

'The Ambassador'

st. paul's
anglican
church

**As Ambassadors for Christ, we are called to
bring our Lord's grace, love, and peace to everyone.**

~ **Friday August 6, 2021** ~

50 Years of Love!

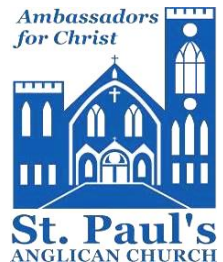


Sharron & John Forshaw celebrated their '50th Wedding Anniversary by renewing their vows in the Labyrinth last Sunday. Archdeacon Deborah presided as the couple held hands and pledged their love anew, surrounded by family. An engraved brick was placed in the labyrinth to mark the occasion. Congratulations on a half-century well-spent! 😊

A "GRACE NOTE" from thunderbay-northshoreanglicans.com

"The Bread of Life never gets stale."

visit our website @ stpaulsanglicanchurch.ca and find us on facebook



1. Rector's Grace Notes ~

ZOOM / Phone-In 9:00 am Morning Prayer Service This Friday & Every Friday

I invite you to join me for this 30 min. service. You are then free to leave the call or stay on for a check-in.

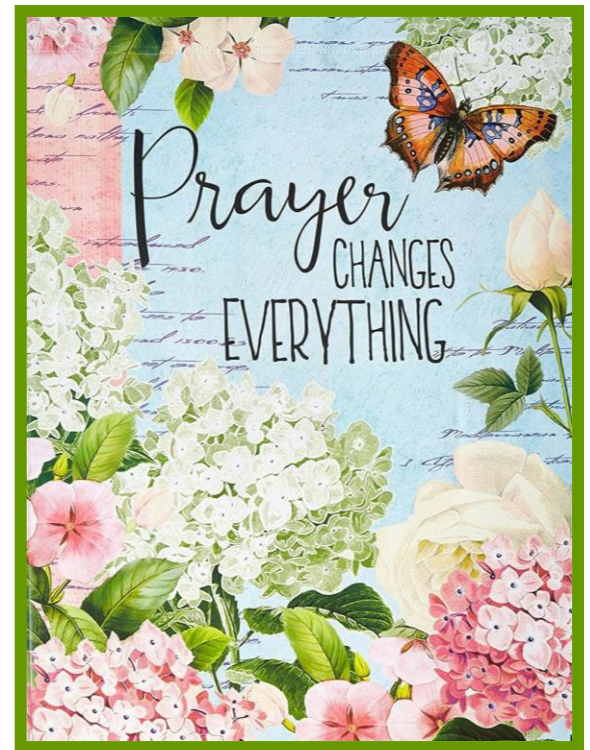
Deborah Kraft is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting: ↓ **SAME LINK EVERY WEEK** ↓

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82208698866>

-  **Topic:** Morning Prayer with the Parish
-  **Time:** Every Friday Morning at 9 am
-  **Meeting ID:** 822 0869 8866

OR Dial any one of these numbers ~

-  1-[204]-272-7920  1-[438]-809-7799
-  1-[587]-328-1099  Meeting ID: 822 0869 8866



Good News! We're Open For Worship! ☺

I am really looking forward to our re-opening this Sunday, August 8. We will have 2 weekly Communion services: 8:30 am and 10:00 am.

The 10:00 am service will continue to be live-streamed (**YouTube / St. Paul's Media**) and all the services will stay on our *YouTube* channel so you can watch them at your convenience!!

I am excited to see real live people back in the pews!! **Please remember your mask and to socially distance.** I am finding that St. Paul parishioners are committed to vaccinations so that is really good news. Jouni and I have both received the 2 shots.

We will have **fellowship** outside following the 10:00 am service. We will serve bottled water and juice boxes and cupcakes.

Baptisms ~ "I Sign You With The Cross And Mark You As Christ's Own Forever."

I am taking requests for baptisms. Please email me directly stpauls.rector@shaw.ca or call/text me on my cell (807-624-7161).

