

Sunday July 4, 2010
Pentecost 6 (Proper 14)

READINGS

2 Kings 5:1-14
Psalm 30 p. 739
Galatians 6:1-16
Luke 10:1-11

PRAYERS

Worldwide: In the worldwide cycle of prayer, today we pray for The Church of Pakistan United and The Rt. Revd Samuel Azariah, Moderator, Church of Pakistan and Bishop of Raiwind.

Companion Diocese of the Windward Islands: In our companion diocese of the Windward Islands, we pray for Christ-the-King with St. Francis, Carriacou.

Diocese: In our diocesan cycle of prayer we remember the parish of St. Alban, Brooks and their priests, The Venerable Ken Wells and The Rev. Casimir Makabuza.

Parish: Here at Holy Nativity we pray for all our parish families and individuals, and for those desiring individual prayers. Today we especially pray for Matt, Joy, Jason, Phyllis, Vance, Anne, Donna and any others on our hearts today.

Sunday, July 11, 2010
Pentecost 7 (Proper 15)

READINGS

Amos 7:7-17
Psalm 82 p.815
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10: 25-37

PRAYERS

Worldwide: In the worldwide cycle of prayer, today we pray for The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea and The Most Revd James Simon Ayong, Archbishop of Papua New Guinea & Bishop of Aipo Rongo.

Companion Diocese of the Windward Islands: In our companion diocese of the Windward Islands, we pray for Cathedral Church of St. George (Parish of St. George and St. Andrew) with Transfiguration, the Ascension and Holy Redeemer and The Very Rev. Patrick McIntosh.

Diocese: In our diocesan cycle of prayer we remember the parish of Church of the Ascension, Coaldale and their priests The Rev. Canon Erin Philips and The Rev. Michael Ebsworth.

Parish: Here at Holy Nativity we pray for all our parish families and individuals, and for those desiring individual prayers. Today we especially pray for Matt, Joy, Jason, Phyllis, Vance, Anne, Donna and any others on our hearts today.

Sunday, July 18, 2010
Pentecost 8 (Proper 16)

READINGS

Amos 8:1-12
Psalm 52 p.771
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

PRAYERS

Worldwide: In the worldwide cycle of prayer, today we pray for The Episcopal Church in the Philippines and The Rt. Revd Edward Pacyaya Malecдан, Prime Bishop elect of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

Companion Diocese of the Windward Islands: In our companion diocese of the Windward Islands, we pray for Holy Trinity, Georgetown with St. John, Holy Name, St. Peter, St. Luke and The Rev. Michael Marshall.

Diocese: In our diocesan cycle of prayer we remember the parish of St. Augustine, Lethbridge and their priests, The Rev. James Robinson, The Rev. Chris Roth, and The Rev. Canon Al McCuaig.

Parish: Here at Holy Nativity we pray for all our parish families and individuals, and for those desiring individual prayers. Today we especially pray for Matt, Joy, Jason, Phyllis, Vance, Anne, Donna and any others on our hearts today.

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR

The flowers on the altar today have been given to the glory of God by Evelyn Vardalas.

Sunday, July 25, 2010
Pentecost 8 (Proper 17)

READINGS

Hosea 1:2-10
Psalm 85 p.818
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10: 25-37

PRAYERS

Worldwide: In the worldwide cycle of prayer, today we pray for The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea and The Most Revd James Simon Ayong, Archbishop of Papua New Guinea & Bishop of Aipo Rongo.

Companion Diocese of the Windward Islands: In our companion diocese of the Windward Islands, we pray for Cathedral Church of St. George (Parish of St. George and St. Andrew) with Transfiguration, the Ascension and Holy Redeemer and The Very Rev. Patrick McIntosh.

Diocese: In our diocesan cycle of prayer we remember the parish of Church of the Ascension, Coaldale and their priests The Rev. Canon Erin Philips and The Rev. Michael Ebsworth.

Parish: Here at Holy Nativity we pray for all our parish families and individuals, and for those desiring individual prayers. Today we especially pray for Matt, Joy, Jason, Phyllis, Vance, Anne, Donna and any others on our hearts today.

