



*This Sunday at St. Luke's Blue Ridge
June 25, 2017*

The Second Sunday after Trinity



Stained glass window, Ely Cathedral. Noah's Flood by Alfred Gérente of Paris, 1849

Background

In Trinity-tide, our readings for Morning Prayer continue to take us through some of the major events in Genesis. In Genesis 1, God creates the world good, but in Genesis 3 the project falls on the rocks when God's image-bearing creatures rebel, seek to enthrone self and dethrone their Creator and, as a result, become subject to sin and death. In today's Old Testament reading, human sinfulness reaches a highwater point and God *almost* starts over. But one man, Noah, is true to God and becomes the new fountain head for the human race. With Noah and his family we begin to see a principle which will reappear as the biblical story goes forward -- the principle of the faithful remnant.

The Collect for the Second Sunday after Trinity

O LORD, who never failest to help and govern those whom thou dost bring up in thy stedfast fear and love; Keep us, we beseech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE (H.C.) – 1 St. John 3:13-24 (J.B. Phillips)

Living in love means confidence in God

¹¹⁻¹³ For the original command, as you know, is that we should love one another. We are none of us to have the spirit of Cain, who was a son of the devil and murdered his brother. Have you realised his motive? It was just because he realised the goodness of his brother's life and the rottenness of his own. Don't be surprised, therefore, if the world hates you.

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ We know that we have crossed the frontier from death to life because we do love our brothers. The man without love for his brothers is living in death already. The man who actively hates his brother is a potential murderer, and you will readily see that the eternal life of God cannot live in the heart of a murderer.

¹⁶⁻¹⁸ We know and, to some extent realise, the love of God for us because Christ expressed it in laying down his life for us. We must in turn express our love by laying down our lives for those who are our brothers. But as for the well-to-do man who sees his brothers in want but shuts his eyes—and his heart—how could anyone believe that the love of God lives in him? My children, let us not love merely in theory or in words—let us love in sincerity and in practice!

¹⁹⁻²⁰ If we live like this, we shall know that we are children of the truth and can reassure ourselves in the sight of God, even if our own hearts make us feel guilty. For God is infinitely greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

²¹⁻²³ And if, dear friends of mine, when we realise this our hearts no longer accuse us, we may have the utmost confidence in God's presence. We receive whatever we ask for, because we are obeying his orders and following his plans. His orders are that we should put our trust in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another—as we used to hear him say in person.

²⁴ The man who does obey God's commands lives in God and God lives in him, and the guarantee of his presence within us is the Spirit he has given us.

NOTE: God loves us and his love makes demands on us. We are expected to respond both by faith and by action. "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another" (v. 23). (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. Luke 14:16-24 (J.B. Phillips)

Men who are “too busy” for the kingdom of God

¹⁶⁻²⁴ But Jesus said to him, “Once upon a time, a man planned a big dinner party and invited a great many people. At dinner-time, he sent his servant out to tell those who were invited, ‘Please come, everything is ready now.’ But they all, as one man, began to make their excuses. The first one said to him, ‘I have bought some land. I must go and look at it. Please excuse me.’ Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen and am on my way to try them out. Please convey my apologies.’ Another one said, ‘I have just got married and I am sure you will understand I cannot come.’ So the servant returned and reported all this to his master. The master of the house was extremely annoyed and said to his servant, ‘Hurry out now into the streets and alleys of the town, and bring here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ Then the servant said, ‘I have done what you told me, sir, and there are still empty places.’ Then the master replied, ‘Now go out to the roads and hedgerows and make them come inside, so that my house may be full. For I tell you that not one of the men I invited shall have a taste of my dinner.’”

NOTE: In the parable of the great supper our Lord is giving a warning to those who are failing to respond to the call to repentance which is also the final summons to the heavenly banquet. (William Sydnor)

READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER (10 a.m. service)

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Genesis 6:5-8, 13-22 (GNT)

The story of Noah

⁵ When the Lord saw how wicked everyone on earth was and how evil their thoughts were all the time, ⁶ he was sorry that he had ever made them and put them on the earth. He was so filled with regret ⁷ that he said, “I will wipe out these people I have created, and also the animals and the birds, because I am sorry that I made any of them.” ⁸ But the Lord was pleased with Noah. Noah.

