

# Season after Pentecost, Proper 15A

(Sunday between August 14 and August 20 inclusive)

**Color:** Green

**Scriptures:** [Scripture linked to NRSV at Oremus Bible Browser]  
[Genesis 45:1-15](#) (*Joseph reconciles with his brothers*)  
[Psalm 133](#) (*How good and how pleasant it is to live in harmony*)  
[Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32](#) (*God extends mercy to all*)  
[Matthew 15:\(10-20\) 21-28](#) (*The Intentions within the heart; a Canaanite woman's faith*)

Alternate First Reading and Psalm  
[Isaiah 56:1, 6-8](#) (*I will make them a house of prayer for all peoples*)  
[Psalm 67](#) (*Let all the peoples praise you, O God*)

**Themes:** God's Mercy, Salvation Is for All, Forgiveness, Healing

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## HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Hymn Suggestions link to [Hymnary.org](http://Hymnary.org), a searchable resource with a wealth of information. The tunes listed here are the ones most commonly associated with the texts, and the biblical/thematic references suggest the hymn's association with the morning's scriptures or themes.

[All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name](#) (*CORONATION; MILES LANE; DIADEM*) ..... Matthew

[For Everyone Born](#) (*FOR EVERYONE BORN*) ..... Isaiah

[Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive](#) (*DETROIT; MORNING SONG*) ..... Genesis

[From All That Dwell Below the Skies](#) (*DUKE STREET; LASST UNS ERFREUEN; OLD HUNDREDTH*) ..... Psalm 67

[Gather Us In](#) (*GATHER US IN*) ..... Isaiah

[In Christ There Is No East or West](#) (*MCKEE; ST. PETER*) ..... Psalm 133, Romans

[Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun](#) (*DUKE STREET*) ..... Matthew

[Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell \(All Are Welcome\)](#) (*TWO OAKS*) ..... Genesis, Psalm 133, Isaiah

[Lord, I Want to Be a Christian](#) (*LORD, I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN*) ..... Matthew

[My Faith Looks Up to Thee](#) (*OLIVET*) ..... Matthew

[O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come](#) (*ERHALT UNS, HERR; ANGELUS*) ..... Genesis, Romans, Matthew

[O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines](#) (*JERUSALEM; CANDLER*) ..... Isaiah

[O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing](#) (*AZMON*) ..... Matthew

[Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me](#) (*TOPLADY*) ..... Matthew

[There's a Wideness in God's Mercy](#) (*WELLESLEY*) ..... Genesis, Romans, Matthew

## ANTHEMS

*E = Easy, M = Moderate, MD = Moderately Difficult*

*The choral music suggestions during summer months are all relatively easy and accessible, reflecting a season when most church choirs take weeks off or change their rehearsal schedule. Several of these anthems are adaptable to fit small choirs or ensembles and can be prepared in one rehearsal.*

**All Are Welcome** - E .....Genesis, Psalm 133, Isaiah  
Marty Haugen  
© 1994, GIA Publications, G-4166  
SATB, Keyboard, Guitar, 2 C-Instruments, Brass

**Broken Yet Chosen** - E..... Romans, Matthew  
Mark A. Miller  
© 2017, Choristers Guild, CGA1537  
SATB, Piano

**Canticle of Fellowship** - ME.....Genesis, Psalm 133  
Craig Courtney  
© 1990, Beckenhorst Press, BP 1349  
SATB, Keyboard

**God Be Merciful Unto Us and Bless Us** - E... Psalm 67  
Philip Stopford  
© 2016, MorningStar Music, 50-8975  
SATB, Organ

**Praise the Lord, Every Land and Nation** - E.. Psalm 67  
G.F. Handel/Hal H. Hopson, arr.  
© 2012, MorningStar Music, 50-5812  
2-Part Mixed, Organ

**There Is a Balm in Gilead** - ME..... Matthew  
African-American Spiritual/Roger M. Holland II, arr.  
© 2020, MorningStar Music, 50-3903  
SATB, Solo, Piano

**There's a Wideness In God's Mercy** - M..Rom., Matt.  
Bob Moore  
© 2016, Augsburg Fortress, 978-1-5064-2215-2  
SAB, Piano

### Smaller Choirs and Intergenerational

**Christ Be Our Light** - E ..... Isaiah  
Bernadette Ferrell  
© 1993, OCP Publications, 80230  
Unison, Descant, Keyboard, opt. Congregation,  
Guitar, Flute, Trumpet

**Psalm 67** - E ..... Psalm 67  
John Horman  
© 1992, Choristers Guild, CGA-589  
Unison/SATB/Ens., Piano, opt. Flute, Handbells

**Psalm 67** - E ..... Psalm 67  
Charles Callahan  
© 2006, Concordia Publishing, 98-3865  
2-Part Any Combination, Organ, opt. C-Instrument

**We Cannot Measure How You Heal** - E ..... Matthew  
*YE BANKS AND BRAES* /Malcolm Archer, arr.  
© 1989, GIA Publications, G-6128  
Unison or SATB, Organ, opt. C-Instrument

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## ADDITIONAL MATERIAL (Prayers, Poems, Quotes & Liturgies)

As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom,  
I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison.

— NELSON MANDELA

If we remember the evil that others have done to us,  
we shut down our ability to remember God.

