

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost—July 16, 2017

The Collect

O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people who call upon thee, and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfill the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 55:10–13

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy, and be

led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Psalm 65:1–14

- 1 You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;*
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.
- 2 To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come,*
because of their transgressions.
- 3 Our sins are stronger than we are,*
but you will blot them out.
- 4 Happy are they whom you choose and draw to
your courts to dwell there!*
they will be satisfied by the beauty of your
house, by the holiness of your temple.
- 5 Awesome things will you show us in your
righteousness, O God of our salvation,*
O Hope of all the ends of the earth and of the
seas that are far away.
- 6 You make fast the mountains by your power;*
they are girded about with might.
- 7 You still the roaring of the seas,*
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of
the peoples.
- 8 Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will
tremble at your marvelous signs;*

- you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for
joy.
- 9 You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you
make it very plenteous;*
the river of God is full of water.
- 10 You prepare the grain,*
for so you provide for the earth.
- 11 You drench the furrows and smooth out the
ridges;*
with heavy rain you soften the ground and
bless its increase.
- 12 You crown the year with your goodness,*
and your paths overflow with plenty.
- 13 May the fields of the wilderness be rich for
grazing,*
and the hills be clothed with joy.
- 14 May the meadows cover themselves with
flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with
grain;*
let them shout for joy and sing.

Epistle Reading: Romans 8:1–11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is

life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen! Hear then the parable

of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Sermon

Mother Carol Tookey