

September 20, 2026

First Reading

Jonah 3:10-4:11

A reading from the 3rd and 4th Chapters of Jonah.

When God saw what [the people of Nineveh] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Second Reading

Philippians 1:21-30

A reading from the 1st Chapter of Philippians.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain.
If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me,
yet I cannot say which I will choose.
I am hard pressed between the two:
my desire is to depart and be with Christ,
for that is far better,
but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.
Since I am convinced of this,
I know that I will remain and continue with all of you
for your progress and joy in faith,
so that, by my presence again with you,
your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,
so that, whether I come and see you
or am absent and hear about you,
I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit,
striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel
and in no way frightened by those opposing you.
For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation.
And this is God's doing.
For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ
but of suffering for him as well,
since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had
and now hear that I still have.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**