



**Call to worship - Psalm 121** : I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip, he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you, the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm, he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

**Lord's Prayer** : Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

**Hymn STF666 Master Speak**

Watch on YouTube : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raPJHiezEhw>

Master, speak! thy servant heareth,  
waiting for thy gracious word,  
longing for thy voice that cheereth,  
Master, let it now be heard.  
I am listening, Lord, for thee;  
what hast thou to say to me?

Master, speak! tho' least and lowest,  
let me not unheard depart;  
Master, speak! for oh, thou knowest  
all the yearning of my heart,  
knowest all its truest need;  
speak! and make me blest indeed.

Speak to me by name, O Master,  
let me know it is to me;  
speak, that I may follow faster,  
with a step more firm and free,  
where the Shepherd leads the flock,  
in the shadow of the Rock!

Master, speak! and make me ready,  
when thy voice is truly heard,  
with obedience glad and steady,  
still to follow every word.  
I am listening, Lord, for thee:  
Master, speak, oh speak to me!

**Readings : Matthew 9:9-13** : As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"  
On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

**Matthew 9:18-36** : While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples. Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed." Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment. When Jesus entered the synagogue leader's house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. News of this spread through all that region. As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you"; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region. While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons." Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

**Sermon: Called to Compassion in a Divided World** Today, we gather to reflect on the themes of calling, compassion, and the mission that we, as followers of Christ, are called to embody in our contemporary world. Our scripture reference today comes from Matthew 9:9-13 and 9:18-36. These passages reveal Jesus' radical approach to those society often overlooked or marginalized.

**The Call of Matthew** : Let's start with the call of Matthew, a tax collector who was despised by his own people. Tax collectors were often seen as traitors, collaborating with the occupying Roman government, and were shunned by society. Yet, Jesus sought him out, demonstrating that He calls everyone—regardless of their past—into relationship with Him. This act challenges us to think about who the “tax collectors” are in our world today. Who is marginalized or judged in our communities? Is it the homeless, those struggling with addiction, or individuals from diverse backgrounds who face discrimination? As a church, we are called to create spaces of acceptance and love, moving beyond judgment and prejudice.

**The Faith of the Overlooked** : Next, we encounter another powerful narrative: the woman suffering from a bleeding condition who reaches out to touch Jesus' cloak, believing that she could be healed. Simultaneously, a synagogue ruler approaches Jesus, pleading for help for his dying daughter. Both figures—one a desperate father and the other a woman living in isolation—show us the power of faith in asking for help. They remind us that even those who feel overlooked have their own stories and struggles. Today, many feel unheard or invisible, whether due to mental health issues, economic hardships, or societal constraints. Our role, then, is to listen actively and respond with empathy. Offering hope and healing can take many forms, from simply being present and listening to supporting community initiatives that address these needs.

**Jesus' Compassionate Response** : In Matthew 9:36, we read that Jesus saw the crowds and had compassion on them because they were like “sheep without a shepherd.” Imagine that image: lost, confused, and in need of guidance. This is a vivid depiction of the reality many face in our world today—disconnection, anxiety, and oppression. It's crucial that we extend our compassion beyond the walls of the church, identifying those who feel like lost sheep in our communities. We are called to be shepherds who lead with care, bringing hope and comfort. Compassion can change lives, and as we reach out, we embody the heart of Jesus.

**The Unchanging Message in a Changing World** : As we navigate the complexities of today's world, we must remember that while our methods and approaches may adapt, the core message of Jesus—grace, compassion, and inclusion—remains constant. The challenges we face may differ, but our calling does not change: to love one another as Christ loved us.

**Conclusion: A Call to Action** : In closing, let's summarize the key themes we have discussed. We are called to break down barriers, listen with compassion, and actively serve those in need. I challenge each of you to seek opportunities to embody these values in your everyday life. Look around and ask how you can be a source of compassion and support to someone who may be struggling. Let's close in prayer, asking God for boldness and guidance to follow Jesus' example and to be the change our world so desperately needs.

**Hymn STF687 – One Human Family God has made** Watch on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnBjppHddkl>

One human family God has made,  
and all for each to care.  
One world, to be the home of all,  
with all its wealth to share.  
One Christ, to manifest on earth  
love's ultimate design.  
One Church to know the mystery  
of broken bread and wine.

One race, one world  
yet torn apart,  
we spurn the way of love.  
But still ahead, the Christ leads on  
and calls his Church to move  
from love of power to power of love,  
to give the word to all  
to trust the love that conquered death outside the city  
wall.

And are we brave enough to join  
with that great company  
the cost not less than all we have  
and are or hope to be  
the bitter cup of human sin  
to drink with him who died,  
and take his love outside the wall  
to all the crucified?

Claim him who claims us for his own,  
to share his pain and grief,  
to bear the scars that stamp us his  
the hallmark of belief.  
As partners of the living Christ,  
who risk the path he trod,  
with wondering love we find we share  
the timeless joy of God.

**Blessings and Dismissal**