

# FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## JUNE 27, 2021 10 AM



**“GO TO GOD”**

ST. JOHN  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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Rev. Rosemary Captain

ORGANIST – SHARON BANJAVCIC

- CCLI LICENSE #11164431
- PLEASE RESPOND WITH WORDS IN BOLD PRINT.
- LITURGY BY REV. SUSAN BLAIN
- SCRIPTURE TEXTS FROM THE COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE.
- \*PLEASE STAND IF COMFORTABLY ABLE.
- **NCH** IS THE NEW CENTURY HYMNAL

*2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27*

*Psalm 130*

*2 Corinthians 8:7-15*

*Mark 5:21-43*

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**PRELUDE: “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”** William Croft

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP:** *adapted from Psalm 30*

Sing Praises to God, all you faithful ones

**God hears us in our fear and our sorrow**

Where there was no way

**God leads us in a new way**

Where there was no mercy

**God surprises us with fresh mercy**

Where there was weeping

**God invites us to step into a new dance.**

**\*OPENING HYMN: “Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer”**

**NCH 18**

**\*RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

O Faithful God, You yearn to be so close to us  
that we can know you in every breath,

in every hope, in every relationship.

**You long for us to trust in your power  
to bring to life new possibilities  
where there has been no hope.**

Meet us here today and teach us to recognize  
the ways of life and hope into which you are leading us.

**So may our desires become your desires,  
our work become your work, and may our community  
be the place where you are sought and found.  
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.**

**\*GLORIA PATRI:**

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit,  
Three- in-One; as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

**\*GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 5:21-43**

*(Today's reading is another example of a story within a story; the author of the Gospel of Mark uses that literary style frequently. This author also seems to be in a hurry because he uses words like "at that very moment" and "suddenly.")*

<sup>21</sup> Jesus crossed the lake again, and on the other side a large crowd gathered around him on the shore. <sup>22</sup> Jairus, one of the synagogue leaders, came forward. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet <sup>23</sup> and pleaded with him, "My daughter is about to die. Please, come and place your hands on her so that she can be healed and live." <sup>24</sup> So Jesus went with him.

A swarm of people were following Jesus, crowding in on him. <sup>25</sup> A woman was there who had been bleeding for

twelve years. <sup>26</sup> She had suffered a lot under the care of many doctors, and had spent everything she had without getting any better. In fact, she had gotten worse. <sup>27</sup> Because she had heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his clothes. <sup>28</sup> She was thinking, If I can just touch his clothes, I'll be healed. <sup>29</sup> Her bleeding stopped immediately, and she sensed in her body that her illness had been healed.

<sup>30</sup> At that very moment, Jesus recognized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"

<sup>31</sup> His disciples said to him, "Don't you see the crowd pressing against you? Yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" <sup>32</sup> But Jesus looked around carefully to see who had done it.

<sup>33</sup> The woman, full of fear and trembling, came forward. Knowing what had happened to her, she fell down in front of Jesus and told him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> He responded, "Daughter, your faith has healed you; go in peace, healed from your disease."

<sup>35</sup> While Jesus was still speaking with her, messengers came from the synagogue leader's house, saying to Jairus, "Your daughter has died. Why bother the teacher any longer?"

<sup>36</sup> But Jesus overheard their report and said to the synagogue leader, "Don't be afraid; just keep trusting." <sup>37</sup> He didn't allow anyone to follow him except Peter, James, and John, James' brother. <sup>38</sup> They came to the synagogue leader's house, and he saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly.

<sup>39</sup> He went in and said to them, “What’s all this commotion and crying about? The child isn’t dead. She’s only sleeping.” <sup>40</sup> They laughed at him, but he threw them all out. Then, taking the child’s parents and his disciples with him, he went to the room where the child was. <sup>41</sup> Taking her hand, he said to her, “*Talitha koum,*” which means, “Young woman, get up.”

<sup>42</sup> Suddenly the young woman got up and began to walk around. She was 12 years old. They were shocked! <sup>43</sup> He gave them strict orders that no one should know what had happened. Then he told them to give her something to eat.”

These are the Ancient Words given to us  
so that we may hear them anew.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**MESSAGE: “What Does It Take for Us to Go to God?”**

What does it take for us to turn to God? Something bad? A tragedy? That is the case for Jairus today in our story.

Jairus must have been someone considered important. He was the administrative head of the synagogue. He was the president of the board of elders, as we would call it today, who was responsible for the good management of the synagogue. Jairus was responsible for the conduct of the services even though he did not usually take part in them himself. However, he was responsible for the allocation of duties and for seeing that they were carried out with all seemliness and good order. The ruler of the synagogue was one of the most important and most respected men in the community. But something

happened to him when his daughter fell ill. Then Jairus thought of Jesus.

