

In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If you were to reach out to Jesus for healing, what would it be for?

What ailment or pain or injury or heartache is holding you back?

Does anything hold you back from inviting the power of Jesus

into your body, mind or spirit to bring healing and wholeness?

Because that's what Jesus is about, back then, and right now.

The movement of God is always toward wholeness.

For God created all things so that they might exist; the generative forces of the world are wholesome," we hear from the Wisdom of Solomon.

Jesus was and is in the healing business.

He told his disciples to go out and proclaim the Good News and heal the sick.

Proclaim the Good News and heal the sick. Those two things were never meant to be separated, because one demonstrates the other.

Jesus demonstrated over and over in his life and teaching and actions,

that healing is the norm in that realm of God he called the "Kingdom."

Everywhere he went, he did amazing things – stilling storms, casting out demons,

multiplying bread and fish, and healing, healing, healing –

all things that the Gospel writers called "deeds of power" – the Greek word is *dunamys*, from the same root that we get the word dynamite.

What we call miracles are simply the way the life of God works.

When we accept the way God works, we often see more of these deeds of power.

Yet in many churches, healing happens on the fringes.

I long for us to have prayer teams to which people could go during communion,

in the back of the church, available every Sunday.

In six years I have not found many who wanted to be part of that ministry.

What are we afraid of? Not seeing healing? Or seeing more than we expect?

In my life, the more I pray for the healing stream of Jesus' love and light

to work in and through people, the more I see it happen.

Not always in the way we want, but way more often than when we just say,

"Oh, well, that's too bad."

Jairus and the unnamed woman in our gospel story today were not content with

"That's too bad."

Jairus threw himself at Jesus' feet asking him to come and heal his daughter. The woman who had been bleeding for 12 years was not willing to go public, but she too went to Jesus' feet, to touch the hem of his cloak. And when Jesus felt the jolt of power that she felt go into her, and said, "Who touched me," she came into the light in full humility. "Your faith has made you whole," he told her. Something happened in that woman that day even before she made her move. Her faith was released. She knew she couldn't go right up to Jesus – her bleeding made her ritually unclean; according to the Mosaic law, she would defile someone just by touching them. But she knew Jesus had power; she thought, "Even his clothes will be charged with that power." Her faith invited God's healing to be released in her. Which Jesus confirmed: "Your faith has made you well." And when he went on to revive that little girl who had died, he was releasing that same power into her.

I do not pretend to understand physics. But I gather that most physicists today believe that everything is energy – all matter is really energy operating at different frequencies. Light, sound, electricity, microwaves... those are just some of the frequencies at which we experience energy. So it makes sense to me that God is energy in its purest form, pure power. That power that created all worlds, all universes, was present in a tiny baby born in Bethlehem. That power that set the planets on their courses was present in a carpenter from Nazareth preaching and healing, stilling storms and walking on water. That power that made mountains and glaciers and mammoths and gazelles was present in a man at Golgotha, unjustly condemned and executed in the most cruel and humiliating way possible, where it seemed he had no power at all... And that power that created flowers and fish and birds in every color of the rainbow – that power was most fully manifest in that man standing in a garden of graves, three days dead and buried and now gloriously alive, risen.

And that power, my friends, flows through us as we are united with that man, that Jesus, in baptism. That power is what heals and transforms. We are called to be conductors of that power to a world in need of transformation. Do we have the capacity to conduct power like that? Can the world take it?

Until I was 14, my family lived mostly in Europe and Africa.
In most places we required transformers to run our American appliances
on a current other than what they were made for.
Transformers take in a current at one frequency and convert them to another.
What a wonderful image for our ministry as conductors of God's power.

The current flowing through Jesus was undiluted – his miracles seem impossible
to us, but are just how things are in the life of God.
Jesus was the Transformer par excellence –
taking the power of the universe and rendering it safe for the earthly realm.
He gave that authority and power to his apostles, and so it has come down to us,
through the laying on of hands, bishop to confirmand, all the way to us.
When I pray for healing I ask God to release that healing power,
and let it restore wholeness. The movement of God is always toward wholeness
When I burn a finger or stub a toe, I react – and then stop, and thank my body
for reacting, and invite it to subside and allow God's healing to flow in me.
I don't say "please" like I'm asking for a favor –
I activate the power already given me as a baptized saint of God.
When we pray we simply invite God to release in us that Kingdom energy
that is already ours by faith and baptism.
We invite ourselves, or others, to receive that energy and life.

It can be easier, especially if we've been disappointed in life, or in prayer, to say,
"Oh, that's just a bunch of fairy tales in this old book. Doesn't happen in real life."
Many of us have stories of praying in faith and not seeing healing. I do.
That's enough to stop many Christians from even believing that God heals today.
But think about it – we will willingly go along with invasive medical procedures,
even if they have less than a 50 percent chance of success.
Those disappointments in prayer are real – and we hold them in tension with all
the times we do see God's healing power in play, often in ways we call miraculous.
And the more we exercise that power of God, the more comfortable we become
conducting it, the more we see the outcomes we crave.

God made us for life, and to show forth God's life in the world.
We don't have to plead or add "If it be your will."
Wholeness and life are God's will for us – here and now, and then and later.
We learn to pray and live expecting blessing, and we see blessing.

Growing in faith means building our capacity to carry more and more power to tolerate more and more blessing.

We are now Christ's body in the world, carrying out his "deeds of power" in our lives, in our broken world, in our divided country.

Everywhere we look there is a need for healing –

and God has made us transformers able to conduct healing power and light into every person and situation where wholeness needs to be restored.

Our bodies, minds, spirits; our communities, government, political processes, healthcare, education, elections.

What person or situation do you want to conduct healing life and power into?

Imagine yourself conducting God's life and love into that person or situation.

That's us being transformers in the best sense of the word.

What if we became known for the healing, transforming power

we conduct into this world?

Amen.

Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." He went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.