

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, July 21

The Collect and Psalms will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer
The Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel will be read from New Revised Standard Version Bible

The Collect: Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Track 1 Old Testament: 2 Samuel 7:1-14a

7 Now when the king was settled in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2 the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." 3 Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind, for the Lord is with you."

4 But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, 5 "Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? 6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. 7 Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' 8 Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel, 9 and I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place and be disturbed no more, and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel, and I will

give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 1 Psalm: Psalm 89:20-37

- 20 I have found David my servant; *
with my holy oil have I anointed him.
- 21 My hand will hold him fast *
and my arm will make him strong.
- 22 No enemy shall deceive him, *
nor any wicked man bring him down.
- 23 I will crush his foes before him *
and strike down those who hate him.
- 24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, *
and he shall be victorious through my Name.
- 25 I shall make his dominion extend *
from the Great Sea to the River.
- 26 He will say to me, 'You are my Father, *
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'
- 27 I will make him my firstborn *
and higher than the kings of the earth.
- 28 I will keep my love for him for ever, *
and my covenant will stand firm for him.
- 29 I will establish his line for ever *
and his throne as the days of heaven."
- 30 "If his children forsake my law *
and do not walk according to my judgments;
- 31 If they break my statutes *

and do not keep my commandments;
32 I will punish their transgressions with a rod *
and their iniquities with the lash;
33 But I will not take my love from him, *
nor let my faithfulness prove false.
34 I will not break my covenant, *
nor change what has gone out of my lips.
35 Once for all I have sworn by my holiness: *
'I will not lie to David.
36 His line shall endure for ever *
and his throne as the sun before me;
37 It shall stand fast for evermore like the moon, *
the abiding witness in the sky.' "

Track 2 Old Testament: Jeremiah 23:1-6

23 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord.
2 Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. 3 Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4 I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord.

5 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."
Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 2 Psalm: Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd; *

I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *

and leads me beside still waters.

3 He revives my soul *

and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I shall fear no evil; *

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *

you have anointed my head with oil,

and my cup is running over.

6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Epistle: Ephesians 2:11-22

11 So then, remember that at one time you gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a circumcision made in the flesh by human hands

— 12 remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and

without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been

brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us,

15 abolishing the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in

himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, 16 and might reconcile

both to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.

17 So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were

near, 18 for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then, you

are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also

members of the household of God, 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone; 21 in him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. 31 He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. 32 And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. 33 Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. 34 As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things.

53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. 54 When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him 55 and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56 And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

The Gospel of the Lord

On July 24 we celebrate the life of Thomas à Kempis, Priest. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

The name of Thomas a Kempis is perhaps more widely known than that of any other medieval Christian writer. The Imitation of Christ, which he composed or compiled, has been translated into more languages than any other book except the Holy Scriptures.

Millions of Christians have found in this manual a treasured and constant source of edification.

His name was Thomas Hammerken, and he was born at Kempen in the Duchy of Cleves about 1380. He was educated at Deventer by the Brethren of the Common Life, and joined their order in 1399 at their house of Mount St. Agnes in Zwolle (in the Low Countries). He took his vows (those of the Augustinian Canons Regular) there in 1407, was ordained a priest in 1415, and was made sub-prior in 1425. He died on July 25, 1471.

The Order of the Brethren of the Common Life was founded by Gerard Groote (1340–1384) at Deventer. It included both clergy and lay members who cultivated a biblical piety of a practical rather than speculative nature, with stress upon the inner life and the practice of virtues. They supported themselves by copying manuscripts and teaching. One of their most famous pupils was the humanist Erasmus. Many have seen in them harbingers of the Reformation; but the Brethren had little interest in the problems of the institutional Church. Their spirituality, known as the “New Devotion” (*Devotio moderna*), has influenced both Catholic and Protestant traditions of prayer and meditation.

Let us pray: Holy Father, you have nourished and strengthened your Church by the inspired writings of your servant Thomas a Kempis: Grant that we may learn from him to know what is necessary to be known, to love what is to be loved, to praise what highly pleases you, and always to seek to know and follow your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**