

**Genesis 12:1-9      The Call of Abram**

12 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot and all the possessions that they had gathered and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran, and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, 6 Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he built an altar to the Lord and invoked the name of the Lord. 9 And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

**Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26 - The Call of Matthew**

9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. 10 And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

**A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed**

18 While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." 19 And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. 20 Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, 21 for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." 22 Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that moment. 23 When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, 24 he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. 25 But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. 26 And the report of this spread through all of that district.



The lectionary for today is filled

with so many themes that one is overwhelmed with riches. There is old Abraham, the ancestor of the promise;

the tax collector Matthew,

Jairus and his dying daughter,

and last but not least

the woman Jesus encounters, as if by accident,

on the way to heal Jairus' sick child.

The Greek word for faith, "pistis,"

is the same root contained in the word for "trust,"

which really means to dwell in pistis/faith.

So let us look at the trust

all these people put in their God and,

later, in Jesus, the Incarnate God.

One must listen to the story of Abraham with the trust of a child

and ask the questions a child asks

when first hearing this story:

How did God speak to him?

Why did God choose Abraham?

How could Abraham,

at a time when travel was so terribly difficult,

take his whole family and his animals to cross to another land

without knowing what he would find there?

We can only guess at the answers to these questions,

but of one thing we can be sure:

Abraham was convinced that God called him,

that God made promises to him,

and that God would keep these promises

even when it seemed that it was utterly impossible

that they would be fulfilled.

It was not adherence and obedience to laws

that made this possible for Abraham,

it was Abraham's complete trust in the God of promises  
that made him leave his home in order to become the father  
of not just one nation, but of nations.

Take a good look around our own community

...how many new families do you know that moved here  
to try to escape the COVID 19 pandemic,  
many thought they just needed to escape  
from the confines of closeness of city life, to save themselves,  
but so many stayed.

They trusted that their move  
would keep their families and themselves safe from the disease.  
Many of them feel trapped in cities that are overrun by crime,  
a rising cost of living  
and hostility to their values

And in the end many of these families found  
than the healing touch of community  
the touch of hospitality,

The touch of good education for their children  
brought them to a better way of life.

All of us would benefit from putting your future in God's hands,  
just as myself and my family were not only accepted but welcomed  
here in Dorset when we moved so many years ago, not  
Knowing a soul, yet trusting that God led us on a path of  
Love, joy and hope in this community.

Abraham, the father of our faith,

began his spiritual odyssey when the Lord said,

“Go from your country ... to the land that I will show you”

I ask you all to put your future in God's hands.

A similar kind of trust propels the persons in the New Testament stories.

Here is Matthew, a tax collector,

who obeys the call and becomes a disciple.

The tax collectors were despised in the day of Jesus

because they collected taxes for the enemy,  
who in this case was Herod Antipas.

The tax collectors were lumped together  
with the sinners by the Pharisees,  
in that same suspect category  
that they placed the other people who were attracted to  
and were welcomed by Jesus' love.

It is most probable that Matthew and Jesus had seen each other  
as the rabbi passed by the market place of Capernaum,  
there by the Sea of Galilee.

On this day Jesus utters an invitation to the tax collector  
who sits alone in the booth,  
despised and avoided by the other citizens.

"Follow me," and once again we can encompass  
the Greek word for faith, "pistis,"  
that same root contained in the word for "trust,"  
that same definition  
which really means to dwell in pistis/faith.

Let me tell you a little story...

A very unlucky man finds a strange looking lamp,  
and when he touches it, a genie pops out.

The genie tells him he has one wish

The man says "Wow, finally my bad luck will come to an end!"

After thinking about it for a long time,

he says "I wish I had the midas touch"

The genie grants his wish,

and for the rest of that mans life

everything he touched turned into a muffler.

Today I want to talk about another kind of touch-----for...

**With one touch from Jesus everything changes.**

So, it was, when Jesus returned,

And behold, there came a man named Jairus,  
and he was a ruler of the synagogue.

And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house,  
for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age,  
and she was dying.

But as He went, the multitudes crowded Him. Now a woman,  
suffering for twelve years,  
who had spent all her livelihood on physicians  
and could not be healed by any,  
came from behind and touched the border of His garment.

And immediately her suffering stopped.

So here we have a multitude of people,  
a community all crowding Jesus.

We have an important man in the community.

Jairus and his daughter is dying.

The whole community watches as this important man bows down at Jesus'  
feet begging Him to come and heal his dying daughter.

We also have the disciples who are journeying with Jesus  
and an outcast woman.

She is an outcast from the community,  
has no place in the community,  
she has no voice

and has been declared by the community as unclean  
because of her condition.

She believes she is unworthy of love.

She believes the lies said over her by the community,  
the world and the religious community of the time.

**And then with one touch from Jesus, something happened.**

This woman in the crowd...

Remember this woman was an outcast.

She is unclean, has no identity,  
no place and no voice within the community.

The complete opposite to Jairus who was a religious leader,  
a voice in the community, respected and admired.

This outcast woman,

with one touch from Jesus,  
received her physical healing.

**With one touch from Jesus she has physical healing.**

Let us go back to the woman.

With one touch from Jesus the woman  
is healed of her physical condition,  
but that is only a small part of the miracle she received that day.

Let us notice what Jesus says

**And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?”**

Now Jesus is the Son of God.

He knows who touched Him.

He knows all things,

by Him and through Him all things were created.

Jesus didn't say, what touched me,

**He said WHO.**

By saying who in the presence of the whole community

**He was identifying this woman as a person.**

Remember the community

considered her less than human because of her condition.

