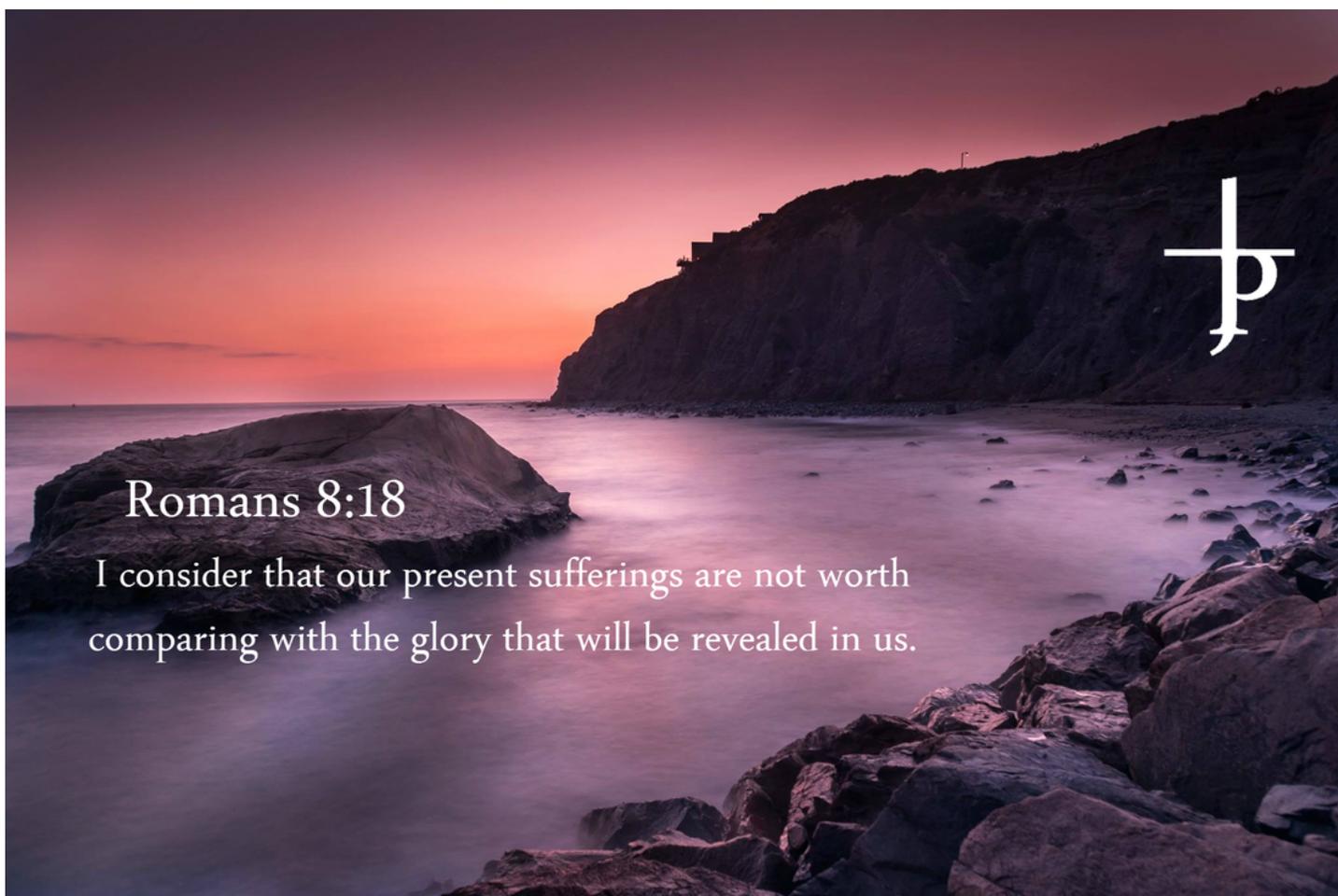


*This Sunday at St. Luke's Blue Ridge
June 24, 2018
(Holy Communion, both services, Bishop's visit)*

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity



God's Purposes and Ourselves

“God is working His purposes out” -- His purposes for men and women and for the whole of Creation. This is Paul's theme in the Epistle appointed for the Fourth Sunday in Trinity. Men and women, as the highest beings God has made in the world, come first. For them “the best is yet to be”; God has planned for them a “magnificent future”.

But for the time being there is suffering everywhere. “All created life groans in a sort of universal travail.” Suffering in the created world – among animals for instance – is nearly as distressing as in men and women. All this makes the wonderful promises about the future hard to understand.

