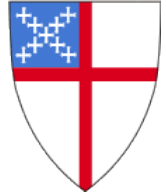


**Lessons for September 24th, 2017
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost**



First Reading: Jonah 3:10-4:11

Hear the Word of God as it is written in Jonah chapter 3 verse 10 to chapter 4 verse 11.

When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

This is the Word of the Lord.

Psalm 145:1-8

Let us all stand and read Psalm 145 verses 1 to 8.

1

I will exalt you, O God my King, and bless your Name for ever and ever.

2

Every day will I bless you and praise your Name for ever and ever.

3

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; there is no end to his greatness.

4

One generation shall praise your works to another and shall declare your power.

5

I will ponder the glorious splendor of your majesty and all your marvelous works.

6

They shall speak of the might of your wondrous acts, and I will tell of your greatness.

7

They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing of your righteous deeds.

8

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great kindness.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, World without end. Amen.

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Hear the Word of God as it is written in Philippians chapter 1 verses 21 to 30.

To me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well--since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

This is the Word of the Lord.