



St. Andrew's

Episcopal Church

Morning Prayer

Wednesday, November 15th

Psalm 119:97-120

97 Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all day long.

98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is always with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your decrees are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

101 I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word.

102 I do not turn away from your ordinances, for you have taught me.

103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

106 I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to observe your righteous ordinances.

107 I am severely afflicted; give me life, O Lord, according to your word.

108 Accept my offerings of praise, O Lord, and teach me your ordinances.

109 I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law.

110 The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.

111 Your decrees are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.

112 I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.

113 I hate the double-minded, but I love your law.

114 You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word.

115 Go away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope.

117 Hold me up, that I may be safe and have regard for your statutes continually.

118 You spurn all who go astray from your statutes, for their cunning is in vain.

119 All the wicked of the earth I count as dross; therefore I love your decrees.

120 My flesh trembles for fear of you, and I am afraid of your judgments.

A reading from the Book of Nehemiah

(Nehemiah 7:73-8:3, 8:5-18)

All Israel settled in their towns. When the seventh month came, the Israelites being settled in their towns, all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people, and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also the Levites Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord, and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

On the second day the heads of ancestral houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the law. And they found it written in the law that the Lord had commanded by Moses that the Israelites should live in booths during the festival of the seventh month and that they should publish and proclaim in all their towns and in Jerusalem as follows, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on the roofs of their houses, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captiv-

ity made booths and lived in them, for from the days of Jeshua son of Nun to that day the Israelites had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. And day by day, from the first day to the last day, Ezra read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew *(Matthew 15:29-39)*

After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the maimed, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them, so that the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for the crowd because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat, and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." The disciples said to him, "Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?" Jesus asked them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all of them ate and were filled, and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**