

The Readings on This Day

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

Sunday, September 4–10

Lectionary 23



The standard Sundays continue reading through Matthew and Romans, setting the texts next to holy communion.

[Ezekiel 33:7-11](#)

History shows that Christians find it difficult to balance the proclamation of divine judgment and divine mercy. Sunday worship attempts to respond to the whole of Ezekiel's call with both a rite of confession and forgiveness and the sacrament of holy communion. The preeminent eleventh-century rabbi Rashi interpreted Exodus 20:5-6 in creative math and benign exegesis so as to affirm that God has 500 times more mercy than justice.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

We respond to Ezekiel's call to repentance by singing [Psalm 119:33-40](#). Verses 33-40 use a variety of nouns—statutes, teaching, commandments, decrees, judgments—to refer to God's word that calls us to righteousness. The passage suggests that we want, with all our heart, to follow God's path. This "good" is our life.

[Romans 13:8-14](#)

The commandments have not gone away, but they are gathered up into the love seen in Christ's crucifixion and are realized by living in the light of baptism. Christ donned humanity that we may wear Christ. Our holy communion feeds us with strength for the day. As usual, Paul alludes to the power of sinful selfishness.

[Matthew 18:15-20](#)

Christians have used this passage to lay out the process of church discipline and to affirm the power of communal prayer. Most who hear this text on Sunday morning

are indeed Gentiles, and in some ways we are all “tax collectors.” The gospel is that when we gather, the risen Christ is present in the word, in the sacraments, and in the assembly.