

Daily Morning Message
St Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247
Allen M Fluent, Pastor
Monday, August 23, 2021

Lectionary Readings

Psalm 11
Nehemiah 9:16-31
Ephesians 6:21-24

Today's Scripture Verse:

Many years you were patient with them, and warned them by your spirit through your prophets; yet they would not listen. Therefore you handed them over to the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God. (Nehemiah 6:30--31)

What it means:

The Old Testament passage in today's readings is a continuation of the prayer of Ezra in the midst of those who were trying to re-establish the nation and its traditions after release from the captivity and exile. The question before the people was how to explain how God could allow the enslavement of these "people of God" by other empires. The answer given is that it was due to the people's disregard for the justice and righteousness of God. But at the same time there is a recognition that God is merciful and eager to restore the people who seek to return to God.

Our time of reflection:

The Word of God is made up of both God's demand for justice in the human community and God's mercy upon us when we recognize the wrongs we have done and honestly repent and seek to live faithfully. These two things – justice and mercy – are essential and to be kept in balance in our understanding of the ways of God.

