

Show Great Love  
Preacher: Rev. Lauren Lorincz  
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10:18

"Show Great Love" Pilgrim Church UCC, Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, (Luke 7:36-50)  
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### Acts of Hospitality

-How do we show hospitality in our homes? If a guest shows up at your door, what do you do?

-In the Ancient Middle East, hospitality was very important: bathing the feet was a common sign of hospitality for guests as they walked long journeys on dusty roads, kiss of greeting, even anointing with oil to refresh and welcome guests to banquets or celebrate joyful occasions.

-In India: chairs or mats given for guests, food and drink, footwashing even happens as you remove your shoes when you enter someone's home (surprised when Sr. Stella washed my feet before a ceremony!)

-In our story, Jesus is the guest and the Pharisee Simon is the host. Though it's the "sinful woman" who extends extravagant hospitality to Jesus (goes above and beyond): bathes feet with tears and dries them with her hair (intimate), costly jar of ointment, kisses Jesus' feet. "She has shown great love." [1]

-When the woman is judged by Simon for being a sinner and touching Jesus, Jesus points out that Simon hasn't been hospitable at all. You didn't offer me water for my feet, didn't kiss me hello, or anoint my head with oil-- but you're judging her?

-Jesus calls Simon out on his bad behavior, reminds him that hosts have responsibility to show forth love for their guests.

### Giving and Receiving Love

-Our Gospel story is about hospitality--how we treat people who come to be with us.

-We also can consider how we give and receive love. Do we feel more comfortable offering care or receiving care? Do we prefer helping or being helped?

-Our society tends to be individualistic and we value independence, it can be hard to ask for help!

-Care Angels at our own church--we would probably rather be in the position to make a meal or go visit someone as opposed to needing to receive meals or a loving visit.

-We're so used to seeing Jesus in the role of caregiver. Jesus was known for being a healer in his time. People brought the sick in mind, body, and spirit to Jesus for healing. Though with this woman at Simon's house, he's on the receiving end of loving care.

-Out of this care and concern, Jesus forgives her sins and in so doing heals her spirit anyway.

-Mutuality present in Luke's Gospel: giving and receiving love, healing and being healed.

### Showing and Appreciating Great Love

-Lesson to take with us wherever we go--we'll have moments where we can show great love like the woman and we'll have moments where we can receive great love from others like Jesus.

-Remember that even Jesus (who we may consider the ultimate caregiver/great teacher and healer) had moments where he received care. Those moments kept Jesus going in the midst of the chaos swirling.

-Some lyrics from Bob Dylan's "Forever Young" come to mind, whether we are blessing our graduates as they will embark upon the next stage of their journeys or whether we are contemplating showing great love and appreciating great love in our own lives:

May God bless and keep you always. May your wishes all come true.

May you always do for others. And let others do for you.

May you build a ladder to the stars. And climb on every rung.

May you stay forever young.

May your hands always be busy. May your feet always be swift.

May you have a strong foundation when the winds of changes shift.

May your heart always be joyful. And may your song always be sung.

May you stay forever young.

[1] Luke 7:47, NRSV.