[⁹⁻¹⁰ This is the story of Noah. He had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Noah had no faults and was the only good man of his time. He lived in fellowship with God, ¹¹ but everyone else was evil in God's sight, and violence had spread everywhere. ¹² God looked at the world and saw that it was evil, for the people were all living evil lives.]

¹³ God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to all people. I will destroy them completely, because the world is full of their violent deeds. ¹⁴ Build a boat for yourself out of good timber; make rooms in it and cover it with tar inside and out. ¹⁵ Make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. ¹⁶ Make a roof for the boat and leave a space of 18 inches between the roof^[b] and the sides. Build it with three decks and put a door in the side. ¹⁷ I am going to send a flood on the earth to destroy every living being. Everything on the earth will die, ¹⁸ but I will make a

covenant with you. Go into the boat with your wife, your sons, and their wives. ¹⁹⁻²⁰ Take into the boat with you a male and a female of every kind of animal and of every kind of bird, in order to keep them alive. ²¹ Take along all kinds of food for you and for them.” ²² Noah did everything that God commanded.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON – St. Matthew 24:32-42 (J.B. Phillips)

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

³²⁻⁴¹ “Learn what the fig-tree can teach you. As soon as its branches grow full of sap and produce leaves you know that summer is near. So when you see all these things happening you may know that he is near, at your very door! Believe me, this generation will not disappear till all this has taken place. Earth and sky will pass away, but my words will never pass away! But about that actual day and time no one knows—not even the angels of Heaven, nor the Son, only the Father. For just as life went on in the days of Noah so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. In those days before the flood people were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage until the very day that Noah went into the ark, and knew nothing about the flood until it came and destroyed them all. So will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left behind. Two women will be grinding at the hand-mill; one is taken and one is left behind.

⁴²⁻⁴⁴ “You must be on the alert then, for you do not know when your master is coming. You can be sure of this, however, that if the householder had known what time of night the burglar would arrive, he would have been ready for him and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. That is why you must always be ready, for you do not know what time the Son of Man will arrive.”

NOTE: Our Lord warns that men must not put off responding to God's call to repentance. Remember what happened in the time of Noah, he says, and adds, "Watch therefore for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming [as judge]" (v. 42).

This passage is often read in view of our Lord's Second Coming . . . and rightly so inasmuch as Jesus in his words to His disciples does urge vigilance. Even so, in context, the more immediate "coming" which Jesus seems to have in view is the coming of the Son of Man in judgment on Jerusalem. Historically, this catastrophic event happened in A.D. 70. when the armies of Rome lay siege on the city and eventually destroyed it to the ground.

How do we know that it was of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem of which Jesus was primarily speaking? Principally because of Jesus' words: "Believe me, this generation will not disappear till all this has taken place."

From our point of view, we should understand the coming of the Son of Man in judgment on the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as a dress rehearsal for our Lord's Second Coming at the end of the age. Jesus' first followers were to be "on guard". So should we!

SERVICES ON TRINITY 2

- **8:15 a.m.** – Holy Communion (said service)

A quiet meditative service

Preacher: The Rev. Ronald O. Wikander

Celebrant: The Rector

Lector: Sam Sartain

Acolyte / Server: Judy Evans

- **10:00 a.m.** – Morning Prayer and Sermon (choral)

Classic Anglican morning service with exposition of the Scriptures

Preacher: The Rector

Acolyte / Server: Ruth Johnson

Lay Reader: Roger Johnson

Theme: "As in the Days of Noah"

A CALL TO SERVICE

Our acolyte and lay reader roster needs additional people. Please contact Tony McConnell, Verger, if you would like to serve, (706) 633-8379, mrwam@tds.net.

ALTAR GUILD OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are also needed for the Altar Guild. Please contact Pat McConnell for more information: (706) 362-8443.

REMEMBER THE NEEDY

EVERY TIME YOU COME TO CHURCH



Please bring one or more item for the needy -- paper, soap products, tinned and dried food, etc. Leave in Narthex. Items will be distributed through North Georgia Community Action Agency



A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2017. Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; [\(706\) 632-8245](tel:(706)632-8245); www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.