

Daily Morning Message

St Paul United Church of Christ

5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247

Allen M Fluent, Pastor

Friday, September 11, 2020

Daily Lectionary Readings *Psalm 114*
Exodus 14:1-18
Acts 7

Today's Scripture Verse: *You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute. (Acts 7:51-51a)*

What it means: Our meditations usually focus on only one verse, but the seventh chapter of Acts only makes sense when read as a whole. It is the narrative of the stoning of the early Christian martyr Stephen by the religious authorities and it tells the whole biblical story from Abraham to Jesus in one chapter. Stephen was stoned, because he accused the leaders of rejecting God's Spirit in the teachings of the prophets and Jesus. Although the passage has sometimes been used as an excuse to blame the Jewish people for the death of Jesus, that would be a serious misreading. Stephen himself, and Jesus and all his followers, were Jewish. By now, Christians too have persecuted many prophets who have spoken truth in the name of Christ. Stephen's statement could just as easily apply to us, and should. What prophets can you think of who have been persecuted for telling the truth in the Christian community?

Our time of prayer: God, we thank you for the prophetic voices in our midst. Give us the power, we pray, to discern the truth within the statements made by those who claim to speak prophetic wisdom to our own generation. Let us be guided by Christ's love.

