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# THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

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*Daily Devotion at Zion + September 2022 AD + **Season of Pentecost***

## **The Strength and Comfort of Devotional Poetry**

*The engulfing waters threatened me,  
the deep surrounded me;  
seaweed was wrapped around my head.  
. . . But you, LORD my God,  
brought my life up from the pit. (Jonah 2:5-6)*

What would you do if trapped in the belly of a great fish? The prophet Jonah, against all odds, took it as a time to compose a psalm, a portion of which you read above. Psalms are a kind of poem or hymn common to the life of ancient Israel. If it seems incredible, it may help to remember that ancient people composed verse more readily than we do. It was part of their culture, devoid of digital recordings, in which people made and shared their own music daily.

Our most common interaction with such verse is probably hymnody, sung at church, and that can be a source of strength and comfort at home, too. What about poetry? Do you think of poetry as something fancy, trite, or non-essential? God's inclusion of poetry in His Scriptures (the Psalms, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and hymns in the New Testament) says that He does not. Maybe there's something more essential—more soul-strengthening—to devotional poetry than we realize. You might enjoy two Lutheran poets, whose books are readily available. Kathryn Ann Hill writes in a more traditional style, and Tanner Olson in a more modern way. Both, like Jonah, plumb the depths of faith in God in the face of life's many challenges.

## **About the Cover Art**

Bill Bell makes the horror of getting swallowed by a great sea creature beautiful in this painting (see Jonah 1:1-2:10). Jonah appears as a tiny, white-and-yellow figure falling through the ocean, churned by the angry, dark storm commanding the top of the painting. The painting succeeds in communicating at once two realities: 1) Jonah's terror as events swirl beyond his control, and 2) God's almost playful power as He conducts all things towards His gracious goal. The blue, circular nature of the painting even gives the events a baptismal cast, reminding us that we are drowned with Christ only to rise with Him to a new, joyful life.

### Daily Readings for the Week of Pentecost 13 (September 4)

**S** Judges 11:1-11, 29-40  
2 Corinthians 11:21a-31  
Mark 4:35-41

**Th** Judges 14:1-19  
Acts 6:15—7:16  
John 4:27-42

**M** Judges 12:1-7  
Acts 5:12-26  
John 3:1-21

**F** Judges 14:20—15:20  
Acts 7:17-29  
John 4:43-54

**T** Judges 13:1-15  
Acts 5:27-42  
John 3:22-36

**Sa** Judges 16:1-14  
Acts 7:30-43  
John 5:1-18

**W** Judges 13:15-24  
Acts 6:1-15  
John 4:1-26

*These readings (after Sunday) correspond to pages 430–469 in Volume IV of For All the Saints.*

### Daily Readings for the Week of Pentecost 14 (September 11)

**S** Judges 16:15-31  
2 Corinthians 13:1-11  
Mark 5:25-34

**Th** Job 1:1-22  
Acts 8:26-40  
John 6:16-27

**M** Judges 17:1-13  
Acts 7:44—8:1a  
John 5:19-29

**F** Job 2:1-13  
Act 9:1-9  
John 6:27-40

**T** Judges 18:1-15  
Acts 8:1b-13  
John 5:30-47

**Sa** Job 3:1-26  
Acts 9:10-19a  
John 6:41-51

**W** Judges 18:16-31  
Acts 8:14-25  
John 6:1-15

*These readings correspond to pages 470—502 in Volume IV of For All the Saints.*

### Daily Readings for the Week of Pentecost 15 (September 18)

<b>S</b>	Job 4:1-6, 12-21 Revelation 4:1-11 Mark 6:1-6a	<b>Th</b>	Job 8:1-10, 20-22 Acts 10:17-33 John 7:14-36
<b>M</b>	Job 4:1; 5:1-11, 17-21, 26-27 Acts 9:19b-31 John 6:52-59	<b>F</b>	Job 9:1-15, 32-35 Acts 10:34-48 John 7:37-52
<b>T</b>	Job 6:1-4, 8-15, 21 Acts 9:32-43 John 6:60-71	<b>Sa</b>	Job 9:1; 10:1-9, 16-22 Acts 11:1-18 John 8:12-20
<b>W</b>	Job 6:1; 7:1-21 Acts 10:1-16 John 7:1-13		<i>These readings correspond to pages 783-817 in Volume IV of <u>For All the Saints</u>.</i>

### Daily Readings for the Week of Pentecost 16 (September 25)

<b>S</b>	Job 11:1-9, 13-20 Revelation 5:1-14 Matthew 5:1-12	<b>Th</b>	Job 16:16-22; 17:1, 13-16 Acts 13:1-12 John 9:1-17
<b>M</b>	Job 12:1-6, 13-25 Acts 11:19-30 John 8:21-32	<b>F</b>	Job 19:1-7, 14-27 Acts 13:13-25 John 9:18-41
<b>T</b>	Job 12:1; 13:3-17, 21-27 Acts 12:1-17 John 8:33-47	<b>Sa</b>	Job 22:1-4, 21—23:7 Acts 13:26-43 John 10:1-18
<b>W</b>	Job 12:1; 14:1-22 Acts 12:18-25 John 8:47-59		<i>These readings correspond to pages 817-853 in Volume IV of <u>For All the Saints</u>.</i>