Home Communions

I have now started back taking communion to people in their residences. **Please let me know if you wish to receive communion.** Email me (stpauls.rector@shaw.ca) or call/text me (807-624-7161).

Thank You For Your Generosity

Thank you if you have been able to maintain your church offering and tithes throughout the pandemic. It is very much appreciated. Several people are making a commitment to **e-transfers** (stpaulsthunderbay@outlook.com) and the money goes straight into the church bank account. Many of the church expenses have remained the same throughout the pandemic and we respectfully ask for your support. Please speak with our **Offering Secretary, Ernie Tilbury** (807-577-3104) if you wish more information about how to support God's work through St. Paul's, the *Diocese of Algoma*, and the *Anglican Church of Canada*.

Monarchs

I am happy to report that the monarchs found our milkweed again this year. We have 2 large plants close to our cottage front door at *One Island Lake*. We now have several chrysalides on our neighbouring black-eyed susan plant. I get a great deal of excitement out of watching the

caterpillars grow and then turn into a “J” by attaching themselves to a leaf via their tail and then becoming a green chrysalis with a gold-beaded collar. I check them out every evening. The monarch cycle reminds me of what happens at the end of our earthly lives. **Through faith in Christ, we have received our eternal life, and are transformed into a heavenly state of being that we can't even imagine.** I commend the monarch caterpillars for leaving the safety of their food source, the milkweed, and going to an unknown plant.

Editor's Note: The Monarchs found our church garden milkweed again this year, too! Even though the plants were in a different location, at the blue Office door instead of on the front, Alison Arthur spotted a caterpillar happily chomping on them. The next day, all the flowers and leaves were gone and that fat caterpillar was hidden away, digesting. 😊



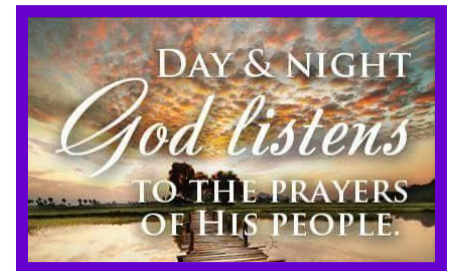
Candle Lighting

I plan to maintain our new tradition of lighting a candle on the altar on Sunday mornings for those who have died or for a significant celebration. Please let me know your requests!!

They do not need to be parishioners! We are all part of God's holy family!!

Who Do You Want Us To Pray For?

Please email me (stpauls.lector@shaw.ca) or text me (807-624-7161) your prayer requests and we will pray for you or your loved one by name during the 10:00 am service.



Healing Prayer AVAILABLE VIA OUR 'PARISH PRAYER CHAIN'

The power of prayer to heal and to comfort is truly a blessing! We encourage you to request a Healing Prayer through our **CONFIDENTIAL Prayer Chain ministry.** The dedicated parishioners who undertake this special ministry offer up the names they receive in prayer continually throughout the day. Call/Text **Sandra Rejall at 629-3431** to leave a

name; give as little or as much info as you wish. *“Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them.”* (James 5: 14)



Good News! We're On TV!

Watch our weekly Sunday 10:00 am service on local TV, every Tuesday at 7:00 pm on **Channel 10, "Shaw Spotlight."** This Sunday's Service will be broadcast **Tuesday August 10 at 7:00 pm.** This free

service from Shaw Spotlight is a blessing. Let me know if you have been able to enjoy it!



watch live or **ANYTIME**



Our Sunday Service LIVESTREAMS ARE HERE FOR YOU!

We will continue to live-stream both our **10:00 am Eucharist Service** every Sunday. Worship with us on **YouTube / St. Paul's Media** or watch the Sunday service on **Shaw TV Channel 10, Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm.**

Office STILL Closed, But **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!** 😊

Our Church Office is still closed to the public, but we are still available to address your questions, requests, or concerns. We are here every day, often on the phone or attending multiple 'ZOOM' meetings, so please do **leave a message if we can't answer your call!** We continually check messages and



emails as we work behind the scenes to bring you the livestreams and keep you updated. You are most welcome to email myself (stpauls.lector@shaw.ca) or call us at 622-4945 (office messages) or 624-7161 (Rector's cell).

