

22nd Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 24 October 16, 2016

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

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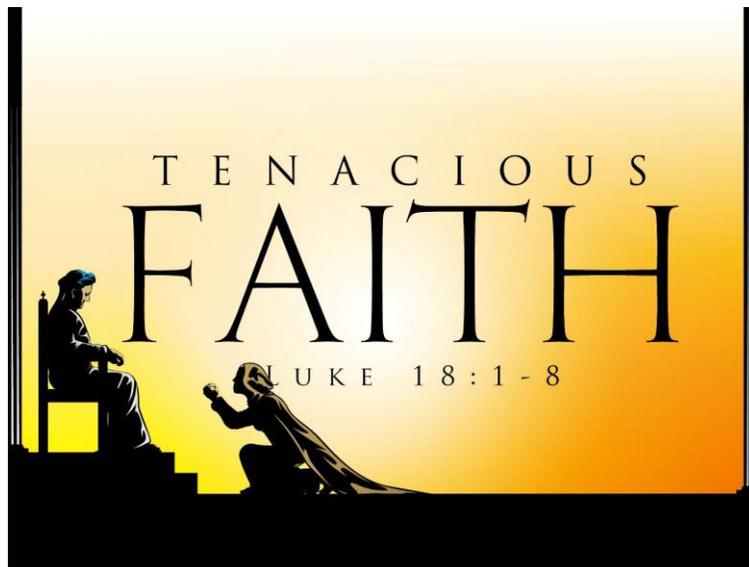
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through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

October 13, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details of this week's location.



<http://davidolatona.com/lessons-from-luke-18-1-8/> “ Reverend David Olatona ...is the founder and Senior Pastor at Dominion Faith International Church, Lagos Nigeria.”

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 734 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 524

LSB “I trust, O Lord, Your holy name”

TLH “In Thee, Lord, I have put my trust”

The only hymn by Reissner translated into English is **In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr. Ps. xxxi**. First published in the *Form und ordnung Gaystlicher Gesang und Psalmen*, Augsburg, 1533, and thence in *Wackernagel*, iii. p. 133, in 7 stanzas of 6 lines. It was included in V. Babst's *Gesang-Buch*, 1545, and repeated in almost all the German hymnbooks up to the period of Rationalism. It is one of the best Psalm-versions of the Reformation period. http://www.hymnary.org/person/Reissner_A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqWxTvQ9Lfm> "Chorale prelude for In dich hab ich gehoffet by Johann Christoph Bach. ...Mark Peters playing the Buck pipe organ at Trinity Lutheran, Traverse City"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNQBjOCD8AY> An interesting way to watch as this is played on a pipe organ.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

"All four texts of this week's pericope, Old Testament Lesson, Epistle, Psalm, and Gospel, work together to teach us the need to continue in faith through all of life. The Christian life is not a moment in time, but a walk through life with our Lord..."<http://www.clba.org/22nd-sunday-after-pentecost/> **The Church of the Lutheran Brethren (CLB)** is a family of 123 congregations in the United States and Canada, with 1,500 daughter congregations in Cameroon, Chad, Japan and Taiwan now organized into four national church bodies."

Genesis 32:22-30; RCL, Jeremiah 31:27-34 or Psalm 119:97-104 (Next Week: Genesis 4:1-15; RCL, Joel 2:23-32 or Psalm 65)

*"...The more impossible a situation may seem, the more we can be tempted to pray without hope that it's actually going to do any good, especially if that problems has already been dragging on for 20 years. I used that number, because that's how long Jacob had been dealing with his problem. However, on this particular night in our text, Jacob's problem had become absolutely critical, and so he prayed harder than he had ever prayed in his entire life... God invites us to do the same. If praying is like wrestling with God, let's take all those impossible situations we're dealing with, and let's **Step into the Ring!** 1. **God wants us to wrestle with Him.** 2. **He shows us how to win...***

<http://www.newhopelutheran.net/Wrestling-with-God-in-Prayer.php> **Pastor Dale Raether, WELS**

Jacob Wrestles with God

²²The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children,^[a] and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. ²⁴And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. ²⁵When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." ²⁷And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,^[b] for you have

striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.”²⁹ Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And there he blessed him.³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel,^[c] saying, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered.”

- a. [Genesis 32:22](#) Or sons
- b. [Genesis 32:28](#) Israel means *He strives with God, or God strives*
- c. [Genesis 32:30](#) Peniel means *the face of God*

“...Jacob’s story is a story of crossings, both geographically and metaphorically...”

The Hebrew verb *abar*, “to pass over, through, by” appears four times in this week’s lesson, although the number of appearances is obscured by English translations. The first two mentions of “crossing” are in v. 22 (Hebrews 23). That night Jacob took his wives, slave girls, and children and crossed (Hebrew root: *abar*) the ford (Hebrew root: *abar*) of the river Jabbok; literally, he “crossed over the crossing.” The other two are in v. 23 where it states that Jacob sent his family across (Hebrew root: *abar*) and all that belonged to him across (Hebrew root: *abar*). Not only were they crossing from one side of the river to the other but they were also crossing over into an unknown new beginning...

