

ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH
THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD
READINGS FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
PROPER 17

THE COLLECT:

THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

THE FIRST LESSON - SONG OF SOLOMON 2:8-13

This book is a collection of love songs. This reading brings us a celebration of love in the spring time of the year and presents a dialogue between a man – the bridegroom – and a woman – the bride. In our passage, the woman speaks first.

A Reading from the Word of God written in Book of the Song of Solomon, Chapter 2, beginning at the eighth verse.

The voice of my beloved!
Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.
Look, there he stands
behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.
My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;
for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away."

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 45:1-2, 7-10

***This psalm is a poem for a royal wedding
celebrating the ruler's majesty.***

1. My heart is stirring with a noble song;
let me recite what I have fashioned for the king; *
my tongue shall be the pen of a skilled writer.
2. You are the fairest of men; *
grace flows from your lips,
because God has blessed you for ever.
7. Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever, *
a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your
kingdom;
you love righteousness and hate iniquity.

8. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you *
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.
9. All your garments are fragrant with myrrh,
aloes, and cassia, *
and the music of strings from ivory palaces
makes you glad.
10. Kings' daughters stand among the ladies of the
court; *
on your right hand is the queen,
adorned with the gold of Ophir.
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: JAMES 1:17-27

This reading is an exhortation to conduct befitting Christians and presents a series of teachings on the meaning of true religion: doing God's work. We are aliens in a world which has become evil, and are also heirs of God's relationship with Israel. We are called to be doers of the word, and not just hearers of

it.

A Reading from the Word of God written in Epistle of the Apostle James, Chapter 1, beginning at the seventeenth verse.

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

The Word of the Lord

The people:. *Thanks be to God.*

THE GOSPEL - MARK 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

In this Gospel Reading, Jesus denounces those who find ways to ignore the genuine commandments of God and calls people to the awareness that the only evil which can corrupt a person comes from within.

A Reading from the Word of God written in Gospel of St. Mark, Chapter 7, beginning at the first verse.

~~***Gospeler: The Lord be with you***~~

~~***All: And also with you***~~

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

~~***All: Glory to Christ Our Saviour.***~~

When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they

do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.” For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

The Word of the Lord

The people: *Thanks be to God.*

~~—————~~***This is the Gospel of Christ***

~~***The people:*** *Praise to Christ our Lord.*~~

(NRSV)