July 11th	
Proper p. 367	Amos 7:7-17
Colossians 1:1-14	Luke 10:25-37

July 18th	
Proper p. 368	Amos 8:1-12
Colossians 1:15-28	Luke 10:38-42

July 25th	
Proper p. 370	Hosea 1:2-10
Colossians 2:6-19	Luke 11:1-13

August 1st	
Proper p. 371	Hosea 11:1-11
Colossians 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21

YEAR C - Proper 17

(Revised Lectionary)

TODAY'S READINGS continue the course readings from Colossians and Luke, and introduce us to Hosea.

The First Reading (Hosea 1: 2-10) is God's call to Hosea. God would speak through Hosea to his people Israel, not so much in prophetic words but by prophetic actions. So God commanded Hosea to marry a prostitute, perhaps a temple prostitute of the heathen religion of Baal. It would be an act to shock people into recognizing how God was "married" in a covenant of love with the Israelites who had "prostituted themselves" in unfaithful alliances with other gods. Hosea named their first child "Jezreel" to warn of the battle of Jezreel and of the bloodshed that was to come. His second child was named "Not Pitied" to indicate that the Lord no longer had compassion for his sinful people. The third child was named "Not My People" to say that God had cut himself off from his people. Yet he goes on to say that they will be restored and be called "children of the living God" (v. 10).

The Second Reading (Colossians 2: 6-15) is the heart of Paul's letter to the Church at Colossae. It is Christ, he says, who gives us fullness of life. Paul had never been to Colossae but apparently he had begun to hear about the strange and troublesome ideas developing there. So he writes to set them straight. He says (1) in Christ "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (v. 9), that it is in Jesus that we find God; (2) the only circumcision necessary is a "spiritual circumcision" (v. 11) whereby we renounce sin and the temptations of the flesh; (3) we are buried with Christ in Baptism and raised by the power of his new life (v. 12); and (4) Christ has erased the record of all our sins by his cross (v. 14). Finally Paul pictures the "rulers and authorities" (i.e. the spiritual powers of evil) as humiliated captives of war, paraded before the public in Christ's triumphal victory march in which we share (v. 15).

The Gospel (Luke 11: 1-13) is a lesson about prayer. Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer, shorter than Matthew's (6: 9-13), is followed by two parables. The first teaches us to be persistent in prayer, and never give up. The second tells us that God, like any good father, wants us to have only good things, so that if we ask for his Spirit he will certainly give him to us.

YEAR C - Proper 16

(Revised Lectionary)

TODAY'S READINGS continue the course readings from last Sunday.

The First Reading (Amos 8: 1-12) is a warning that the consequences of sin and immorality are judgement and terror. Amos' fourth vision is of a "basket of summer fruit" (vv. 1 & 2). The Hebrew in this passage makes a pun: the "summer fruit" ("qayits" in Hebrew) depict the "end" ("qets" in Hebrew). So Amos warns of the end or destruction of the nation (v. 2). Our problem, says Amos, lies in the greed and dishonesty of the rich who "trample on the needy" (v. 4) and "practise deceit with false balances" (v. 5). Therefore, says Amos, there will be an earthquake ("shall not the land tremble?", v. 8), a frightening solar eclipse ("I will ... darken the earth in broad daylight", v. 9), and a failure of religion ("I will send a famine ... of hearing the words of the Lord", v. 11). It was a time of prosperity in Israel, but Amos warned them not to be complacent in wickedness for God demands righteousness.

The Second Reading (Colossians 1: 15-28) continues Paul's letter to the Christians at Colossae. He writes to correct their heretical ideas by describing just who this Jesus is and what he does. He points out (vv. 21 & 22) how the Colossians, even though they are gentiles, are reconciled to God provided that they "continue in the faith" (v. 23). Paul goes on to describe his own sufferings (he is writing from prison; see 4: 18) which he regards as a personal sharing in the sufferings of Christ. He endures all this, he says, for the sake of the Colossians, and indeed for the whole Church. Paul had never been to Colossae, but he wrote to commend himself to them, and to assure them that gentiles also are called to share in Christ's glory.

