

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 1

The Collect: Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; 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: 2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a read from World English Bible

26 When Uriah's wife heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. 27 When the mourning was past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased Yahweh.

1 Yahweh sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in one city: the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had very many flocks and herds, 3 but the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and raised. It grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food, drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. 4 A traveler came to the rich man, and he didn't want to take of his own flock and of his own herd to prepare for the wayfaring man who had come to him, but took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5 David's anger burned hot against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As Yahweh lives, the man who has done this deserves to die! 6 He must restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and because he had no pity!"

7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that would have been too little, I would have added to you many more such things. 9 Why have you despised Yahweh's word, to do that which is evil in his sight? You have struck Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and

have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 10 Now therefore the sword will never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken Uriah the Hittite's wife to be your wife.'

11 "This is what Yahweh says: 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did this secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.' "

13 David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 1 Psalm 51:1-13 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *

in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness *

and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, *

and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you only have I sinned *

and done what is evil in your sight.

5 And so you are justified when you speak *

and upright in your judgment.

6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *

a sinner from my mother's womb.

7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *

and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *

wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, *

that the body you have broken may rejoice.

- 10 Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Track 2 Old Testament: Exodus 16:2-4,9-15 read from the World English Bible

2 The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron in the wilderness; 3 and the children of Israel said to them, “We wish that we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots, when we ate our fill of bread, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

4 Then Yahweh said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from the sky for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.

9 Moses said to Aaron, “Tell all the congregation of the children of Israel, ‘Come close to Yahweh, for he has heard your murmurings.’ ” 10 As Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, Yahweh’s glory appeared in the cloud. 11 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 12 “I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, ‘At evening you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am Yahweh your God.’ ”

13 In the evening, quail came up and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay around the camp. 14 When the dew that lay had gone, behold, on the surface of the wilderness was a small round thing, small as the frost on the ground. 15 When the children

of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they didn't know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread which Yahweh has given you to eat.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 2 Psalm 78:23-29 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

- 23 So he commanded the clouds above *
and opened the doors of heaven.
- 24 He rained down manna upon them to eat *
and gave them grain from heaven.
- 25 So mortals ate the bread of angels; *
he provided for them food enough.
- 26 He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens *
and led out the south wind by his might.
- 27 He rained down flesh upon them like dust *
and winged birds like the sand of the sea.
- 28 He let it fall in the midst of their camp *
and round about their dwellings.
- 29 So they ate and were well filled, *
for he gave them what they craved.

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-16 read from the Easy to Read Version Bible

4 So, as a prisoner for the Lord, I beg you to live the way God's people should live, because he chose you to be his. 2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient and accept each other with love. 3 You are joined together with peace through the Spirit. Do all you can to continue as you are, letting peace hold you together. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, and God chose you to have one hope. 5 There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. 6 There is one God and Father of us all, who rules over everyone. He works through all of us and in all of us.

7 Christ gave each one of us a special gift. Everyone received what he wanted to give them.

8 That is why the Scriptures say,

“He went up high into the sky;
he took prisoners with him,
and he gave gifts to people.”

9 When it says, “He went up,” what does it mean? It means that he first came down low to earth. 10 So Christ came down, and he is the same one who went up. He went up above the highest heaven in order to fill everything with himself. 11 And that same Christ gave these gifts to people: He made some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to go and tell the Good News, and some to care for and teach God’s people. 12 Christ gave these gifts to prepare God’s holy people for the work of serving, to make the body of Christ stronger. 13 This work must continue until we are all joined together in what we believe and in what we know about the Son of God. Our goal is to become like a full-grown man—to look just like Christ and have all his perfection.

14 Then we will no longer be like babies. We will not be people who are always changing like a ship that the waves carry one way and then another. We will not be influenced by every new teaching we hear from people who are trying to deceive us—those who make clever plans and use every kind of trick to fool others into following the wrong way. 15 No, we will speak the truth with love. We will grow to be like Christ in every way. He is the head, 16 and the whole body depends on him. All the parts of the body are joined and held together, with each part doing its own work. This causes the whole body to grow and to be stronger in love.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: John 6:24-35 read from The Revised Standard Version Bible

24 So when the people saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Caper’na-um, seeking Jesus.

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not labor for the

food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal.” 28 Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” 30 So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform? 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” 32 Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world.” 34 They said to him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On August 3rd we celebrate the life of George Freeman Bragg, Jr. Priest. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

George Freeman Bragg served for 35 years as the secretary of the Conference for Church Workers Among the Colored People and authored important studies, such as *A History of the Afro-American Group of The Episcopal Church* and *Richard Allen and Absalom Jones*, documenting the early history of African Americans in The Episcopal Church.

Bragg was born to slaves of an Episcopal family in Warrenton, North Carolina, in 1863. As a young man he campaigned for the Readjuster Party in Virginia, which advocated for voting rights and state supported higher education for African Americans. He was the editor of the influential black weekly paper *The Lancet*, which he renamed the *Afro-American Churchman* upon his entrance into divinity school in 1885. Through this paper, Bragg called attention to the fact that African Americans were treated as recipients of mission work but were not supported in raising up self-sustaining institutions that would have fostered their presence in the Church.

Ordained a deacon in 1887 in Norfolk, Virginia, Bragg challenged the diocese's policy of requiring black men to remain in deacon's orders for five or more years, much longer than their white counterparts, and in 1888 he was ordained a priest. He served as the rector of St. James' First African Church in Baltimore for 49 years, from 1891 until his death in 1940. He helped establish the Maryland Home for Friendless Colored Children, and did not cease in his advocacy for black Episcopalians and their full inclusion in the larger life of the church, vehemently challenging the exclusion of African Americans from the church's society for mission work. He was instrumental in fostering over twenty priestly vocations in an environment in which black Episcopalians were often left to fend for themselves without the support and resources of the larger Church.

Let us pray: O God, whose mighty hand freed your servant George Freeman Bragg from bondage and blessed him with perseverance and courage: Deliver your Church from its ignorance and injustice, that, through his example and prayers, all the baptized may share in the work of ministry and, at the last, attain to the perfect freedom of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.