And suddenly Jesus declares over her she is a person,

someone whose life is so valued that Jesus stops,

turns and speaks.

Remember He is on His way to healing a dying daughter.

Jairus' one of the important leaders of the community,

the leader of the synagogue—equal to the pastor of a congregation

Yet this woman is just as important as Jairus.

**Not only has Jesus acknowledged the woman as a person,**

**but now we have all the disciples discussing who touched Him.**

Instantly, Jesus with three words

has restored the woman's marred identity by declaring her a person.

She is a person of equal value to Jairus.

Jesus is demonstrating this not only by the words

He speaks, but by giving her time.

With one encounter with Jesus,  
the entire community, the disciples,  
Jairus and Jesus Himself are looking to this woman  
Jesus has given her a place and a voice,  
showing she is a person of value and significance.

Let us see what happens next.

Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden,  
she came trembling; and falling down before Him,  
she declared to Him in the presence of all the people  
the reason she had touched Him  
and how she was healed immediately.

**With one touch from Jesus physical healing.**

**With one touch from Jesus mental healing.**

If that is not enough that Jesus restored her physical identity  
but Jesus had to speak truth and life into her thinking.

The way we think can be formed by the way people treat us  
and by the community that we live in.

Let us go back to the woman.

For there's more.

There is always more with Jesus!

So, she has received her physical healing,  
which is what she thought she was coming for.

She had received her mental healing.

She is testifying of who Jesus is and what He has done.

She has the eyes and the ears of the whole community,  
being restored, given a place and a voice by Jesus.

**Yet there is more**

Let us see what Jesus called out in front of His disciples  
and all the community.

And He said to her, "**Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith--that same  
Greek word, pistis again--your trust, your faith.**

**Daughter--beloved child of mine--Go in peace."**



**With one touch from Jesus she received her physical healing.**

**With one touch from Jesus she received her mental healing.**

**With one touch from Jesus she received her spiritual healing.**

Jesus declares complete wholeness, physically, mentally and spiritually.

She is set free from the lies of this world

**Interesting to note she did not receive her spiritual healing first.**

Let us not put any barriers into our thinking

No matter where we are in this life's journey

Jesus is ready, willing and able to give us one touch.

A continuous touch, a daily touch, according to our need.

With one touch from Jesus everything changes.

Let us close our eyes...

Anyone listening who has not received one touch from Jesus

whether it is physical,

mental or

spiritual healing now is the time.

Jesus, we praise you and worship you.

And in this Pentecost season

as we once again receive and recognize

the power of the Holy Spirit,

Jesus, we know that it is your will

that we all may have physical healing,

mental healing,

spiritual healing.

May each of us tear down and remove all that prevents us

from receiving from you.

**FOR**

**One touch from Jesus everything changes.**

We thank you Jesus for who you are, what you have done and will do, and that you are willing, able and always ready

as we reach out to you to receive one touch from you.

We thank you in your mighty name. Amen.



## **\*THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*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 into temptation but deliver us from evil:  
for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.*

## **\*GLORIA PATRI # 36**

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

## **PRAYER OF PASTORAL CARE**

**Our response: Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

Covenant-making God, you meet us where we are and call us forth to follow you.  
We give you thanks for the beauty of the earth.  
And as summer approaches, we thank you for the lengthening of days,  
the warming of waters, the excitement of children ready for a break.

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

Help us to enjoy your creation, and from that place of joy,  
to be faithful stewards of the planet that sustains us.

We give you thanks for the loving community we find here in Christ's  
church. Strengthen us, teach us and empower us to faithful service in the  
world, so that our love may mirror your love, and our mercy your mercy.

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

We praise you, O God, for your sovereign care for your people. Before  
you, nations rise, fall, and wither like grass. Guide the leaders of nations,  
states, cities and towns in the ways of your justice, compassion, and  
mercy. May all who hold positions of authority seek your will, and in so  
doing tend to the welfare of all people.

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

We rejoice this morning with those who rejoice, even as we know that  
the morning does not bring joy for all your people. We pray for people living through war,  
violence or oppression. We pray for the hungry and the homeless; the sick, injured and  
grieving; those who feel lonely or afraid.

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

This morning as we do each week, we think of those who we have been praying for all week, especially those on our immediate prayer list including ...

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

This morning O Lord, we have a special prayer—for those on the Southwest Association Tour de SWAW, including those from our own community Rev. Jim Gray, Malcolm Cooper, Tom Cooper, Daris Delins, Matt Moore and Dan Zimmerman that are biking from Shrewsbury to Brandon with stops at all the UCC churches along the way, raising money for the HOPE FUND that will enable struggling churches to begin new program that may help their churches to remain open and hopefully grow in witnesses.

**Rejoice in the Lord, for the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

We pray for immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and all people “on the move.” As Jesus reached out and touched the people who came to him for healing, may we also reach out: our hands as your hands, our feet as your feet. Give us the grace to love and serve, to seek and listen, to pray and persist in righteousness and mercy in your holy name we pray. AMEN!

**ANTHEM** *The Peace of God* John Rutter

**\*HYMN (CH) # 392** *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

**SCRIPTURE LESSON** Genesis 12:1-9, Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Patty DeNicola

**SERMON** Healing with a Touch

Jane LoBrutto

**LET US PRAY**

**O God of Love, O God of Truth;  
Let us say strong things gently  
and gentle things strongly.**

**Let us speak the truth in love to all  
and love the truth that lives in each.  
Let us hear the truth as we each need it  
and live that truth.**

**O God, we heed it through Jesus  
our brother and our Lord. Amen.**