What happened to Jairus? First of all, his prejudices were forgotten. There was no doubt that he must have regarded Jesus as an outsider, as a dangerous heretic, as one to whom the synagogue doors were rightly closed, and one whom anyone who valued his orthodoxy would do well to avoid. However now he was big enough man to abandon his prejudices in his hour of need. (*“A prejudiced mind shuts out many a blessing.” – William Barclay*) Jairus went to Jesus.

Secondly his dignity was forgotten. He, the ruler of the synagogue, came and threw himself at the feet of Jesus, the wandering teacher; and in front of all the Jewish people in the town.

Thirdly, his pride was forgotten. It must have taken a conscious effort of humiliation for this ruler of the synagogue to come and ask for help from Jesus of Nazareth. No one wishes to be indebted to anyone else; we would like to run our lives on our own. (*“The very first step of the Christian life is to become aware that we cannot be anything other than indebted to God.” – William Barclay*)

We could speculate that Jairus also forgot his friends. It may be that, to the end, they objected to him calling in Jesus. It is rather strange that he came himself and did not send a messenger. Maybe he came because no one else in his household would consent to go. It may well be that this ruler defied public opinion and home advice in order to call on Jesus. (*“It is often the case that we are wisest when our worldly-wise friends think we are acting like fools.” – William Barclay*)

Here was a man who forgot everything except that he wanted the help of Jesus, and because of that forgetfulness he would remember forever that Jesus was and is a Savior.

What can we today learn from this story? What does it take for us to go to God when we are in disparate times? Our prejudice? Our dignity? Our pride? Our friends?

I admit that when I have a situation, I go everywhere for an answer EXCEPT TO GOD. I think God is too busy to bother with my little problem. How wrong I am!! GOD IS NEVER TOO BUSY FOR ANYONE. We must remember that God may not answer our prayers the way WE want God to answer them. God answers prayer in GOD'S WAY, IN GOD'S TIME and the answer might be NO! But the most important thing is **to go to God, everywhere, every day, and when we face the tragedy and when we experience the good in life.** Amen.

**MUSIC: "Just As I Am"** William Bradbury  
Flute/Piano Duet Sharon and Stacie

**PASTORAL PRAYER:** *Beginning with personal silent prayer.*  
God of death and life, of tragedy and comedy, of sorrow and joy, we confess our dismay at the grief and accidents that happen in this world. We cannot understand why some live in pain and some die. Forgive us if we permit our doubts to threaten our commitment to you through Jesus Christ.

God of mystery, many of the things that you do are quite beyond any explanation. Other events move us to joy and dancing with music and many instruments. Let our music also express our questions, as well as our affirmations, that we may rejoice in all things, whether in a minor or a major

key. Give us joy also in our work both begun and finished with satisfaction. We offer our work and our charities as thanksgiving to you, in Jesus Christ.

We pray for those on our prayer list and those affected by the building collapse in Miami, the terrible heat in parts of our world, and the hurricanes and storms that affect others. May they always remember that you are with them, even to the end of the age. Thank you, most Holy God.

**LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed it be your 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 debts as, we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE: THREE-FOLD AMEN**

**OFFERING INVITATION:**

The freshness of God's mercy and love, the continued generosity of God's gifts to us, call for thanksgiving and generosity on our part. This church stands because of the faithful generosity of those who came before us, and its ministry grows today because of the hopeful, expectant generosity that lives in us. Let us gather our gifts together, then, and offer them to God in gratitude, heartfelt commitment, and praise.

**\*DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above you, heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

**Generous God, take our gifts this day and use them  
so that we may be part of your great work in this world.  
Through our giving, bring a brighter day of justice and  
love, not just in our community but in the world beyond  
these walls. Strengthen our church and the whole United  
Church of Christ so that we grow together each day into a  
powerful voice for healing and peace. Amen.**

**\*HYMN: "How Can I Keep from Singing" NCH 476**

**\*BENEDICTION:**

Deep in our hearts, we know that we are children of God.  
Remember who you are, then walk in the assurance of  
God's presence and love with you always, calling you  
beyond fear into belief and joy.  
And may the grace and peace of God the Creator,  
the Redeemer, and the Sustainer come upon you this day  
and remain with you.

**POSTLUDE: "Awesome God" Rich Mullins**

**PRAYER LIST:** Urban Baum, Donna Isselhard, Nelson Libell,  
Joe Knapp, Jim Garrett, Ronald Bopp, Agnes Doctolero, Julie  
Walker, David Seneczyn, Cathy Ganschietz.