There at the crossing Jacob has crossed yet another boundary. The man who left Haran as the patriarch of a family including 11 children would become the progenitor of a nation of 12 tribes named for 12 sons.”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2555 [Vanessa Lovelace](#)
Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible, **Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Ga**

Psalm 121; RCL, Genesis 32:22-31 or Psalm 121 (Psalm 5; RCL, Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22 or Psalm 84:1-7)

“...Psalm 121 is liturgical in character, as indicated by the shift in voices throughout the psalm. Verses 1-2, and possibly verse 4, seem to be voiced by a pilgrim, who perhaps represents the whole company of travelers. The remainder of the psalm may be the response of a priest if the setting is departure from the temple. Or the response may be the words of a travel leader, or one who is remaining at home, if the setting is the initial departure for Jerusalem. Regardless of the exact orientation of the travelers, the main issue in the psalm is the safety God provides through constant attention to the faithful pilgrims...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=916 [Jerome Creach](#)
Robert C. Holland Professor of Old Testament, **Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA**

My Help Comes from the LORD

A Song of Ascents.

121 I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where does my help come?

² My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

³ He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade on your right hand.

⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

⁷ The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

⁸ The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.

“There are no references or allusions to Psalm 121 in the New Testament. Nevertheless, it remains one of the more popular psalms in Christian liturgy, hymnody, and piety. In the Lutheran tradition, for example, this psalm has found a place in services at both the beginning and the end of life. In the baptismal service of the old Evangelical Lutheran Church, as the child or adult was brought to the font, the pastor said, “The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth and forevermore,” a paraphrase of Psalm 121:8.1 Contemporary services for comforting the bereaved and for the burial of the dead make use of Psalm 121.2 The Psalm is suggested for use in ministering to those who are addicted³ and the last verse is part of an order for the blessing of a dwelling.⁴ In the course of the church year, Psalm 121 is assigned as one of the readings for the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost...”

https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/5-2_Psalms/5-2_Limburg.pdf

This 8 page article gives detailed information about this psalm and the “Songs of Ascent”

“If you’re just joining us now for this, the third of four Sundays devoted to Second Timothy, here’s what you’ve missed so far:

Timothy must persevere in the faith and teach others to do likewise by passing along the instruction he has received. What is his example for remaining steadfast despite the threat of persecution and the challenges posed by other teachers spreading false doctrine? Paul...”

(continued after the reading)

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5; RCL, the same reading (2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; RCL, the same reading) Readings from Timothy will continue each week until Reformation Day, October 30/31.

“...In times of danger it is important to have secure foundations. This letter has in view threats from people propounding a form of Christianity which threatens the faith. Last week our

passage stopped just short of 2:16-17 which mentions two such people. We hear little of the substance of what they are teaching beyond the idea that they are saying that the resurrection has already happened. The letter mainly warns without engaging in argument, such as we find in the undisputed letters of Paul. 3:1-9 accuses them of immorality and irresponsibility. Our passage refers to people going off after myths and not enduring sound teaching. We are left guessing what the real problem was....”

<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/CEpPentecost22.htm> William Loader, Murdoch University, Uniting Church in Australia

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom^[a] you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God^[b] may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- a. [2 Timothy 3:14](#) The Greek for *whom* is plural
- b. [2 Timothy 3:17](#) That is, a messenger of God (the phrase echoes a common Old Testament expression)

Preach the Word

⁴ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound^[a] teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

“...The comments in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 hardly amount to a refined “doctrine of scripture.” Moreover, several interpretive questions make them a topic for much discussion among scholars: uncertainty about whether the author means “each piece of the scriptures” or “all of scripture as a whole,” ambiguity in the rare word translated in the NRSV as “inspired by God,” and syntax that allows for different construals of the connection between scripture’s inspired character and its quality as something useful. The comments’ main focus, however, falls on scripture’s utility, its trustworthiness for the ministry Timothy is called to perform. For in scripture one learns about the salvation God provides.

Beginning in 2 Timothy 4:1, the exhortation’s attention turns from the past to the future, beginning with the prospect of Christ’s judgment. The attention to Christ’s “appearing and his kingdom” does not lend urgency to Timothy’s charge. The passage doesn’t issue warnings about a rapidly approaching end as much as it underscores the seriousness of Christ’s

future work. The corresponding need to root people in “sound doctrine” and “the truth” matters so they might be prepared.

Timothy receives a solemn charge in 4:2, which might be the centerpiece of the entire letter: “preach the message [*logos*]”, that is, the good news about Jesus Christ (see also 2 Timothy 2:15). Again, emphasis falls on *persistence* in this ministry. But persistence does not mean a license to berate or steamroll. Notice the imperatives to “convince, rebuke, and encourage” and to teach “with the utmost patience.” Timothy, one hopes, understands this as being something other than a boom box (remember those?) blaring received teachings over and over again without regard for how others hear them. Discretion must be part of any evangelistic effort, no matter what kind of evangelism we have in mind. Whether by words, by prayers, or by deeds, Christians cannot effectively bear witness to Christ’s good news without careful attention to and deep respect for their audiences...”