— ABBA MACARIUS OF EGYPT (295-392)

## THREE PRAYERS TO BEGIN WORSHIP

(Based upon Isaiah 56)

Loving God,  
We come gathered today as your people from the various spaces and places of our lives. As You welcome us, we welcome all who gather to worship and pray in this place. We gather around your dream for a just and flourishing world and pray it becomes our dream as well. Reveal to us Your righteousness. Amen.

(Based upon Matthew 15)

Dear Jesus,  
Like the Canaanite woman, we come to you seeking mercy, grace, and acceptance. Sometimes we feel as if we are on the outside looking in. We don't feel part of the "in" crowd or those that have it all together. We live life far away and on the margins because we fear you won't accept us. But we can't stay there any longer. Welcome us into your presence and bring wholeness to our lives. Amen.

(Based upon Romans 11)

Loving and Gracious God,  
We have spent our week amidst a world that is often unmerciful and ungracious. We are glad to be among friends and with You – the God of mercy and grace. May this time of worship renew our vision for mercy and may we experience the graciousness, acceptance, and power of Your love. Amen.

— SCOTT WAGONER\*

## LITANIES

*OF INTERCESSION (after Isaiah 56)*

Loving God, for a world broken by exclusion and bereft of justice and mercy, we pray for the wholeness of Your salvation to be manifested.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Loving God, for a world fearful of immigrants and those different from us, we pray for a spirit of hospitality.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Loving God, for a world torn by division and anxious over an uncertain future, we pray for a deepened spirit of compassion and trust.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Loving God, for a world that feels isolated, disconnected, and alone, gather us to Yourself and grace us with your Presence.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

*OF PRAISE (after Psalm 67)*

Gracious God, we give thanks for the gift of life and each breath we take throughout our day.

**Let the people thank you, God! Let all the people thank you!**

We are grateful for Your grace that sustains and strengthens us and carries us through our day.

**Let the people thank you, God! Let all the people thank you!**

We rejoice in answered prayers as well as the promise that you hear our groans and sorrows.

**Let the people thank you, God! Let all the people thank you!**

We give thanks for those who bless the world with their gifts and serve to create a world that flourishes for all.

**Let the people thank you, God! Let all the people thank you!**

## FOUR PRAYERS OF RESPONSE TO SCRIPTURE

*(after Isaiah 56)*

Living God of Justice and Righteousness,  
Forgive us when our preferences have superseded Your justice. Forgive us when our fears have excluded others from Your presence. Forgive us when we have reduced Your vision of “all peoples” down to “some people.” Forgive us when our own attitudes and perceptions have cast out those You have gathered in. Through Your salvation heal us and gather us to Yourself. Amen.

*(after Psalm 67)*

Loving and Gracious God,  
As we go into this new week, may Your ways become our ways. We give thanks for how You have blessed us and we pray that our actions may pass on those blessings so our world may know the wholeness of Your salvation. Help us to live each day with a spirit of gratitude. Through all of the week’s challenges, may we know Your joy and welcome moments of celebration. Amen.

*(after Romans 11)*

Our God of Mercy,  
We confess that our greatest struggle in our spiritual journey is self-rejection...  
We reject ourselves when we fail  
We reject ourselves when we make mistakes  
We reject ourselves when we feel we do not measure up  
We reject ourselves when we stray from living in Your way  
We reject ourselves out of shame and guilt  
We reject our own gifts and potential  
We reject the mercy You so graciously offer us.  
God of Mercy, we receive Your grace that welcomes and forgives us. Help us to offer grace to the rejected parts of our own selves. Amen.

*(after Matthew 11)*

Loving God,  
Often our awareness of the wideness of Your mercy is limited by our own understanding. As the Canaanite woman widened Jesus’ understanding of Your mercy, may we be open to those who come into our lives and widen our understanding of Your mercy. May we be less concerned about external markers of religiosity and more concerned about possessing a heart of mercy that shows up in our spiritual journey. As you have received us, may we receive others. Amen.

*Evil is contagious. It can be contained and defeated...when hatred, insult, and injury are absorbed and neutralized by love. Thanks to our belief that 'God is as he is in Jesus', we know that his love does absorb evil, and that we can ourselves be enabled to extend to others and to receive from them forgiveness in this way.*

— SISTER JANE, SLG, *Loving God Whatever*

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## TWO PRAYERS OF BLESSING

*(after Psalm 67)*

Loving God,  
Bless those who struggle with uncertainty and  
anxiousness during the week.  
Bless those who are caregivers and feel they have no  
time to rest.  
Bless those who have jobs that are in jeopardy and  
struggle to make ends meet.  
Bless those who feel depressed, lonely, and isolated.  
Bless those who persevere each day even when it's  
hard to keep going.  
Grant us Your grace and bless us.  
May Your face shine on us and all of creation. Amen.

*(after Romans 11)*

God of acceptance and mercy,  
May the reality  
of Your acceptance and mercy  
permeate our souls.  
May the power  
of Your acceptance and mercy  
be present in our lives.  
May the graciousness  
of Your acceptance and mercy  
show up in our actions.  
And may the permanence  
of Your acceptance and mercy  
heal our world. Amen.

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\*Thanks to Scott Wagoner for this week's prayers and liturgies.

Warren Howell, editor