

READINGS FOR September 24, 2017 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

End each reading with: The Word of the Lord or The Word of God, word of life.

First Reading: Jonah 3:10--4:11

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. ^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” ⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰Then the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God’s doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Prayers of Intercession for September 24, 2017

Pastor: Open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Leader: Let us pray for the church and its ministry especially Bethany Lutheran Church of Kaleva and Leland United Methodist Church. Unite us in one Spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our council, ministry committees, call committee, and all who guide this congregation's ministry. We ask you to prepare a candidate to come to Immanuel as our shepherd and lead us in your work. Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: God who stretched the spangled heavens, we thank and praise you for the gift of the sun, moon, stars, mountains, valleys, grasslands, and deserts. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: God of great mercy and love, you show faithfulness and kindness to the world every day. Guard those who suffer because of dishonest policies, corrupt government, or unfair labor practices. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: God, you provide for all our needs. We pray for those who are homeless, jobless, or hopeless. We pray for those who are forgotten, ignored, or isolated. We pray for all in any need, especially Bishop Craig Satterlee, Rev. Fred Overdier, Mike Erdman, Kathy Crouse, Don Boersma, Sandy Altemann, Ken Nash, Julius Nelson, Laura Regas, Mickey Viox (VEE-ox), Lindsay LePow, Sara Collins, Alana Kiple, Dave Regner, Rodney Wailes, Jack Gossett, Jan Sims, Don Kiessel, Nick Popovici (pa-po-vitch), Judy Aebig (A-big), Richard Dale, Steve Stroh, Paul Feickert and our shut-ins, Helen Bahle and Dorothy Stanow. Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our congregation and our neighborhood. Accompany us wherever we are on our journey of faith. Give us joy in the present and hope for the future. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: Make us free in your presence to raise to you our individual petitions that we share aloud, or in the silence of our hearts . . . *pause* . . . Lord in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Leader: God of endings and beginnings, we remember before you all the faithful departed. Comfort those who mourn. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting the power of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.