Archdeacon Deborah+

2. My Sermon from Sunday July 11, 2021, 'Pentecost 7' ~ "Count Your Blessings"

Speak, Lord, your servants are listening. Amen

I find that one of the hardest things I do every week in my sermon prayers and preparation is to decide which scripture appointed for the week is the one that I will be using for my sermon inspiration. This week was no different. I started off thinking that I would preach on David bringing the Ark of The Covenant into Jerusalem. The ark held the 10 Commandments, the rod of Aaron, and some manna that sustained the Hebrews in the wilderness. David was so excited that he danced before the Lord with all his might and he shouted with joy. There were songs and tambourines and castanets and harps and cymbals. Then I moved to the gospel which was the tragic tale of the murder of John the Baptist by King Herod. This happened on the night of Herod's birthday party. Due to a promise he had made to Herodias because she had danced so well, he had John beheaded and his head put on a platter and brought into a room where the birthday celebration was going on. We celebrated my husband Jouni's birthday yesterday and I cannot imagine seeing someone's head brought into the room at the same time as the birthday cake. Well, in the case of Jouni, it wasn't cake but 2 of his favourite pies.

I finally settled on the passage appointed for today from Paul's letter to Christians in Ephesus ~ what we know as Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 3-14. As soon as Paul writes his opening greeting, he continues on with a listing of spiritual blessings that you and I receive in Christ.

A group of seniors were sitting outside of *Tim's* and talking about all of their ailments while drinking coffee. One said, "My arms are so weak I can barely lift up my coffee cup." Another one said, "My cataracts are so bad, I can barely see my coffee." A third person said, "My hands are so crippled that I can barely write my name." A 4th person said, "What? Speak up. I can't hear anybody." The 5th person said, "My blood pressure pills make me really dizzy." The 6th person added, "I can barely turn my head because of the arthritis in my neck." The 7th said, "I often forget where I am going," The others all nodded and said that getting old is not for sissies. The last person looked around at them and said, "We need to stop looking at the negative and start accentuating the positive. Let's count our blessings. I'll start: At least we can all still drive!!"

Counting our blessings is important. We need to focus on the good things in our lives. Even in the midst of the pandemic there have been blessings. I have enjoyed a chance to slow down and to spend more time at home. We were able to get our live-streaming equipment and a new sound system for the church. This enables us to reach out and worship with people all around the world. Many of us have received the blessings of two vaccines. I haven't been able to shop or buy clothes or get my hair cut and so another blessing is that I have saved a lot of money.

The apostle Paul knew the significance of counting our blessings. Here he was under house arrest in Rome, and yet he still reminded the Christians in Ephesus of their spiritual blessings that came from their Christian faith. He writes that we have every spiritual blessing.

Now that is really something!



Paul is so excited about our spiritual blessings that he puts them at the beginning of his letter, right after the salutation. I wonder what he thought were his blessings of being under house arrest in Rome? Perhaps converting his Roman guards. Receiving lots of time to write to his friends. Having visitors come and speak with him. Feeling the energy of the eternal city.

And of course the following spiritual blessings which are the most important of all. Here's what Paul listed: (from Chapter 1, verses 3 – 14.

1. Christ chose us because he **loves us**
2. Christ has adopted us as his children
3. We have glorious **grace**
4. We have the riches of grace that Jesus has lavished upon us
5. Christ has shared with us the wonders of God's will
6. We share in God's plan that unites heaven and earth
7. We are all named in God's will ~ we have an eternal inheritance
8. We live to praise God and we receive God's glory
9. When we believe and are baptized we are marked forever with the **Holy Spirit**
10. We have received our salvation through faith

Which one of these blessings, and I counted to 10, is really speaking to you today? I love that God has adopted me and lavished grace upon me. You and I are named as beneficiaries in God's will. Over my nearly 21 years in parish ministry, I have noticed how happy people get when they are named to receive a bequest in a will. When the church receives a bequest, we receive an envelope from a lawyer in the mail and it is exciting to see the name of the church listed as a recipient of a person's generosity.