As far as suffering is concerned we will be wise not to say “God sends it” or “it is God’s will”, but rather “God uses it to bring about good, and makes it one of the means of achieving His purpose.”

Paul has a lively picture of creation – “standing on tiptoe” eagerly waiting for the “wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own”. We may imagine creation saying to itself, “My turn next!” Put another way, when humans are put right at Jesus’ Second Coming, then creation itself will be restored. The Fall pictured in Genesis 3 will be undone. God’s good creation project will at last be put back on track.

The Collect for Trinity 4

O GOD, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE (H.C.) – Romans 8:18-23 (J.B. Phillips)

Present distress is temporary and negligible

¹⁸⁻²¹ In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God’s purpose it has been so limited—yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!

²²⁻²⁵ It is plain to anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail. And it is plain, too, that we who have a foretaste of the Spirit are in a state of painful tension, while we wait for that redemption of our bodies which will mean that at last we have realised our full sonship in him. We were saved by this hope, but in our moments of impatience let us remember that hope always means waiting for something that we haven’t yet got. But if we hope for something we cannot see, then we must settle down to wait for it in patience.

THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. Luke 6:36-42 (J.B. Phillips)

Jesus' advice to the sons of God

³⁶ “You must be merciful, as your father in Heaven is merciful.”

³⁷⁻³⁸ “Don't judge other people and you will not be judged yourselves. Don't condemn and you will not be condemned. Make allowances for others and people will make allowances for you. Give and men will give to you—yes, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will they pour into your lap. For whatever measure you use with other people, they will use in their dealings with you.”

The need for thorough-going sincerity

³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Then he gave them an illustration—“Can one blind man be guide to another blind man? Surely they will both fall into the ditch together. A disciple is not above his teacher, but when he is fully trained he will be like his teacher.”

⁴¹⁻⁴² “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and fail to notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’ when you cannot see the plank in your own? You fraud, take the plank out of your own eye first and then you can see clearly enough to remove your brother's speck.

READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER

These are the readings which would had been read at Morning Prayer had the 10 a.m. service been Morning Prayer rather than Holy Communion. They are printed here for those who wish to follow this sequence of lessons interrupted. During Trinity-tide, our Old Testament lessons tell the story of the last of the Judges of Israel and introduce the period of the Kings. Our New Testament lessons, meanwhile, tell the story of the young Church as told in the Acts of the Apostles.

FIRST LESSON – 1 Samuel 9:1-10, 18-19, 26:10:1 (ESV)

Saul Chosen to Be King

9 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. ² And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upwards he was taller than any of the people.

³ Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, “Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys.” ⁴ And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them.

And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then they passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them.

⁵ When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant^[a] who was with him, “Come, let us go back, lest my father cease to care about the donkeys and become anxious about us.” ⁶ But he said to him, “Behold, there is a man of God in this city, and he is a man who is held in honour; all that he says comes true. So now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us the way we should go.” ⁷ Then Saul said to his servant, “But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?” ⁸ The servant answered Saul again, “Here, I have with me a quarter of a shekel^[b] of silver, and I will give it to the man of God to tell us our way.” ⁹ (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, he said, “Come, let us go to the seer”, for today's “prophet” was formerly called a seer.) ¹⁰ And Saul said to his servant, “Well said; come, let us go.” So they went to the city where the man of God was.

¹⁸ Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, “Tell me where is the house of the seer?”

¹⁹ Samuel answered Saul, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind.

²⁶ Then at the break of dawn^[f] Samuel called to Saul on the roof, “Get up, that I may send you on your way.” So Saul arose, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

²⁷ As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to pass on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God.”

10 Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, “Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be prince^[a] over his heritage.

NOTE: This is a continuation of the Samuel-Saul saga which began on Trinity I. In last week's reading, the elders of Israel clamored for a king – so they could be like everyone else, other nations. God instructed Samuel to give them what they wanted. In today's reading, Samuel does as God had instructed. Saul is introduced and is crowned. Saul begins well.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON – Acts 8:26-40 (J.B. Phillips)

Philip is given a unique opportunity

²⁶ But an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go south down the road which runs from Jerusalem to Gaza, out in the desert.”

²⁷⁻²⁹ Philip arose and began his journey. At this very moment an Ethiopian eunuch, a minister and in fact the treasurer to Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, was on his way home after

coming to Jerusalem to worship. He was sitting in his carriage reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit said to Philip, “Approach this carriage, and keep close to it.”

