

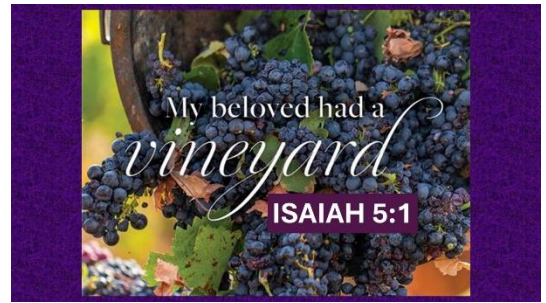
The Readings on This Day

****Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)*

Sunday, October 2–8

Lectionary 27

The standard Sundays continue to read through the final chapters of Matthew. Its emphasis on divine judgment is balanced by Paul's emphasis in Philippians on divine mercy. We come to the vineyard as we drink the wine of holy communion.



[Isaiah 5:1-7](#)

The poem in Isaiah 5 is chosen this Sunday because the gospel's parable explicitly cites its details, and it is good to know the Old Testament reference that the evangelists assume their audience has. When Christians hear this "love song," we are to examine to what degree we are yielding only wild grapes, unfit for producing good wine. Looking at us, does God see justice, or bloodshed?

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard the love song about our own failure in the vineyard, we sing [Psalm 80:7-15](#), another of the Old Testament's songs elaborating the vineyard image. Christians have seen the face of God in Jesus Christ, and we beg God to tend the vine of the church.

[Philippians 3:4b-14](#)

Both today's readings in Isaiah and Matthew include what Lutherans call "law"—that is, the bitter truth of our own human failings. Paul writes "gospel": we now know Christ and are found in Christ. Thus we can respond to God's call, despite the rubbish—the "shit"?!—of even our devout religious practices.

[Matthew 21:33-46](#)

Matthew's intention in the parable need not be ours: recent Christian theological discussion attends not only to Matthew's condemnation of Jewish religious leadership, but also to Paul's testimony that God remains faithful to Israel, into which believers in Christ are grafted. On Sunday, each biblical reading means to address the assembled Christian community: thus, it is we as the tenants of the vineyard, now interpreted as the church, who are called to heed the Son and to build upon Christ as our cornerstone.