Paul writes that Jesus lavishes grace on all of us. Isn't that a glorious word, **LAVISH**. It means to bestow something and do it with extravagant generosity. Grandparents lavish love on their grandchildren. Pet owners lavish attention on their pets. Successful entrepreneurs lavish follow-up care on their clients.

People in this parish lavish many things to this parish and I am forever grateful.

May you and I always count our spiritual blessings and do this each and every day. Instead of counting sheep at night, count your spiritual blessings.

- ♥ God has adopted me.
- ♥ I am God's beloved.
- ♥ I share in God's inheritance.
- ♥ I am blessed with eternal life.
- ♥ I am an adopted child of God.





Adoption, inheritance, redemption and grace. All in one lavish package of blessings.

Life doesn't get any better than this!

Thank you God!

Archdeacon Deborah+

3. My Sermon from Sunday July 4, 2021, 'Pentecost 6' ~ **"The Missing Words"**

Speak, Lord, your servants are listening. Amen

What kind of family do you have? Do people in your family share all the stories or just the nice ones? Are the unpleasant ones not talked about or are they shared? Everyone has a different kind of family dynamics. If there has been a major trauma in the family and the family wishes to move forward and to heal, the telling of the story, the telling of the truth is essential. People often don't wish to share the story because they feel it will hurt too much. It is human nature to hide the ugly stories.

Grieving parents have always told me that it is worse if no one mentions the child's name again or shares stories about the child. They say that then it becomes a 'double' death ~ it is as if the child never lived. I know why caring people practice these omissions. They are trying to protect the family from hurt but it actually just makes everything worse.

I have been asked to do a presentation on ZOOM to bereaved parents this month, to parents who have lost a child. This is difficult to prepare as I don't have the words to say. However, I commend *Hospice Northwest* for doing this memorial and for keeping the memories of these children alive. Truth-telling. Essential to healthy individuals, healthy families, healthy workplaces and healthy countries.

For decades, we have had the reading from the 5th chapter of the second **Book of Samuel** in our Lectionary (called the *Revised Common Lectionary* or *RCL*). These are the readings from the Bible for use in Christian worship, all around the world. Today on the 6th Sunday after Pentecost, we have scheduled readings from **Samuel, 2nd Corinthians** and **Mark's gospel**. Until this year and my heightened awareness of the importance of telling the story and listening to the story and acting upon the story, I did not realize that the 3 verses omitted from the Samuel passage and intentionally left out are highly significant. 3 whole verses from the 2nd book of Samuel, chapter 5. Verses 6, 7, and 8.

Why did the authors of the lectionary leave them out? Why was this reading censored? It seems to be a narrative of David becoming the king to replace Saul and then telling us that King David reigned for 40 years. The passage also speaks about Jerusalem becoming the capital of the United Kingdom of Judah in the south and Israel in the north. The passage ends in verse 10 with David becoming **"greater and greater for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him."**

All good stuff, isn't it? So what has been left out? I hope you are getting curious. What is in the 3 missing verses that you may have never heard or, like me, never paid attention to before?

I will read them to you: **THE MISSING VERSES . . .**

The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back" – thinking, "David cannot come in here." Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David. David had said on that day, "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates." Therefore, it is said "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house."

What are we learning? David conquers the city of David, the city of Jerusalem. The Jebusites are convinced that their city is invincible. They taunt David by saying that the blind and the lame will be able to keep them out. David decides to conquer the city by using the tunnels that bring water into the city and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. He then decides to shut the blind and the lame out of the city. Not a very compassionate action is it?

The author of the reflection for this week's scripture from the book *Disciplines, Daily Devotions for 2021*, James Harnish, writes this about the missing verses:

Ugly stories of exclusion, racism, injustice, and violence are embedded in the history of every city and nation and continue to infect our lives each day. We all have reasons to repent for the ways we succumb to the worst demons in our sin-infected economic and political systems.

