

About the Readings on August 25, 2024

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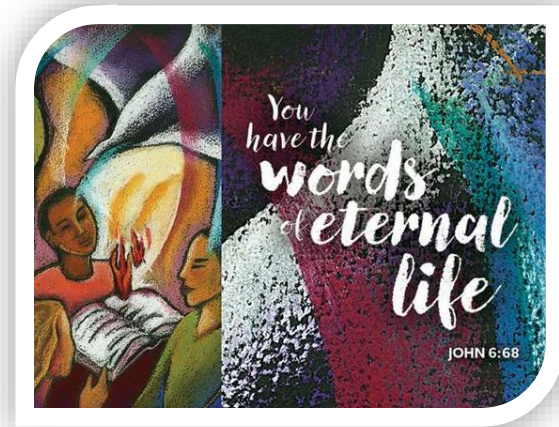
Sunday, August 21–27

Lectionary 21

Granting the cosmic power of evil, we don God's armor, which is faith in Christ and prayer in the Spirit. Granting the reality of death, we gather to eat the bread of heaven.

[Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18](#)

The conclusion of John 6, in presenting a choice of whether to remain a believer or turn away, has suggested the parallel of Joshua 24. The deities that reign in our land are as attractive as were the Amorites' gods and goddesses. Believers help one another acknowledge that God was always there, doing great signs in our midst.



to

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

This Sunday's psalm completes our singing of Psalm 34. In [Psalm 34:15-22](#), the troubles and evils of the world are honestly faced, in prayer that God will keep us safe. The claim that not one of our bones will be broken entered Christian imagination when describing Christ's passion (John 19:36).

[Ephesians 6:10-20](#)

The military imagery of the armor of God stresses protection and peace, not violent response. Even the "sword," as the word of God, is the gospel of peace. Since the first century, Christians have debated the morality of their involvement in the military, which indicates that there is no easy answer to this question. In the complex descriptions typical of the author of Ephesians, we speak the "mystery" of the gospel with "boldness." This passage concludes the lectionary's semicontinuous reading of Ephesians. Preceding this passage is the household codes, which advocate ethics in terms of the patriarchal slave culture of the Roman Empire; in both past and present a Christian ethical quicksand, the household codes have been omitted from the lectionary's selections.

[John 6:56-69](#)

In concluding a chapter that speaks repeatedly of eating Christ's flesh, the fourth evangelist writes that the flesh is useless. Thus he has elaborated on a metaphor, yet then reminds the reader that it was only a metaphor. The metaphors are the vehicles that proclaim the "words of eternal life." The gospel calls also us, along with the Twelve, to receive Christ, to live in him.