

Season of Creation

Sunday, September 21

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 8.18-9.1

Reader: A Reading from the Book of Jeremiah.

My joy is gone; grief is upon me;
my heart is sick.

Listen! The cry of the daughter of my people
from far and wide in the land:

“Is the Lord not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?”

(“Why have they provoked me to anger with their images,
with their foreign idols?”)

“The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved.”

For the brokenness of the daughter of my people I am
broken,

I mourn, and horror has seized me.

Is there no balm in Gilead?

Is there no physician there?

Why then has the health of the daughter of my people
not been restored?

O that my head were a spring of water
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Do Not Doubt What You See (Steven Charleston)

Reader: A Reading from Do Not Doubt What You See from *Ladder to the Light*.

Last night they came again, the spirits of earth and sky, of wind and rain, of deep seas and tall mountains. In all shapes and sizes they came, from every tribe and nation: the deer and the elk, the bear and the wolf, broad-winged eagles and crows as black as night. They all came and stood in a solemn circle beneath the one-eyed moon and spoke with a single voice this message from the sacred: "Do not doubt what you see: the world is warming, the waters are rising, and the winds are coming stronger than before. Do not turn away, do not pretend not to see, but speak the truth and set the spirits free to heal the world, before the ice has gone, before the last tiger falls, before only the desert remembers the ones who once walked this land.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

***All:* Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

Luke 15.1-10 (FNV)

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Priest: Shining Light tells the Good Story of Creator Sets Free.

All: **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Tribal tax collectors and other outcasts would often gather around Creator Sets Free (Jesus) to listen to him tell his stories. But the Separated Ones (Pharisees) and the scroll keepers would complain about this. They would say things like, "This man welcomes outcasts to join him at the table and eat with him."

On one of those occasions Creator Sets Free (Jesus) answered them with a story.

"Who among you, if you were caring for one hundred sheep and one of the lambs wandered away, would not leave the ninety-nine and search for that lost lamb until you found it? Would you not put that lamb on your shoulders, hurry home, and invite you friends to a

celebration, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost lamb!'"?

In the same way, the Spirit-world above will celebrate even more over one outcast who find the way back home than for ninety-nine who are already safely there.

"Let me say it is another way," he explained. "What man who has ten eagle feathers and loses one would not light a torch, sweep the house clean and look everywhere until he found it? Then after he finds it, would he not gather his friends together for a celebration? In the same way, Creator's spirit-messengers will celebrate when even one outcast find the way home.

Priest: The Gospel of Christ.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Luke 15.1-10 (NRSVue)

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So he told them this parable: “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

“Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”