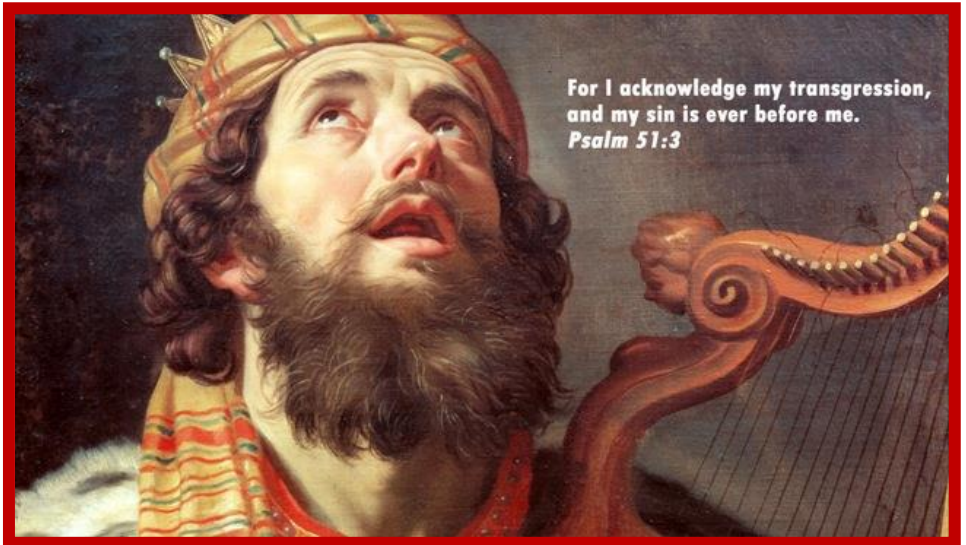
In spite of David's sin and his turning away from God and his treatment of the marginalized and his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, God continues to favour David because **David is able to repent and to do better.** Our loving God forgives us, heals us, blesses us, and gives us a vision for the future.

Although these 3 missing verses paint a picture of David at odds with the Shepherd Boy King and the author of 'The Lord is My Shepherd' (Psalm 23), I think they are essential for all of us. When we truly understand and experience the redemptive power of God, we too can be partakers of God's holy grace. If we portray King David as perfect, then we will never rise to his level. **But David was a flawed human being, just like you and like me.** There is hope for us.

In his gospel passage from Mark 6, Jesus is judged unfairly and unkindly by the people of his hometown Nazareth. They call him the carpenter's son and are disdainful and dismissive of his preaching, his wisdom, and his power. Jesus was very disappointed with their attitudes and negative perceptions of him and so was unable to do deeds of power that day in Nazareth. Their hearts were not open to grace.

A man who was open to grace, and exemplified Christ's compassion and inclusivity was a Lutheran Pastor who passed away in February 2021 in Thunder Bay at the age of 90. His name was **John Schmidt** and 'Pastor John' did his long-time ministry with unconditional love. Pastor John was a true Ambassador for Christ and he took care of all of God's people, including the blind and the lame. He walked alongside many people in their journey of discipleship.

As we grow in grace, we begin to become more inclusive and more tolerant and less judgmental. We



begin to pay attention. Harnish points us to the historical reality. A couple of hundred years after David's judgement against the blind and the lame, the prophet Isaiah has an inclusive vision of the city of Jerusalem. A couple of hundred years after that, the prophet Jeremiah included the blind and the lame in the return of the Jewish people from exile in Babylon. Micah prophesied that the lame would be welcome in Jerusalem.

We know why there are these mentions of inclusivity, and specific mention of the blind and the lame. The prophets would have been very aware of the feelings of David regarding the blind and the lame. They would have grown up knowing the 3 missing verses.

Now we know why Jesus spoke so much about the blind and the lame.

Jesus himself made a point of healing the blind and the lame. St. John the Divine has a vision of all being healed in his Revelation.

Our country of Canada has done some great things in terms of universal health care and the discovery of insulin. However, we have real episodes of darkness.

Here are just a few:

- Our **turning away in 1939 of the boat full of 900 Jewish refugees** who were seeking safety and sanctuary. As no country would accept them, they had to return to Europe where many then died in Nazi concentration camps.
- **Residential schools.**
- Our treatment of **Chinese Canadians** in the early 1900s.
- The **internment of Japanese Canadians** during WWII.