³⁰ Then as Philip ran forward he heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah, and he said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹ And he replied, “How can I unless I have someone to guide me?”

³²⁻³³ And he invited Philip to get up and sit by his side. The passage of scripture he was reading was this: ‘He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation his justice was taken away. And who will declare his generation? For his life is taken from the earth.’

³⁴ The eunuch turned to Philip and said, “Tell me, I beg you, about whom is the prophet saying this—is he speaking about himself or about someone else?”

³⁵⁻³⁶ Then Philip began, and using this scripture as a starting point, he told the eunuch the good news about Jesus. As they proceeded along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is some water; is there any reason why I should not be baptised now?”

³⁸⁻⁴⁰ And he gave orders for the carriage to stop. Then both of them went down to the water and Philip baptised the eunuch. When they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away suddenly and the eunuch saw no more of him, but proceeded on his journey with a heart full of joy. Philip found himself at Azotus and as he passed through the countryside he went on telling the good news in all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

NOTE: This is a continuation of the Acts sequence. As the story moves forward, the circle of those who received the Gospel continued to expand outward. (William Sydnor)

Services on the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

- **8:15 a.m.** – Holy Communion and Confirmation / Reception (said service)

A quiet meditative service.

Celebrant: The Rev. Ronald O. Wikander

Preacher: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Williams W. Millsaps

Lector: Joe Brandon

Acolyte / Server: Fin Thoreson

- **10:00 a.m.** – Holy Communion and Confirmation / Reception

A joyful celebration of the Supper of the Lord with hymns and exposition of the Scriptures.

Officiant: The Rector

Preacher: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Williams W. Millsaps

Acolyte: Juanita Lebkuecher

Lay Reader: Rodney Allen

Usher: Don and Sally Hess

New Christian education opportunity beginning in July ***How Firm a Foundation: God, Christianity in America***



Pat Dearing has prepared an informative five-week series of classes on God, Christianity and key documents in American history. The classes will begin on Tuesday, July 10, and will be held in the Yellow Room. Time will be at 10 a.m. Topics include:

- God, Christianity, and the Declaration of Independence
- God, Christianity, and the Constitution of the United States
- God, Christianity, and the Bill of Rights
- God, Christianity, and the Twenty-Eight Principles of Liberty
- God, Christianity, and The Confederation of States in Perpetual Union
(our first and mostly forgotten Constitution)

An optional video, "*A More Perfect Union*", is a feature length docudrama about the Great Convention (the first Constitutional Convention) as seen through the eyes of James Madison, and how disparate, self-serving, state factions, through the grace of God, came together as one mind to create the Constitution and the United States of America.

Course materials include: a booklet containing all the pertinent documents referenced in the courses, and a CD with a digital library of other related documents, articles and books, plus links to many additional resources available on the Internet.

Mr. Dearing needs a count of who is planning to attend so he can prepare the right number of handouts. Please email or call the church office if you plan to attend one or more of these sessions. You might also write on a piece of paper your intent and put it in the alms basin at Sunday's service.

"American government rests on the consent of the people; and, according to natural right, the consent must be given formally [to change it]. In fact, it must be given in a written compact entered into by the people." - Alexander Hamilton

Holy Communion at noon on Friday

The Holy Communion will be celebrated on the Feast of St. Peter, Friday, June 29, at noon in the Jennus Chapel.

DATES FOR JUNE 2018

Monday, June 11 -- Thursday, June 21

8 a.m. – 10 a.m. -- Sunny D Theatre

Camp breakfasts, Thomason Hall

Saturday, June 16

Co-ed Shooting Day at the home

of Mr. and Mrs. James Yacavone

7 p.m. – Concert featuring chamber music,

Scott and Maggie Flavin

Sunday, June 17

3 p.m. Dr. Moses concert

Saturday, June 23

1 p.m. Ordination of William

Anthony McConnell, Order of Deacon

Sunday, June 24 – Bishop Millsaps

preaching at both services; Confirmations
and Receptions at 10 a.m. service

Saturday, June 30

10 a.m. Old Timers' Parade, downtown
Blue Ridge.

*See calendar on St. Luke's website for a
full list of events for June and July,
including services on Prayer Book Holy
Days.*

OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2018

*As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to the work of Christ through
St. Luke's Church for 2018*

Name _____

Address _____

Amount _____

_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him to store, as God has prospered him. 1 Corinthians 16:2

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



NEW SIGN-UP SHEET FOR 2018 IS AVAILABLE

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2018. 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:7066328245); www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.