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1836 [Matt Skinner](#)
Professor of New Testament, **Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.**

As an example of the “scholarly discussion” visit <https://bible.org/article/relation-geovpneusto-graphv-2-timothy-316> for an 8 page discussion of verse 16 only.



“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 18th Chapter”

Luke 18:1-8, RCL, the same reading, again!, again!! (*Luke 18:9-17; RCL, almost the same, just verses 9-14*)

“The parable of the widow’s persistence is introduced as a parable about prayer and not losing heart, then moves into a story about justice, and ends with a question about faith.

It begins with the introduction of the judge who neither fears God nor respects people. The un-respected people are represented here by a widow whose relentlessness is so bothersome to the judge that she ends up receiving the justice she demands. And the un-feared God will, by the end of the parable, eclipse the judge who does not fear him...”

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1787 Meda Stamper is a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) with a Ph.D. in New Testament from Princeton Theological Seminary.

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’” ⁶ And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Obviously this text attracts attention. <http://www.textweek.com/mtlk/lk18a.htm> lists 38 links to commentaries about this reading. Be persistent and try a few.

“I grew up in a culture where it was considered poor form and impolite to be a bother or to pester someone. Children were “seen, not heard.” Adults were civil, or worse yet, nice (a word laden with baggage in the South). Folks who either “made a stink” or “raised a ruckus” were highly suspect and sometimes even the objects of outright ridicule. If you follow the rules, keep your composure, and do what’s right, the hope is that everything will turn out okay. If it doesn’t, well, you still aren’t supposed to do too much grouching because after all, no one ever said life was fair. Yet here in this week’s gospel lesson, we find Jesus lifting up another kind of behavior—that of persistent pestering and incessant bothering...

One way to unpack this parable is to understand God as the judge and Christians in the role of persistent widow. That makes for a nice example, but there is one major issue with that approach: God is NOT like the judge at all. God’s nature is to love and to give lavishly. God doesn’t give just to get rid of us; the Creator of the universe desires to be in relationship with the created. Perhaps, then, this approach is not the most fitting application of the story...

The question is not whether the Son of Man will find faith when he comes. It is rather where he will find faith; it may not be in the most obvious places or ways. Whether he finds such faith in action with us is our choice. Are we willing to “make a stink in solidarity” and “raise a holy ruckus” knowing that God is with us? I pray that we will, my faithful friends. We have nothing to lose because we have already gained everything, so pester, pester, and pester some more...”

<http://www.stewardshipoflife.org/2013/10/pester-pester-pester/> The Rev. Sharron Riessinger Blezard is an ELCA pastor currently rostered in the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

“...Two elements of the parable discourage easy interpretation. First, the parable proper (verses 2-5) doesn't stand alone. Instead, it's bracketed by Luke's introductory note on prayer (verse 1) at one end and an early interpretation (whether Luke's or not is difficult to tell) of the parable (verses 7-8) on

the other. Second, whatever the original parable's import, it is now placed in the context of the delayed *parousia*, as it is preceded by Jesus' teaching on the coming kingdom (17:20-37) and followed by another reference to the coming of the Son of Man (verse 8b).

Given these complicating factors, what can we say about this parable? Three distinct possibilities present themselves that, while drawing on similar elements, yet differ enough from each other that the preacher will need to exercise homiletical and pastoral judgment in determining which route to pursue.

God the Good Judge

Perhaps the easiest interpretative road to travel involves correcting our faulty hearing of the rhetorical force of the parable's comparison of the unjust judge and God. The point is not that God is like an unjust judge...The focus of this interpretation is on God's goodness and eagerness to bless. Therefore, the sermon offers believers who are perhaps reluctant to address almighty God with their petitions both an invitation and encouragement to pray without ceasing, confident of God's desire to respond.

God the Just Judge

A second and related path would be to give primary attention not only to Luke's introductory note but also to the choice of the unjust judge as a major character... Believers, like the widow, should pray and petition without ceasing and not lose heart, confident that God's justice will in time prevail.

The Widow as Pursuer of Justice

A third interpretive route shifts our attention from the judge to the widow. Widows in the ancient world were incredibly vulnerable, regularly listed with orphans and aliens as those persons deserving special protection. The fact that this particular widow must beseech a judge unattended by any family highlights her extreme vulnerability...

Read this way, the parable serves to encourage those suffering injustice to continue their complaints and calls for justice. A sermon following this path will encourage believers in their efforts, noting that sometimes it takes extreme, even socially unacceptable behavior to effect change. God, the Bible has persistently insisted, gives special attention to those who are most vulnerable; therefore, we should persist in our complaints, even to the point of embarrassing the powers that be in order to induce change..." http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=810 David Lose President, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Penn.



Ted said, "Like God doesn't screen his calls?", but God does have caller ID, you can count on that.

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