The Italians and the Finnish were badly treated during WWII and my German ancestors changed the spelling of their last name from 'Schrumm' to 'Shrum' when they came to Canada.

As the archdeacon, I review the parish profiles of congregations seeking a new incumbent. The best profiles are those that tell the truth and share their struggles and their dark times. They do not censor out the stories that portray them in an unfavourable light.

I am thankful that when the prophet Samuel wrote the Samuel literature, he included verses 6, 7, and 8. I find **they add hope and reality** to the narrative of the life of David.

I had our **Lay Reader Marty** read the verses from Samuel as suggested by the lectionary and leave out the missing verses. In 3 years from now, when this reading comes up again, I promise you that the 3 missing verses will be included.

I believe in this country of Canada and **I know we can learn and do better.** In 3 years from now, I hope that the strength and the vision for this country of Canada will have moved us ahead. Will we still make mistakes? Of course, but we will learn, grow, and act. Did Jesus stop his ministry because of the



attitudes of the people in his hometown? Of course not.

We tell the truth. We listen to the truth. We dream. We move forward together ~ united, inclusive, non-judgmental, caring and loving.

In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus. Amen.

Archdeacon Deborah+

4. My Sermon from Sunday June 27, 2021, 'Pentecost 5' ~ *"The Power Of Touch"*

Speak, Lord, your servants are listening. Amen.

There is a field of study in science today that is called the 'Science of Touch.' Many studies have been done to understand touch and its importance, particularly between people.

In one interesting lab study, two strangers were put into a room with a barrier between them so they couldn't see each other. One person put his or her arm through a barrier. The other person was given a list of emotions and had to touch the person on the forearm for just one second. The object was to communicate the emotion. The person being touched had to guess the emotion. Remarkably, the participants being touched were able to guess compassion correctly nearly 60% of the time. They also guessed the emotions of gratitude, anger, love, and fear more than 50% of the time. The key message is that the touch language of compassion is essential to what it means to be human.

Touching gives life. I have read about orphaned babies who were left alone in cribs without being touched and how this touch-deprivation had a profound impact on their development. In fact, babies who are touch-deprived struggle to gain weight. There are cultural differences in touching also. North Americans and the British rarely touch friends during a conversation while people in the Mediterranean countries touch each other constantly. Now, of course, all this has changed since the beginning of the pandemic. I wonder if and when we will feel comfortable touching people outside of our bubbles again?

"To touch can be to give life," said Michelangelo, and he was absolutely right. Touching can be soothing and it should signal safety and trust. That is another reason why the residential school survivors have suffered so much. They did not receive the gentle and kind touches that build caring relationships.

Warm touch stimulates the release of oxytocin which calms us. A caring touch helps us when we are under stress and it promotes trust and generosity.

Studies show that touching people with Alzheimer's can have a large impact on getting them to relax, and to connect with others.

I find it sad that in our pre-Covid world, we've had to be very careful about touching due to potential litigation. As a female priest, it has been more acceptable for me to touch people than male priests who must be very careful about touching children and youth. When patting the hand of someone we are talking with, they are more likely to have a positive experience.

Now this doesn't mean that when the pandemic restrictions are lifted we go around invading people's personal space and comfort zones, but we are aware of the power of touch. A gentle touch of the hand or shoulder. A hug for those who are comfortable with them. I feel blessed when I do healing prayers for a person and touch them on the head and anoint them with the sign of the cross on their forehead. We need to connect with people on a basic physical level. This is why sharing the peace of Christ feels so good and is comforting to many.

Jesus knew the power of touch and used touch constantly in his healing ministry. As Christians, who



have the light of Christ within us, the power of touch has a tremendous impact when we touch another person through the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus. In the early Christian church, people were ordained and set aside for ministry through touch, through the laying on of hands.

