

SUNDAY, OCT. 4, 2020

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth  
Eaton, Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

+ Pentecost 18 (Lectionary 27)

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 |  
Psalm 19 | Philippians 3:4b-14 |  
Matthew 21:33-46



*The law of the Lord is  
perfect, reviving the soul.* Psalm 19:7

In the story of creation God provided a paradise. All of creation was in balance and was a delight. And God set clear boundaries so that balance could be maintained and all created things could flourish. These boundaries provided definition that made possible the amazing diversity of the created world. Far from being a constraint, these boundaries provided freedom and, paradoxically, real connection.

But humankind rebelled and continues to rebel. It is almost as if we view boundaries as an offense and limits as an affront. Creation is ours to use! But that denies the truth that we have this one earth and this one temporal life.

As I write this, we are living in a pandemic. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has spread throughout the world, bringing sickness and death. Viruses are strange creatures. They have no nucleus or membrane; they are unable to

differentiate like normal healthy cells and are completely dependent on a host cell to survive. They will use up that cell even if it means the death of the host.

So God, through the law, gave us the gift of limits. God is God and we are not. We are responsible to each other. Our actions have consequences. We are not to live as membrane-less viruses.

The law of the Lord is perfect, sure, right, clear, pure and true. It brings wisdom, rejoicing, enlightenment and righteousness.

*Creator God, help us to accept your boundaries so that all created things can flourish. Amen.*

Suggested hymn: **"Light Dawns on a Weary World"**  
(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 726).