

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, September 01, 2019

The Collect: 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.**

Track 1 Old Testament: Jeremiah 2:4-13 read from The Message Bible

4-6 Hear God's Message, House of Jacob!

Yes, you—House of Israel!

God's Message: "What did your ancestors find fault with in me
that they drifted so far from me,

Took up with Sir Windbag

and turned into windbags themselves?

It never occurred to them to say, 'Where's God,
the God who got us out of Egypt,

Who took care of us through thick and thin, those rough-and-tumble
wilderness years of parched deserts and death valleys,

A land that no one who enters comes out of,
a cruel, inhospitable land?'

7-8 "I brought you to a garden land
where you could eat lush fruit.

But you barged in and polluted my land,
trashed and defiled my dear land.

The priests never thought to ask, 'Where's God?'

The religion experts knew nothing of me.

The rulers defied me.

The prophets preached god Baal

And chased empty god-dreams and silly god-schemes.

9-11 "Because of all this, I'm bringing charges against you"

"charging you and your children and your grandchildren.

Look around. Have you ever seen anything quite like this?

Sail to the western islands and look.

Travel to the Kedar wilderness and look.

Look closely. Has this ever happened before,

That a nation has traded in its gods

for gods that aren't even close to gods?

But my people have traded my Glory

for empty god-dreams and silly god-schemes.

12-13 "Stand in shock, heavens, at what you see!

Throw up your hands in disbelief—this can't be!"

"My people have committed a compound sin:

they've walked out on me, the fountain

Of fresh flowing waters, and then dug cisterns—

cisterns that leak, cisterns that are no better than sieves.

The Word of the Lord

Track 2 Old Testament option 1: Sirach 10: 12 – 18 read from The New Revised Standard Bible

12 The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord;
the heart has withdrawn from its Maker.

13 For the beginning of pride is sin,
and the one who clings to it pours out abominations.

Therefore the Lord brings upon them unheard-of calamities,
and destroys them completely.

14 The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers,
and enthrones the lowly in their place.

15 The Lord plucks up the roots of the nations,
and plants the humble in their place.

16 The Lord lays waste the lands of the nations,
and destroys them to the foundations of the earth.

17 He removes some of them and destroys them,

and erases the memory of them from the earth.

18 Pride was not created for human beings,
or violent anger for those born of women.

The Word of the Lord

Track 2 Old Testament option 2: Proverbs 25:6 – 7 read from The Message Bible

6-7 Don't work yourself into the spotlight;
don't push your way into the place of prominence.
It's better to be promoted to a place of honor
than face humiliation by being demoted.

The Word of the Lord

Track 1 Psalm 81:1, 10-16 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Sing with joy to God our strength *
and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.

10 I am the Lord your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said, *
"Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."

11 And yet my people did not hear my voice, *
and Israel would not obey me.

12 So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts, *
to follow their own devices.

13 Oh, that my people would listen to me! *
that Israel would walk in my ways!

14 I should soon subdue their enemies *
and turn my hand against their foes.

15 Those who hate the Lord would cringe before him, *
and their punishment would last for ever.

16 But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat *
and satisfy him with honey from the rock.

Track 2 Psalm 112 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Hallelujah!

Happy are they who fear the Lord *
and have great delight in his commandments!

2 Their descendants will be mighty in the land; *
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches will be in their house, *
and their righteousness will last for ever.

4 Light shines in the darkness for the upright; *
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.

5 It is good for them to be generous in lending *
and to manage their affairs with justice.

6 For they will never be shaken; *
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.

7 They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; *
their heart is right;
they put their trust in the Lord.

8 Their heart is established and will not shrink, *
until they see their desire upon their enemies.

9 They have given freely to the poor, *
and their righteousness stands fast for ever;
they will hold up their head with honor.

10 The wicked will see it and be angry;
they will gnash their teeth and pine away; *
the desires of the wicked will perish.

Epistle: Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 read from the Modern English Bible

13 Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unknowingly. 3 Remember those who are in chains, as if imprisoned with them, and those who are ill treated, since you are also in the body.

4 Marriage is to be honored among everyone, and the bed undefiled. But God will judge the

sexually immoral and adulterers. 5 Let your lives be without love of money, and be content with the things you have. For He has said:

“I will never leave you,
nor forsake you.”

6 So we may boldly say:

“The Lord is my helper; I will not fear.
What can man do to me?”

7 Remember those who rule over you, who have proclaimed to you the word of God. Follow their faith, considering the results it has produced in their lives. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

15 Through Him, then, let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share. For with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Luke 14:1, 7-14 read from the New American Standard Bible

14 It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely.

7 And He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table, saying to them, 8 “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, 9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this man,’ and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place. 10 But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you. 11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

12 And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors,

otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment. 13 But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On September 4th we remember Albert Schweitzer. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Albert Schweitzer was an accomplished musician, an insightful theologian, a pioneering medical doctor, and noted humanitarian.

Schweitzer was born on January 14th, 1875, in Kayserburg in the disputed Alsace-Lorraine region, the son of a Lutheran pastor. He began studying music at an early age, and took to the organ. At the age of 18, he began studying with the noted French organist Charles-Marie Widor, with whom he studied the music and theology of Johann Sebastian Bach (July 28). Widor and Schweitzer founded the Paris Bach Society in 1905 and laid the foundations for the Bach revival of the 20th century.

Schweitzer entered an almost unimaginably productive time of life between 1899 and 1912. Schweitzer earned three doctoral degrees from Strasbourg faculties: philosophy (1899), theology (1901), and medicine (1913). He served as a Lutheran pastor in St. Nicholas Church in Strasbourg, taught in the theology faculty, performed regular concerts for the Bach Society, and wrote many of his most important books. Schweitzer was a prolific author whose work included a pamphlet on the art of organ-building and playing that kicked off a sweeping reform of organ building practices, a two-volume work on J. S. Bach, a dissertation on Immanuel Kant's philosophy of religion, and two books that revolutionized the study of the New Testament: *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* and *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*.

Schweitzer's philosophical and theological study crystallized around the importance of ethics. Knowledge, in his view, was incomplete if it did not lead to direct action. As a result, Schweitzer decided to earn a medical degree in order to relieve human suffering. After receiving the M.D. degree in 1913, he traveled to Gabon and served as a medical doctor

there as an embodiment of his commitment to follow Christ. He and his wife, physician and researcher Helene Bresslau, established a medical clinic in Lambarene, Gabon, in 1913, where he served the local population. When World War I broke out, Schweitzer and his wife were forced to leave the hospital and, after recuperating, continued fund-raising efforts to keep the hospital going. Even after returning in 1924, Schweitzer periodically raised money for the mission with organ recordings and concert tours throughout Europe and the United States. He served as chief doctor at Lambarene for almost fifty years until his death there at the age of 90 on September 4, 1965.

He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952 for his “ethic of reverence for life.” He explained this ethic as “the universal, encompassing ethic of love. It is the perceived ethic of Jesus expressed in necessarily thoughtful form.” The chief calling of Christians was to work in the spirit of Jesus in order to make present the Kingdom of God. Schweitzer lived this understanding through his tireless efforts on behalf of his patients, in his public criticism of European colonialism in Africa, and in his appeals for the abolishment of nuclear tests and weapons.

Let us pray: O God, who endowed your servant Albert Schweitzer with a multitude of gifts for learning, beauty, and service: Inspire your Church that we, following his example, may be utterly dedicated to you, that all our works might be done to your glory and the welfare of your people; through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**