In our gospel this morning from Mark 5, Jesus restores a young girl to life and heals a woman. Both the restoration and the healing involve touch. A man of faith, a leader of the synagogue, named Jairus (pronounced 'Jay-eye-rus') spots Jesus, falls at his feet and begs Jesus to touch his daughter who is very sick. She is ***“at the point of death”*** (Mark 5:23). Jairus believes that if Jesus lays his hands on and touches his daughter, she will get better and live.



As Jesus is walking to the home of Jairus, an unnamed woman comes up to Jesus from behind. She reaches out and touches his cloak. She believes that if she touches Jesus' clothes, not even his flesh, her bleeding of 12 years will stop and she will be made well. She is right! Her bleeding stops instantly. Her ostracization from the community ends immediately. For 12 years, she was not permitted to touch anyone because of her bleeding. Imagine her emotional suffering. Not able to touch her family or her friends.

The story of Jairus' sick daughter intensifies. People who live in his home find Jairus and tell him that it is too late. His daughter is dead. No need for Jesus, the teacher to come. Imagine what was in the mind of Jairus. He was probably thinking that if Jesus hadn't stopped to speak with the women who touched his cloak, he would have been able to get to Jairus's home in time and heal his daughter. If the crowds around Jesus weren't so huge, Jesus would have been able to walk faster and get to the home in time. All the what ifs...

Jesus hears the conversation and tells Jairus to BELIEVE. Taking with him only 3 of his disciples ~ Peter, James, and John ~ they go to the home. People were weeping and wailing and grieving for this 12 year old girl. Jesus tells the mourners that the girl is not dead, that she is sleeping. And then in spite of their tears, they all laugh at him.

Jesus takes Jairus, his wife, Peter, James, and John with him into where the girl is lying. Jesus then touches her. He takes her by the hand and speaks to her in Aramaic: ***“TALITHA CUM”*** which means ***“Little girl, get up.”*** The girl immediately comes back to life. She gets up and she walks and she eats. What a story of grace and of power!



Everyone wanted to touch Jesus because they all understand this significance and the impact of touching Jesus and being touched by him.



The gospels are filled with examples of Jesus healing through touch:

Matthew 14:36 ~

The people begged Jesus that the sick people might touch even the fringe of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Luke 6:19 ~

And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Matthew 17:7 ~

And Jesus came and touched them, saying "Get up, and do not be afraid."

Matthew 20:34 ~

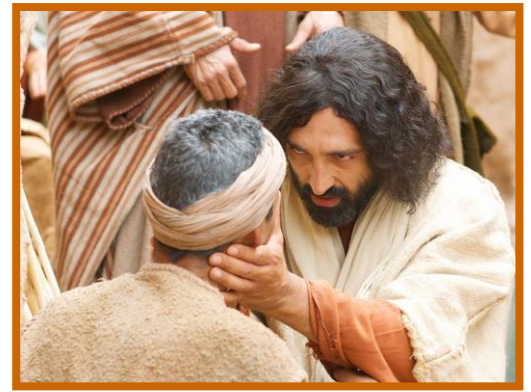
Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him.

Mark 10:13 ~

People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them.

Mark 10:16 ~

And Jesus took the children up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.



Jesus even put his fingers in a deaf man's ears and touched his tongue. Jesus was known to touch eyes which enabled blind people to see. He would take people by the hand and they would be healed immediately.

The first thing that Jesus does when a leper comes to him for healing is to stretch out his hand and touch the man.

The power of touch is real and essential. That is why it is such a sin when touch is abused and given in violence, in lust, in anger, in viciousness.

I pray that when the world opens up again, we as Christians can use touch in the way God intended. As comfort, as healing, as soothing, as compassion, as kindness, as connectedness to bring healing to the other person and glory to God.

The apostle Paul calls us to be imitators of Christ. Let's imitate the compassionate touch of our Lord and Saviour. Amen.



Archdeacon Deborah+



5. **The Last Laugh** ~ "A cheerful heart is good medicine." [Proverbs 7:22]

"Unfair Advantage ..."

Open our hearts to the riches of God's grace.

Archdeacon Deborah+

"The Happy Rector & Archdeacon"