

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, June 25

The Old Testament, New Testament and Gospel will be read from Holman Christian Standard Bible.

The Collect and Psalm will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer.

The Collect: O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving kindness; 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: Genesis 21:8-21

8 The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned. 9 But Sarah saw the son mocking—the one Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham. 10 So she said to Abraham, “Drive out this slave with her son, for the son of this slave will not be a coheir with my son Isaac!”

11 Now this was a very difficult thing for Abraham because of his son. 12 But God said to Abraham, “Do not be concerned about the boy and your slave. Whatever Sarah says to you, listen to her, because your offspring will be traced through Isaac. 13 But I will also make a nation of the slave’s son because he is your offspring.”

14 Early in the morning Abraham got up, took bread and a waterskin, put them on Hagar’s shoulders, and sent her and the boy away. She left and wandered in the Wilderness of Beer-sheba. 15 When the water in the skin was gone, she left the boy under one of the bushes. 16 Then she went and sat down nearby, about a bowshot away, for she said, “I can’t bear to watch the boy die!” So as she sat nearby, she wept loudly.

17 God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What’s wrong, Hagar? Don’t be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the boy from the place where he is. 18 Get up, help the boy up, and support him, for I will make him

a great nation.” 19 Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the waterskin and gave the boy a drink. 20 God was with the boy, and he grew; he settled in the wilderness and became an archer. 21 He settled in the Wilderness of Paran, and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 1 Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

- 1 Bow down your ear, O Lord, and answer me, *
for I am poor and in misery.
- 2 Keep watch over my life, for I am faithful; *
save your servant who puts his trust in you.
- 3 Be merciful to me, O Lord, for you are my God; *
I call upon you all the day long.
- 4 Gladden the soul of your servant, *
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, *
and great is your love toward all who call upon you.
- 6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer, *
and attend to the voice of my supplications.
- 7 In the time of my trouble I will call upon you, *
for you will answer me.
- 8 Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord, *
nor anything like your works.
- 9 All nations you have made will come and worship you, O Lord, *
and glorify your Name.
- 10 For you are great;
you do wondrous things; *
and you alone are God.
- 16 Turn to me and have mercy upon me; *
give your strength to your servant;
and save the child of your handmaid.

17 Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed; *
because you, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Track 2 Old Testament: Jeremiah 20:7-13

7 You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived.

You seized me and prevailed.

I am a laughingstock all the time;
everyone ridicules me.

8 For whenever I speak, I cry out,
I proclaim, "Violence and destruction!"
because the word of the Lord has become for me
constant disgrace and derision.

9 If I say, "I won't mention Him
or speak any longer in His name,"
His message becomes a fire burning in my heart,
shut up in my bones.

I become tired of holding it in,
and I cannot prevail.

10 For I have heard the gossip of many people,
"Terror is on every side!

Report him; let's report him!"
Everyone I trusted watches for my fall.

"Perhaps he will be deceived
so that we might prevail against him
and take our vengeance on him."

11 But the Lord is with me like a violent warrior.

Therefore, my persecutors will stumble and not prevail.
Since they have not succeeded, they will be utterly shamed,
an everlasting humiliation that will never be forgotten.

12 Lord of Hosts, testing the righteous

and seeing the heart and mind,
let me see Your vengeance on them,
for I have presented my case to You.

13 Sing to the Lord!

Praise the Lord,
for He rescues the life of the needy
from the hand of evil people.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 2 Psalm: Psalm 69: 8-11, (12-17), 18-20

8 Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, *
and shame has covered my face.

9 I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *
an alien to my mother's children.

10 Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

11 I humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.

[12 I put on sack-cloth also, *
and became a byword among them.

13 Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.

14 But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *
at the time you have set, O Lord:

15 "In your great mercy, O God, *
answer me with your unfailing help.

16 Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me
and out of the deep waters.

17 Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *

do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.]

18 Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind; *

in your great compassion, turn to me.'

19 "Hide not your face from your servant; *

be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

20 Draw near to me and redeem me; *

because of my enemies deliver me.

Epistle: Romans 6:1b-11

Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? 2 Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in a new way of life. 5 For if we have been joined with Him in the likeness of His death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of His resurrection. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that sin's dominion over the body may be abolished, so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, 7 since a person who has died is freed from sin's claims. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him, 9 because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over Him. 10 For in light of the fact that He died, He died to sin once for all; but in light of the fact that He lives, He lives to God. 11 So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39

24 A disciple is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master. 25 It is enough for a disciple to become like his teacher and a slave like his master. If they called the head of the house 'Beelzebul,' how much more the members of his household!

26 "Therefore, don't be afraid of them, since there is nothing covered that won't be

uncovered and nothing hidden that won't be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper, proclaim on the housetops. 28 Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Aren't two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's consent. 30 But even the hairs of your head have all been counted. 31 So don't be afraid therefore; you are worth more than many sparrows.

32 "Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven. 34 Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I came to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; 36 and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.

37 The person who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; the person who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. 39 Anyone finding his life will lose it, and anyone losing his life because of Me will find it.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On June 25 we celebrate the life of James Weldon Johnson, Poet. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

James Weldon Johnson was born on June 17, 1871, in Jacksonville, Florida. His parents stimulated his academic interests, and he was encouraged to study literature and music. Johnson enrolled at Atlanta University with the expressed intention that the education he received there would be used to further the interests of African Americans. He never reneged on that commitment. In the summer after his freshman year, Johnson taught the

children of former slaves. Of that experience he wrote, "In all of my experience there has been no period so brief that has meant so much in my education for life as the three months I spent in the backwoods of Georgia." After graduation, he became the principal of the largest high school in Jacksonville, during which time he was paid half of what his white counterparts were paid, even though the school excelled under his leadership.

In 1900, he collaborated with his brother, Rosamond, a composer, to create "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." Written in celebration of President Lincoln's birthday, the song, still popular today, has become known as the "African American National Anthem." Due to the success of their collaboration, Johnson moved to New York in 1901 to join his brother, and together they attained success as lyricist and composer for Broadway.

In 1906, Johnson was invited to work for the diplomatic corps and became U.S. Consul to Venezuela and later Nicaragua. During his Nicaraguan tenure, Johnson was a voice of reason and reconciliation in a time of civil unrest and turmoil. His ability to bring together people of differing viewpoints toward a common vision served Johnson well in the 1920's, when he became an organizer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Johnson was a prolific poet and anthologist. He edited *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), a major contribution to the history of African American literature. His book of poetry, *God's Trombones* (1927), seven biblical stories rendered into verse, was influenced by his impressions of the rural South.

James Weldon Johnson died on June 26, 1938.

Let us pray: Eternal God, who gave your servant James Weldon Johnson a heart and voice to praise your Name in verse: As he gave us powerful words to glorify you, may we also speak with joy and boldness to banish hatred from your creation; in the Name of Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**