

ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH
READINGS FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025
THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
PROPER 18 C

THE COLLECT

THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Grant us, O Lord, to trust in you with all our hearts; for, as you always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so you never forsake those who make their boast of your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

THE COLLECT FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen***

THE FIRST LESSON - JOB 38: 1 - 18

THE MYSTERIES OF CREATION:

In this portrait of God creating the universe, Earth is constructed like a grand edifice, the ocean is born like a baby and restrained with boundaries while down below lie domains called the deep and the realm of the dead. Earth with its oceans is a complex of profound mysteries designed by the Creator.

A Reading from the Word of God, found in the book of Job, Chapter 38, beginning at the first verse.

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:

‘Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up your loins like a man,

I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone

when the morning stars sang together

and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

‘Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb?—

when I made the clouds its garment,
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
and prescribed bounds for it,
and set bars and doors,
and said, "Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be
stopped"?

'Have you commanded the morning since your
days began,
and caused the dawn to know its place,
so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,
and the wicked be shaken out of it?
It is changed like clay under the seal,
and it is dyed like a garment.
Light is withheld from the wicked,
and their uplifted arm is broken.

'Have you entered into the springs of the sea,
or walked in the recesses of the deep?
Have the gates of death been revealed to you,
or have you seen the gates of deep
darkness?

Have you comprehended the expanse of the
earth?

Declare, if you know all this.

The Word of the Lord

The people: *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 104: 1 - 9, 24 – 26

A WORLD CREATED BY WISDOM

The whole world is formed by the Wisdom of God thereby giving it all its discrete parts, laws, design and purpose. That world even includes domains where God ‘plays’ with wild creatures in the ocean.

1. Bless the Lord, O my soul; *
O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!
you are clothed with majesty and splendor.
2. You wrap yourself with light as with a cloak *
and spread out the heavens like a curtain.
3. You lay the beams of your chambers in the
waters above; *
you make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind.
4. You make the winds your messengers *
and flames of fire your servants.
5. You have set the earth upon its foundations,*
so that it never shall move at any time.
6. You covered it with the Deep as with a mantle; *
the waters stood higher than the mountains.
7. At your rebuke they fled; *
at the voice of your thunder they hastened away.
8. They went up into the hills and down to the
valleys beneath, *
to the places you had appointed for them.

9. You set the limits that they should not pass;*
they shall not again cover the earth.

24. Man goes forth to his work*
and to his labor until the evening.

25. O LORD, how manifold are your works!*
in wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

26. Yonder is the great and wide sea
with its living things too many to number,*
creatures both small and great.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son:*
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:*
and shall be forever. Amen.

THE SECOND LESSON: EPHESIANS 1:3-10

THE COSMIC CHRIST:

In Jesus, the Christ, we not only face the eternal mystery of forgiveness and salvation, but also the truth that as the cosmic one, Christ gathers all things

together and unites the cosmos. The cosmic Christ fills the universe!

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians, Chapter 1, beginning at the third verse.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL - LUKE 5:1-11

FACING THE DEEP:

When Peter and his friends catch no fish, Jesus asks them to take a risk and cast into 'the deep', the realm of the unknown. An even greater risk faces the disciples when they one day, catch humans with a new message.

Gospeler: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

***Gospeler: A Reading from the Holy Gospel
according to Luke.***

Response: Glory to Christ Our Saviour.

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' For he and all who were with him were amazed

at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

This is the Gospel of Christ

The people: Praise to Christ our Lord.

(NRSV)

THE FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 18:1-11

Jeremiah, inspired by God, uses an example story, an allegory, to try to teach the people and rulers of Judah a lesson. People can choose to do good or to do evil. God notices when people turn towards him, and when

they turn away.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of the prophet Jeremiah, Chapter 18, beginning at the first verse.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

Then the word of the LORD came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the LORD: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 139:1-5, 12-17

With marvelous wisdom, God alone perceives the heights and depths of life.

- 1 LORD, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
- 2 You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
- 4 You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
- 12 For you yourself created my inmost parts; *
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 13 I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.
- 14 My body was not hidden from you, *
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.
- 15 Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the
womb;
all of them were written in your book; *
they were fashioned day by day,
when as yet there was none of them.
- 16 How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *
how great is the sum of them!
- 17 If I were to count them, they would be more in
number than the sand; *

to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son:*
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:.*
and shall be forever. **Amen.**

THE SECOND READING: PHILEMON 1-21

Onesimus, a slave in Philemon's service, has run away from his master and has visited Paul, who is in prison. While with Paul, Onesimus has become a Christian. Now Paul pleads with Philemon to take him back and to exercise leniency towards him.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Epistle to Philemon, beginning at the first verse.

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your

faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love-- and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother-- especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 14:25-33

Jesus tells the crowds what it takes to become a follower: you must put Christ first. He uses extreme language to make his point.

A Reading from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 14, beginning at the twenty-fifth verse.

Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you

can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions."

The Word of the Lord

The people: *Thanks be to God.*

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