About 6:00 A.M. on a Wednesday morning James Lawson of Running Springs, California (in the San Bernardino mountains) left home to apply for a job. About an hour later his thirty-two-year-old wife Patsy left for her fifth-grade teaching job down the mountain in Riverside—accompanied by her two children, five-year-old Susan and two-year-old Gerald—to be dropped off at the baby-sitter's. Unfortunately, they never got that far. Eight and a half hours later the man found his wife and daughter dead in their wrecked car, upside down in a cold mountain stream. His two-year-old son was just barely alive in the forty-eight-degree water. But in that death the character of a mother was revealed in a most dramatic and heart-rending way. For when the father scrambled down the cliff to what he was sure were the cries of his dying wife, he found her locked in death, holding her little boy's head just above water in the submerged car. For eight and a half hours Patsy Lawson had held her beloved toddler afloat and had finally died, her body almost frozen in death in that position of self-giving love, holding her baby up to breathe. She died that another might live. That's the essence of a mother's love. (Illustrations Unlimited, pp. 375-376, #2 and verified from the San Bernardino, CA Sun newspaper from Patsy and Susan's obituaries)

The essence of the Canaanite woman's love was that she risked her life to kneel before Jesus, whom she, an outcast and outsider, recognized as God's son. She called him Son of David and Lord, and she asked for mercy "*Kyrie eleison*" – "*Lord, have mercy.*" Her persistence paid off. Even in her response to Jesus' comment about throwing the children's food to the dogs, she told him that even the dogs can eat the crumbs from under the table. She would take whatever she could get if it meant that her daughter would be healed, and she believed that Jesus was the only one who could accomplish that.

When I was looking for the cover for today's bulletin, I wanted something that might reflect this scene well, and I believe that the one I found does that. It's more than the woman kneeling before Jesus and trying to get his attention; it's more than the disciples looking on; it's also the look on Jesus' face and his body language that seems to be leaning away from her as he tries not to interact.

However, Jesus' heart is moved, and his mind is opened. The Canaanite woman reaches deep inside him and offers him new ideas, new possibilities, new realizations. Maybe God worked through her to speak to Jesus and tell him that his mission was far-reaching beyond Israel. Jesus was, after all, human, too. He had been brought up in the Jewish traditions, and he saw

the misinformation in the teachings of the religious leaders. We don't really know what happened inside him, but we do know that Jesus healed the daughter and praised the woman for her faith. Even the disciples had not shown such faith. (*NOTE TO READERS – a copy of the picture is at the end of the sermon.*)

The chapters that follow in Matthew, don't really tell us very much about how the encounter may have changed Jesus until we reach the end of the gospel: “*Go therefore and make disciples of ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.*” (Ch 28:19-20a) And that became the commission to the disciples and to the church of Jesus Christ over the ages. God's mercy was for all people.

So, here we are in the twenty-first Century as one of the many churches of Jesus. What can we learn from this persistent – maybe even pesky – Canaanite woman? Our world is full of injustice, mistreatment of others, prejudice, and alienation. A colleague of mine named Phiwa Langeni, shared his experience in moving to a new school. He is black and gay, and even in grade school he was marginalized, citing the following verse: *When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. ...you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. - Leviticus 19:33-34 (NRSV)*

At my new school back in third grade, I vividly remember approaching peers on the playground and asking if I could join their game. I was met with one of the most dreaded phrases of my childhood: Tick tock, game locked. That meant they didn't want to play with me. That was the law of the playground to protect the scarce resource of playtime. Once it was spoken, I couldn't argue. I had to find some other place to play, also losing playtime as I did.

Unfortunately, this mindset didn't remain on the playground. Though it plays out differently in various settings and circumstances, our scarcity-based society thrives on exclusions. We create separations based on our sexual orientations, pigmentations, national originations, gender identifications, political inclinations, educations, or other iterations of human variations.

Our biblical ancestors too were a people who were quite familiar with being outsiders. Even so, situations of comfort made them forget about their own hardships as aliens. When they had plenty, they guarded instead of sharing. Like them, we work hard at getting and keeping what we've got at any cost. Sometimes we're so focused on doing things right that we forget to do the right thing.

I'm personally grateful for those few rule-challengers in third grade (and beyond!) who went against culture to welcome me. It's through them that I was able to thrive and be the best third grader I knew how to be. (The Rev. Phiwa Langeni is the Founder/Director of Salus Center (the first LGBTQ Resource & Community Center in Lansing, MI) and Pastor of Salus Center UCC & First Congregational UCC - Ypsilanti. Found at the on-line devotional “Still Speaking” for July 13, 2019.)

While we may not intentionally set out to alienate, reject, or criticize people who are different from us, it's helpful to remind ourselves once in a while that everyone is welcome in the family of God. If we are part of pointing fingers at “those people” whoever they may be, it might be

good to follow Jesus' example and listen, learn more, not judge, and most of all befriend. How do we keep open minds and hearts for those who are seeking hope, acceptance, and love.

Who are the ones who have felt alienated from the church? Ask folks who don't attend to learn more about why they don't go to church. We can listen and learn from them even as they can learn from us. As followers of Jesus, who died for the WORLD, we have a marvelous gift of being commissioned to carry on his work. Let's wear our faith on our sleeve for all to see, and may our actions reveal Christ in us in whatever we do and how we grow in faith.

Let us pray:

Dear God, keep us from saying, "Tick tock, doors locked." Help us realize you have room enough for all of us. Embolden us to act toward the day we can proclaim: *Tick tock, nothing locked!* Amen.