

YEAR 1, PROPER 24, TUESDAY: EVENING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus

A pleasant voice multiplies friends, and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies. Let those that are at peace with you be many, but let your advisers be one in a thousand. When you gain a friend, gain him through testing, and do not trust him hastily. For there is a friend who is such at his own convenience, but will not stand by you in your day of trouble. And there is a friend who changes into an enemy, and will disclose a quarrel to your disgrace. And there is a friend who is a table companion, but will not stand by you in your day of trouble. In your prosperity he will make himself your equal, and be bold with your servants; but if you are brought low he will turn against you, and will hide himself from your presence. Keep yourself far from your enemies, and be on guard toward your friends. A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter: he that has found one has found a treasure. There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend, and no scales can measure his excellence. A faithful friend is an elixir of life; and those who fear the Lord will find him. Whoever fears

the Lord directs his friendship aright, for as he is, so is his neighbor also.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

At that time Jesus declared, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.