The Gospel (Luke 10: 38-42) is the familiar story about the two sisters, Mary and Martha. Martha, who seems to be the dominant one, was determined to be a good hostess. Their domestic situation became an issue when Martha complained that Mary was not doing her part. But Jesus pointed out to Martha that Mary honoured him more by simply being with him. This story has often been used to contrast the quiet life of the contemplative with the active life of the servant, but surely both are necessary in the Christian life. Mary and Martha complement each other.

YEAR C - Proper 15

(Revised Lectionary)

TODAY'S READINGS continue the course readings from Luke, but begin a series of four readings from Colossians and two from Amos.

The First Reading (Amos 7: 7-17) contains the essence of what we know about Amos. Here, in a vision, Amos sees the Lord gauging the straightness of a wall with a "plumb line". God points out that his people are like a wall out of plumb; they are not straight but crooked. Although they keep the forms of religion they are an immoral people. Amos, the first prophet to have his utterances written down (c. 750 B.C.) was a farmer from Tekoa (v. 14 & 1 :1) near Jerusalem. He had come north to Bethel, the religious centre of the northern kingdom, to denounce its injustices and to warn of its destruction at the hands of Assyria. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, tells Amos to "go, flee away" to his rustic home, but Amos explains that he is not prophesying to make money; he is just a simple person, called by God to warn the people.

The Second Reading (Colossians 1: 1-14) is St Paul's opening greeting to the newly formed Church at Colossae, followed by an encouraging thanksgiving for this little congregation which was developing so well. It was Epaphras (v. 7) who had first brought the Gospel to Colossae, and now he had come to Paul to tell him of their progress. But it seems that mistaken and heretical ideas had come into their thinking. So Paul writes to them to clarify just who this Jesus really is; and to tell them how he prays for them (v. 9) that they might grow in their understanding of God and be strengthened by his power, bearing the fruit of good works.

The Gospel (Luke 10: 25-37) is the parable of the Good Samaritan. This is Jesus' answer to the questions, "Who is my neighbour?" and "What does it mean to love my neighbour?" One of the academic exercises of the scribes was to ponder the question, "Which of all the laws and regulations in the Law of Moses is the most important?" By Jesus' time it was agreed that to love God (Deuteronomy 6: 5) and to love one's neighbour as oneself (Leviticus 19: 18) best summed up the Law. Now Jesus, in this parable, illustrates how we are to love our neighbour. The Samaritans, of course, were despised by the Jews who regarded them as outcasts and spiritually inferior.

YEAR C - Proper 14

(Revised Lectionary)

TODAY'S READINGS have no obvious common theme, but they do show how God in his goodness overcomes Evil.

The First Reading (2 Kings 5: 1-14) is the story of Naaman and how he was cured of his leprosy (or some kind of skin disease). It is a story which establishes the reality and supremacy of the God of Israel. Naaman was a powerful man, a general in the Syrian army. Syria, with its capital at Damascus, held a threatening influence over Israel at that time. At the suggestion of his wife's slave-girl, a captive from Israel, Naaman came to Israel, to the king, ready to buy a cure. But God does not work through "important" people (like the king) but through his obedient servants (like Elisha). And he does not work in exaggerated pomp and ritual as Naaman expected, but in the simple and humble lives of those who obey him (even to bathing in a local stream).

The Second Reading (Galatians 6: 1-16) concludes Paul's letter to the Christians in Galatia and sums up his case. He says, we are to bear with one another, assisting each other as best we can. We reap what we sow: sensuality produces corruption; life in the Spirit leads to eternal life; genuine goodness will have its reward. Paul, who normally dictated his letters, now finishes this one by adding a paragraph in his own bold handwriting. He says once again what he had said before: he glories not in circumcision or the Law, but only in the Cross of Christ. With Christ he has died to the world in order to be at one with God in his new creation.

The Gospel (Luke 10: 1-11, 16-20) tells of "the mission of the seventy". Here Jesus sends out, not the twelve apostles (we read about that in 9: 1-6) but other disciples (i.e. the "laity"). The mission of the twelve apostles is generally thought to represent the Church's mission to the twelve tribes of Israel. The mission of the seventy is understood to represent the Church's mission to the "seventy nations" of the world. The disciples returned to Jesus overjoyed with their success: the power of Satan was overthrown in their ministry and the Kingdom indeed had come. Jesus reminds them, however, that it is not by their own power that the Kingdom is established, but by the power of God.