

Lessons for Pentecost 10 – August 14, 2022

Collect: Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Jeremiah 23:23-29

Am I a God near by, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord. I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back – those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the Lord. Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 82

God takes his stand in the council of heaven;
he gives judgment in the midst of the gods:

"How long will you judge unjustly,
and show favor to the wicked?

Save the weak and the orphan;
defend the humble and needy;

Rescue the weak and the poor;
deliver them from the power of the wicked.

They do not know, neither do they understand; they go about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

Now I say to you, 'You are gods,
 and all of your children of the Most High;
Nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
 and fall like any prince."
Arise, O God, and rule the earth,
 for you shall take all nations for your own.

Second Reading: Hebrews 11:29-12:2

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace. And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets – who through faith conquered kingdom, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding his shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel: Luke 12:49-56

Jesus said, "I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is complete! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mothers against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

The Gospel of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Pentecost 10 Morning Prayer Service – August 14, 2022

Prelude

Hymn 435 – At the Name of Jesus, stanzas 1-3

At the Name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him King of glory now;
'it's the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season, to receive a Name,
from the lips of sinners, unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious, when from death he passed;

bore it up triumphant, with its human light,
through all ranks of creatures, to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast;
filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.

Opening sentence - BCP page 40

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Invitation to Confession – BCP page 41

So that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship Almighty God, let us, with penitent and obedient hearts, confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Confession – BCP pages 41-42

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their

faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

Absolution – BCP page 42

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Gloria – BCP page 42

O Lord, open thou our lips.
And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Venite – BCP page 44

Come, let us sing to the Lord;
 let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
 and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great God,
 and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are all the corners of the earth,
 and the strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his and he made it,
 and his prepared the dry land.
O come, let us worship and fall down
 and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is the Lord our God,
 and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
 let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,
 and with righteousness to judge the world and the people with his truth.

Psalm 82 – insert

First Reading: Jeremiah 23:23-29 – insert

Second Reading: Hebrews 11:25-12:2 – insert

Hymn 509, stanzas 1-3

Spirit divine, attend our prayers

Spirit divine, attend our prayers, and make this house thy home;
descend with all thy gracious powers, O come, great Spirit, come!

Come as the light; to us reveal our emptiness and woe,
and lead us in those paths of life whereon the righteous go.

Come as the fire, and purge our hearts like sacrificial flame;
let our whole soul an offering be to our Redeemer's Name.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:49-56 - insert

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Apostles' Creed – pp 53-54

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;*

*And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried,
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father
almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Let us pray.

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Suffrages A – page 55

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;
and grant us thy salvation.
Endue thy ministers with righteousness;
and make thy chosen people joyful.
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
for only in thee can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under thy care;
and guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let thy way be known upon earth;
thy saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
and sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

Collect for 10th Sunday after Pentecost – insert

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy spirit one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Prayers for Sundays (BCP p 56) and Human Family (BCP p 815)

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God, you made us in your own image, and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish our purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

General Thanksgiving - BCP pp 58-59

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

Announcements and *America*

*My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might, great God our King.*

Prayer of St. Chrysostom – BCP, p 59

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

The Grace – BCP, p 59

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Hymn 645, stanzas 1-4 – The King of love my shepherd is

The King of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine for ever.

Where streams of living water flow, my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow, with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid, and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still, thy cross before to guid me.

Dismissal and Postlude

Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 10th Sunday after Pentecost, August 14, 2022.

As I read today's lessons, I saw myself in God's waiting room, wondering how my session would go. You would think that the door to God's office would be thick so that those in the waiting room couldn't hear how the person who went before was faring.

Instead, though, the door seemed not thick at all. In fact, we could hear plainly. And what we heard was at a minimum thought provoking and at a maximum downright scary.

Our session began comfortably enough. **From today's Collect: "Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life."** God prayed with the visitor for grace. Fair enough. Not threatening. Unless of course we remember that "blessed steps of his most holy life" included crucifixion. But let's move on.

Next, God reviews the Book of Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 23:26**), the prophet. And God asks the visitor, "Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back – those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart?"

Whoa! Is this the approach God will take with us? "Lies" and "deceit." I'm beginning to squirm. I've told a few whoppers and there are times when I've misled people. This session with the Lord might be heavier than I thought. "Like a hammer that breaks rocks in pieces." Ouch!

But, before I can excuse myself from the waiting room, I hear God's voice: "Next!"

I gather myself, and report. And God is quick to establish the ground rules. "God takes his stand in the council of heaven; he gives judgment in the midst of the gods." A quick reminder of who is in charge of this session. Then God moves on to a welcome reminder: "Save the weak and the orphans; defend the humble and needy; rescue the weak and the poor; deliver them from the power of the wicked."

This is what I hoped for: helping the Lord help others. But God quickly reminds me: “Now I say to you, ‘You are gods, and all of you children of the Most High.’” Reassuring. But not the end of God’s words: “Nevertheless you shall die like mortals, and fall like any prince.”

Oh boy.

And God is not done with me. There’s more on God’s mind, captured in the Epistle to the Hebrews Namely, I am about to experience a very tough assignment, one that only a deep, deep faith in God’s love can help me/us complete favorably. It’s not going to be easy – torture, mocking, flogging, chains and imprisonment, perhaps even stoned to death. **(Hebrews 11:36)**. “Oh boy” is right.

Well, having scared us, God announces “something better.” Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith **(Hebrews 12:2)**, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.”

But even this promise of Jesus makes us squirm again. “Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!” And “scorching heat” **(Hebrews 12:28)**.

And when we recoil, Jesus himself, the one we’re counting on, calls us hypocrites because we “do not know how to interpret the present time.” **(Luke 12:56)**

Excused, we return to the waiting room. We could leave and never come back. Instead though we walk up to the receptionist and ask for another appointment. Our choice. The receptionist obliges with a knowing smile. There have been others who entered confident, but left a little shaken. But – and this is key - with a decision to return for another one-on-one with the Lord.

And not just one-on-one with the Lord, but as part of a whole community of seekers who feel the need for more, who want more. Yes, in the Lord’s office, there will be some chastisement, but also assurance that we are where we ought to be. Not free from “tough love,” but embraced by that “tough love.”

As we waited and listened and guessed what our session with the Lord would be like, we were uneasy. We weren't sure what to expect. But, by the end of the session, we wanted another appointment. Not because the Lord told us everything is fine, but because the Lord was honest with us about our condition, and hopeful for us because He knew He could make a positive difference if we followed his directions.

That's what we do here. We gather to learn more about what it means to be healthy and how important our spiritual health is to a family, a community, a nation, a world, and ourselves. Getting spiritually healthy begins with us making an appointment with the Lord, showing up for that appointment, following the Lord's counsel, making more appointments, and repeating the process time and time again.

Our final hymn today could be the theme song of the Waiting Room. "The King of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never; I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine for ever ... and so through all the length of days thy goodness faileth never: Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house for ever."

Here's to health. Here's to wholeness. Here's to what we right here. Here's to God Almighty, who can scare the bejesus out of us, but chooses instead to save us.

Interesting term "bejesus." It means of course "by Jesus." God in Jesus doesn't have to save us, but God in Jesus chooses to do so. Oh yes, there's always uncertainty in the Waiting Room, but great relief when we are given yet another shot at healthier living. What we know in this setting as "forgiveness."

Thank you, Doctor. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.