

## Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 27

**The Collect:** Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; 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: Exodus 1:8-2:10

8 Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. 9 “Look,” he said to his people, “the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. 10 Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.”

11 So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites 13 and worked them ruthlessly. 14 They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, 16 “When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.” 17 The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. 18 Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?”

19 The midwives answered Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.”

20 So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more

numerous. 21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

22 Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, 2 and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months.

3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. 4 His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

5 Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. 6 She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

7 Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

8 "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. 9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. 10 When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

**Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people**

### **Track 1 Psalm: Psalm 124**

1 If the Lord had not been on our side, \*  
let Israel now say;

2 If the Lord had not been on our side, \*  
when enemies rose up against us;

3 Then would they have swallowed us up alive \*  
in their fierce anger toward us;  
4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us \*  
and the torrent gone over us;  
5 Then would the raging waters \*  
have gone right over us.  
6 Blessed be the Lord! \*  
he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.  
7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; \*  
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.  
8 Our help is in the Name of the Lord, \*  
the maker of heaven and earth.

## **Track 2 Old Testament: Isaiah 51:1-6**

“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness  
and who seek the Lord:  
Look to the rock from which you were cut  
and to the quarry from which you were hewn;  
2 look to Abraham, your father,  
and to Sarah, who gave you birth.  
When I called him he was only one man,  
and I blessed him and made him many.  
3 The Lord will surely comfort Zion  
and will look with compassion on all her ruins;  
he will make her deserts like Eden,  
her wastelands like the garden of the Lord.  
Joy and gladness will be found in her,  
thanksgiving and the sound of singing.  
4 “Listen to me, my people;  
hear me, my nation:

Instruction will go out from me;  
my justice will become a light to the nations.

5 My righteousness draws near speedily,  
my salvation is on the way,  
and my arm will bring justice to the nations.

The islands will look to me  
and wait in hope for my arm.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
look at the earth beneath;  
the heavens will vanish like smoke,  
the earth will wear out like a garment  
and its inhabitants die like flies.

But my salvation will last forever,  
my righteousness will never fail.

**Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people**

### **Psalm: Psalm 138**

1 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart; \*  
before the gods I will sing your praise.

2 I will bow down toward your holy temple  
and praise your Name, \*  
because of your love and faithfulness;

3 For you have glorified your Name \*  
and your word above all things.

4 When I called, you answered me; \*  
you increased my strength within me.

5 All the kings of the earth will praise you, O Lord, \*  
when they have heard the words of your mouth.

6 They will sing of the ways of the Lord, \*  
that great is the glory of the Lord.

7 Though the Lord be high, he cares for the lowly; \*

he perceives the haughty from afar.

8 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; \*  
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;  
your right hand shall save me.

9 The Lord will make good his purpose for me; \*  
O Lord, your love endures for ever;  
do not abandon the works of your hands.

### **Epistle: Romans 12:1-8**

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

**Hear what he Spirit is saying to God's people**

### **Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20**

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

**On August 29 we celebrate the life of John Bunyan, Writer. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.**

John Bunyan was born in 1628 at Elstow in Bedfordshire, England. Little is known about his early life. His parents were poor; his father was a brazier, a trade that Bunyan also followed for a time. Bunyan had little to no formal education, and he may have learned to read English from reading the Bible. He served as a soldier in the Parliamentary army during the English Civil War, after which he married. His wife introduced him to Arthur Dent's Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven and Bishop Lewis Bayly's Practice of Piety, devotional books that set him on the religious path.

In 1653, he was baptized in the Bedford Baptist (Independent) Church, and was soon thereafter recognized as a preacher, a vocation at which he excelled. He claimed to have had visions similar to those of Teresa of Avila. After the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Bunyan was targeted and slandered by the new royalist government, along with many others who had supported the revolutionary cause during the Civil War. Under the laws of

the restored Stuart regime, congregational meeting houses were closed and citizens were required to attend their Anglican parishes. It was punishable by law for anyone, except those who had been ordained according to Anglican orders, to conduct services or preach. Bunyan was arrested while preaching in 1660 and spent most of the next twelve years imprisoned in Bedford.

While imprisoned, Bunyan wrote the first part of his most famous work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an allegorical story that was completed in 1684. *The Pilgrim's Progress* tells the story of Christian, a lonely pilgrim who must cross such treacherous terrain as the Slough of Despond and the River of Death before finally reaching the Land of Beulah. Along with John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, it was one of the most influential works of the seventeenth century, and retained its influence for several centuries thereafter. Bunyan died August 31, 1688.

**Let us pray:** God of peace, you called John Bunyan to be valiant for truth: Grant that we, having endured as strangers and pilgrims on this earth, may at last rejoice with all the faithful in your heavenly city; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**