

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, November 08, 2020

The Collect: O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 read from the International Children's Bible

24 Then all the tribes of Israel met together at Shechem. Joshua called them all together there. Then he called the elders, heads of families, judges and officers of Israel. These men stood before God.

2 Then Joshua spoke to all the people. He said, "Here's what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to you: 'A long time ago your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates River. I am talking about men like Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor. They worshiped other gods. 3 But I, the Lord, took your ancestor Abraham out of the land on the other side of the river. I led him through the land of Canaan. And I gave him many children.

14 Then Joshua spoke to the people. He said, "Now you have heard the Lord's words. So you must respect the Lord and serve him fully and sincerely. Throw away the false gods that your people worshiped. That happened on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Now you must serve the Lord. 15 But maybe you don't want to serve the Lord. You must choose for yourselves today. You must decide whom you will serve. You may serve the gods that your people worshiped when they lived on the other side of the Euphrates River. Or you may serve the gods of the Amorites who lived in this land. As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."

16 Then the people answered, "No! We will never stop following the Lord. We will never serve other gods! 17 We know it was the Lord our God who brought our people out of Egypt. We were slaves in that land. But the Lord did great things for us there. He brought us out.

He protected us while we traveled through other lands. 18 Then he helped us defeat the people living in these lands. He helped us defeat the Amorites who lived here. So we will continue to serve the Lord because he is our God.”

19 Then Joshua said, “You will not be able to serve the Lord well enough. He is a holy God. And he is a jealous God. If you turn against him and sin, he will not forgive you. 20 If you leave the Lord and serve other gods, he will cause great trouble to come to you. The Lord has been good to you. But if you turn against him, he will destroy you.”

21 But the people said to Joshua, “No! We will serve the Lord.”

22 Then Joshua said, “Look around at yourselves and the people with you here. Do you all know and agree that you have chosen to serve the Lord? Are you all witnesses to this?”

The people answered, “Yes, it’s true! We all see that we have chosen to serve the Lord.”

23 Then Joshua said, “Now throw away the false gods that you have among you. Love the Lord, the God of Israel, with all your heart.”

24 Then the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey him.”

25 On that day Joshua made an agreement for the people. He made the agreement a law for them to follow. This happened at Shechem.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

Alternate 1 Wisdom of Solomon 6: 12-16 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible

12 Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.

13 She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.

14 One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
for she will be found sitting at the gate.

15 To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,
and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care,

16 because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,
and meets them in every thought.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

Alternate 2 Amos 5: 18-24 read from the International Children's Bible

18 How terrible it will be for you who want
the Lord's day of judging to come.

Why do you want that day to come?

It will bring darkness for you, not light.

19 It will be like a man who runs from a lion
and meets a bear.

It will be like him going into his house
and putting his hand on the wall.

And then a snake bites him.

20 So the Lord's day of judging will bring darkness, not light.

It will be a time of sadness, not joy.

21 The Lord says, "I hate and reject your feasts.

I cannot stand your religious meetings.

22 You offer me burnt offerings and grain offerings.

But I won't accept them.

You bring the best fellowship offerings.

But I will ignore them.

23 Take the noise of your songs away from here!

I won't listen to the music of your harps.

24 But let justice flow like a river.

Let goodness flow like a never-ending stream.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

Psalm 78:1-7 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Hear my teaching, O my people; *

incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable; *

I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.

3 That which we have heard and known,
and what our forefathers have told us, *

we will not hide from their children.

4 We will recount to generations to come
the praiseworthy deeds and the power of the Lord, *
and the wonderful works he has done.

5 He gave his decrees to Jacob
and established a law for Israel, *
which he commanded them to teach their children;

6 That the generations to come might know,
and the children yet unborn; *
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;

7 So that they might put their trust in God, *
and not forget the deeds of God,
but keep his commandments;

Wisdom of Solomon 6: 17 – 20 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible

17 The beginning of wisdom[a] is the most sincere desire for instruction,
and concern for instruction is love of her,

18 and love of her is the keeping of her laws,
and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality,

19 and immortality brings one near to God;

20 so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

Psalm 70 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; *

O Lord, make haste to help me.

2 Let those who seek my life be ashamed

and altogether dismayed; *

let those who take pleasure in my misfortune

draw back and be disgraced.

3 Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back, *

because they are ashamed.

4 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; *

let those who love your salvation say for ever,

"Great is the Lord!"

5 But as for me, I am poor and needy; *

come to me speedily, O God.

6 You are my helper and my deliverer; *

O Lord, do not tarry.

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 read from the King James 21st Century Version Bible

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so will God bring with Him those also who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord: that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

17 then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13 read from the Lexham English Bible

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven may be compared to ten virgins who took their lamps and[a] went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 For when[b] the foolish ones took their lamps, they did not take olive oil with them. 4 But the wise ones took olive oil in flasks with their lamps. 5 And when[c] the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.[d] 6 But in the middle of the night there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ 7 Then all those virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish ones said to the wise ones, ‘Give us some of your olive oil, because our lamps are going out!’ 9 But the wise ones answered saying, ‘Certainly there will never be enough for us and for you! Go instead to those who sell olive oil[e] and buy some[f] for yourselves.’ 10 But while[g] they had gone away to buy it[h] the bridegroom arrived, and those who were ready went inside with him to the wedding celebration, and the door was shut. 11 And later the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open the door[i] for us!’ 12 But he answered and[j] said, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you!’ 13 Therefore be on the alert, because you do not know the day or the hour!

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: November 14th we remember Samuel Seabury, First American Bishop. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Samuel Seabury, the first Bishop of The Episcopal Church, was born in Groton, Connecticut, November 30, 1729. After ordination in England in 1753, he was assigned, as a missionary

of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1757, he became rector of Grace Church, Jamaica, Long Island, and in 1766, rector of St. Peter's, Westchester County. During the American Revolution, he remained loyal to the British crown and served as a chaplain in the British army.

After the Revolution, a secret meeting of Connecticut clergymen in Woodbury, held on March 25, 1783, named Seabury or the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, whichever would be able or willing, to seek episcopal consecration in England. Leaming declined; Seabury accepted, and sailed for England.

After a year of negotiation, Seabury found it impossible to obtain episcopal orders from the Church of England because, as an American citizen, he could not swear allegiance to the crown. He then turned to the Non-juring bishops of The Episcopal Church in Scotland. On November 14, 1784, in Aberdeen, he was consecrated by the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Ross and Caithness, in the presence of a number of the clergy and laity.

On his return home, Seabury was recognized as Bishop of Connecticut in Convocation on August 3rd, 1785, at Middletown. With Bishop William White, he was active in the organization of The Episcopal Church at the General Convention of 1789. With the support of William Smith of Maryland, William Smith of Rhode Island, William White of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Parker of Boston, Seabury kept his promise, made in a concordat with the Scottish bishops, to persuade the American Church to adopt the Scottish form for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

In 1790, Seabury became responsible for episcopal oversight of the churches in Rhode Island; and, at the General Convention of 1792, he participated in the first consecration of a bishop on American soil, that of John Claggett of Maryland. Seabury died February 25th, 1796, and is buried beneath St. James' Church, New London.

Let us pray: We give you thanks, O Lord our God, for your goodness in bestowing upon this Church the gift of the episcopate, which we celebrate in this remembrance of the

consecration of Samuel Seabury; and we pray that, joined together in unity with our bishops and nourished by your holy Sacraments, we may proclaim the Gospel of redemption with apostolic zeal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**