

Order of Service for Sunday November 15, 2020

24th Sunday after Pentecost

St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Lebanon, OR

S. Kay Young, Homilist and Doug Young, Lector

A Greeting

Today's Collect:

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading -- Judges 4:1-7

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. So the LORD sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goiim. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.'"

- Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People
- ✦ **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 123

- 1 To you I lift up my eyes, *
to you enthroned in the heavens.
- 2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, *
and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
- 3 So our eyes look to the LORD our God, *
until he show us his mercy.
- 4 Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of contempt,
- 5 Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich, *
and of the derision of the proud.

Second Lesson – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will



come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

- ✦ Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People
- ✦ **Thanks be to God**

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus said, "It is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

- ✦ This is the Gospel of the Lord
- ✦ **Thanks be to God**



Homily – “Talented” – by S. Kay Young –

In Jewish law, once you buried something--money, or a jewel of great price, you are no longer responsible for it. So the terrified servant buried his 1 Talent in fear that the master would come back and be disappointed in him. My heart breaks for him. He did this out of fear.

This parable comes at that time of year when it is convenient to work it into the pledge drive. That's sad, because I like Matthew and this story is found only in Matthew. What gives? Well, Jesus' stories fall into 2 categories: parables and allegories. Let's dig a bit...

Looking at these weeks, Jesus' stories have been a bit stern: the faithful & unfaithful servant; The wise and the foolish virgins (I always wanted them to share their oil) and the investors, good and bad. It's all so judgy. But there's context. We're almost done with Matthew. I see that we are at the end of Jesus' Story. This story was told during Holy Week, and Jesus knows how it's going to turn out. He is delivering those wise words and parting shots we all hope to do; to tell them how to behave when He's not physically with them. To be faithful and wise, and what? We've got to get beyond shrewd versus the gnashing of teeth... These stories are allegorical. Jesus is going on a long trip. He is leaving us each with blessings. He will come back, and there will be an accounting.

When the Master comes back, he rewards the five-talent servant and the two-talent servant the same. “Come share in my joy.”

The third servant is so fearful of the Lord, he doesn't even put the money in a bank. He shirks his responsibility totally: he digs a hole, and washes his hands of it. Dietrich Bonhoeffer struggled with this as he wrote in the midst of the Holocaust. He offered “**that the sin of respectable people is running from responsibility.**”

Often our faults, our sins, are just the obverse side of the coin Of our strengths, our virtues. I remember Rev. Carol Sedlacek+, our former pastor, saying that the opposite of faith is not doubt; it's fear. We all have times of fear, but it's a mistake to live in terror. If our fears lead us to embrace the status quo at all costs, we will not only fail, we really are washing our hands of the glory we have been entrusted with.

Our response to fear should not be to dig holes. Our holes are meant to shelter us, but in the end, they could bury us!

What is this talent we've been given? When I hear the word, I think of gifted people: prophets, healers, writers, singers, cooks, entertainers, sports figures; even accountants. But that feels like some people are being left out, and they are! WHAT IS THE GOD GIVEN TALENT THAT WE ALL HAVE? It's LOVE. Presiding Bishop Curry says: If it's not about Love, it's not about God. When we don't use whatever we've been given in some way, we are not spreading God's Love. We need to help one another and reach out to others any way we can. We can do this. Even in a pandemic, even in troubled times, even in small ways and small places while we await the Master's return.

With thanks to ~Rev. Elizabeth Lovell Milford, Heritage Presbyterian Church



Prayers of the People: Form I

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying "Lord, have mercy."

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Michael our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this city of Lebanon and for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For reasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.



For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of St. Martin and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To thee, O Lord our God.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer for St. Martin's

God of Love, open our eyes and ears to perceive you at work in creation, the church, and our parish. Fill our hearts with your love that we may reach out in love to others. Stir up our imagination with your Holy Spirit that we may find new ways to live into life with you. Give us a vision of your mission that we may share your love and your spirit in all the places where we work and play and worship you. In Jesus' holy name, **Amen.**

Blessings and Dismissal

