



**Church at Home 23  
for Abridge  
Sunday 16th August 2020**



**Oh, how good and pleasant it is,  
when brethren live together  
in unity!**  
(Ps 133v1)

A 'Churches Together in Lambourne' picnic, "Celebrating God Outdoors" has been arranged for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August between 3:00 and 4:30 pm at St Mary's Lambourne. Bring your own chairs, picnic rugs and picnic. There will be ongoing 'Outdoor Church' activities for all ages and the picnic will conclude with a short act of worship, including hymns, Bible story and prayers. This follows on from the success of our last united picnic held on 12 July.



**Today's readings: Genesis 45:1-15.**

Joseph makes himself known to his brothers

**Psalm 67 (Deus Misereatur)**

God's Blessings and Praise.

**Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32**

The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

**Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28.**

It is all about your mouth – what goes in and what comes out. Is it for Good or Bad?

**Prayer** – As we come to praise you dear Lord and heavenly Father, may we pause to be still; to leave the busy world alone; to breathe slowly and to bring

ourselves into the full presence of God. Oh God of welcome, You invite us into Your family. Today we come to praise you. We savour Your words to us. May we receive all the nourishment that You have for us today. **AMEN.**

**Suggested hymns to sing along to:** [And can it be ... 'Tis so sweet to Trust in Jesus ... all hail the power of Jesus name ...](#)

**The Collect:** Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

[This is a day of new beginnings](#) [Lets the words of my mouth ...](#)

**Thoughts on today's Gospel Matt 15: 10-20, 21-28**

The two stories are linked together by the common theme of uncleanness or defilement. In Israelite tradition particularly in the late Second Temple period, there were many potential sources of uncleanness. Two of the most important were eating unclean foods and contact with unclean persons. Gentiles were unclean persons because they ate unclean foods and did not follow the purity laws: washing hands, cooking utensils, sexual practices, etc. Thus, going into a Gentile's house or eating with a Gentile made a Jew unclean. Women were also often unclean because of menstrual blood. In both of these stories Jesus is dealing with explicit issues of purity or cleanliness in Jewish tradition.

The story of the Canaanite woman has only one significant sonic connection around "the dogs:" "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." To which she replies, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." This is the central interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman. The other thing to notice is the contrast in

volume. In the first episode, the woman is shouting. When she comes and kneels before him, her words are quieter and more intense.

We regard this Canaanite woman with more than just an academic interest. She awakens in us a feeling of admiration, perhaps even envy, because she stands where most of us would like to stand. What faithful Christian would not like it said of him or her: Great is your faith. How wonderful it would be then to a believer in God, if Jesus would place his hand on our shoulder and say: You have a remarkable talent for faith.

Questions:-

1. Would you qualify? Do you have a remarkable talent for Faith?
2. What comes out/in of your mouth? Does it reflect God's glory?
3. If you stood in front of Jesus, would He see you as a faithful Christian?

## **The Apostles' Creed**

Let us all confirm our faith by saying the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

**The reflection and all-age activities sheets** form part of the overall service.

You can find these resources on the websites of the two churches and here are the links:

[www.lambournechurch.com](http://www.lambournechurch.com)    [www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org](http://www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org)

## **For our prayers:**

- The families and businesses of the village
- Our political leaders as they work out how to manage the future.
- For those we know who are holidaying this month
- For those we know who are sick, at home or in hospital and those whose families have disintegrated during the crisis.
- For people whose faith has been challenged during the past months.

Add any particular people and situations that The Holy Spirit brings to your mind as you have been praying and then say our family prayer, [The Lord's Prayer. \(Hillsong Worship\)](#)

End your time of church-at-home by saying out loud the words of **The Grace**, reaching out your hands to include in your imagination all those you know and love, who live here in the village and beyond

In the peace of your home, just listen to the words. Pause and Pray.

## [Touch of Heaven](#)

**Prayer:** Father, help us to live this day to the full, being true to You, in every way. Jesus, help us to give ourselves away to others, being kind to everyone we meet. Spirit, help us to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all we do and say. AMEN (Lectio 365)

## **Church Leaders' contact details:**

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