

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2020

First Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9

⁶“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Psalm 27:1-13*

¹The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then | shall I fear?*

the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I | be afraid?

²**When evildoers came upon me to eat | up my flesh,***

it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stum- | bled and fell.

³Though an army should en- | camp against me,*

yet my heart shall not | be afraid;

⁴**And though war should rise | up against me,***

yet will I put my | trust in him.

⁵One thing have I asked of the Lord; one | thing I seek;*

that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days | of my life;

⁶**To behold the fair beauty | of the Lord ***

and to seek him | in his temple.

⁷For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe | in his shelter;*

he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling and set me high up- | on a rock.

⁸**Even now he lifts | up my head***

above my enemies | round about me.

⁹Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation with sounds | of great gladness;*

I will sing and make music | to the Lord.

¹⁰Hearken to my voice, O Lord, | when I call; *

have mercy on me and | answer me.

¹¹You speak in my heart and say, | “Seek my face.” *

Your face, Lord, | will I seek.

¹²Hide not your | face from me, *

nor turn away your servant | in displeasure.

¹³You have been my helper; cast me | not away; *

do not forsake me, O God of | my salvation.

Second Reading: Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30

¹²I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁹... {F}or I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again. ²⁷Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

¹{Jesus said,} “For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Next Week’s Readings:

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-10; Philippians 2:1-4 [5-13] 14-18; Matthew 21:23-27 [28-32]

* — Some psalms within the Book of Common Prayer psalter, which the Sola lectionary uses, are numbered differently than the psalms in the psalter of the English Standard Version Bible, on which the lectionary calendar is based. To account for this difference, today’s psalm reading ends at verse 13 (the ESV reading will end at verse 9).