

LECTIONARY 2022

Part 1

from

Advent Sunday 28 November 2021

to

Christ the King 20 November 2022

for use in the United Benefice of **Hornby** with Claughton
and **Whittington** with **Arkholme** and **Gressingham**

ADVENT 1

Sunday 28 November

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 33.14-16*

A reading from the book
of the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord,
when I will fulfil
the promise I made
to the people of Israel
and to the house of Judah.

In those days,
and at that time,
I will raise up a new son of David,
who will bring justice
and righteousness
to the land.

In those days,
all Judah will be saved,
and Jerusalem will live in safety;
and they shall call Jerusalem
the City of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 25.1-10

SECOND READING – *1 Thessalonians 3.12-13*

A reading from the first letter of Paul.
to the Thessalonians.

May the Lord grant you
to have ever greater love,
for one another,
and for everyone,
just as we have
such great love for you.

And may the Lord
strengthen your hearts
in holiness,
that you may be ready
to meet our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus
with all the saints.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 21.25-28,34-36*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'In those days,
even the powers of the heavens
will be shaken:
the sun and the moon and the stars.

On the earth,
there will be distress
amongst the nations;
and in the oceans,
the thundering of the waves;
and people will be in fear
for all that is coming upon the world.

Then they will see the Son of Man,
coming in a cloud,
with power and great glory.
When these things begin to take place,
stand up, and raise your heads,
because your salvation is drawing near.

These things
will come upon all who live
upon the face of the whole earth -
so be ready.

Do not let your hearts
be weighed down
by the excesses and worries
of this present age,
for that day to catch you unexpectedly.

Be alert at all times,
praying that you may have the strength
to escape all these things,
and to stand, on that day,
before the Son of Man.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ADVENT 2

Sunday 5 December

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Malachi 3.1-4*

A reading from the book
of the prophet Malachi.

‘See, I am sending my messenger before me,
to prepare the way,’
says the Lord of hosts.

All who seek the Lord,
all who delight in the Lord,
will see the Lord appear in the temple
as the messenger of the covenant.

But who can endure
the day of the Lord?

And who can stand
when the Lord appears?

For the Lord of hosts
is like a refiner’s fire.

The Lord will purify
the priests of the temple,
refining them like silver and gold,
until they present offerings to the Lord
in righteousness.

On that day,
the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem
will once again be pleasing to the Lord,
as they were in days of old,
and former years.

This is the word of the Lord.

Benedictus

SECOND READING – *Philippians 1.3-11*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

I thank my God

every time I remember you,
and I am joyful
in my prayers for you,
because of the way
you have shared in the gospel,
from the time
you first heard the word.

And I am confident of this:

that the one who began
a good work amongst you
will bring it to completion
on the day of Jesus Christ.

I know that you hold me in your heart,
and that you share with me
in God’s grace,

both in my imprisonment,
and in my work
proclaiming and defending the gospel.

And with all the compassion of Christ Jesus,
I pray for you earnestly.

I pray that your love may abound
more and more.

I pray that you may grow
in knowledge, and insight, and discernment.

I pray that, through Jesus Christ,
you may produce
a full harvest of righteousness
to the praise and glory of God.

And I pray that you may be found
pure and blameless
on the day of Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 3.1-6*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

When Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea,
and Herod was ruler of Galilee,
the word of God

came to John,
in the wilderness.

And John went out
into all the region
around the Jordan,
proclaiming a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins;

as it is written
in the book
of the prophet Isaiah:

‘A voice cries out in the wilderness,
Prepare the way of the Lord!

Fill the valleys,
level the hills,
straighten the paths,
and make the rough ways smooth;

for all who live
shall see
the saving power of God.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ADVENT 3

Sunday 12 December

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Zephaniah 3.14-19*

A reading from the book
of the prophet Zephaniah.
Sing aloud, O Zion;
shout out, O Israel!
Rejoice with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
For the Lord has taken away
the judgements against you,
and has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is with you,
and no disaster shall come upon you.
Stay strong,
and do not fear,
O Zion;
for the Lord your God
is with you
as a mighty saviour.
And the Lord says this:
I will delight in you with gladness,
I will rejoice over you with singing,
and I will renew you
in my constant love.
I will remove disaster from you,
and free you from oppression;
no longer will you be ashamed.
I will save the lame,
and gather the outcast,
and I will change your shame
into praise and honour
in all the earth.
This is the word of the Lord.

Canticle Isaiah 12.2-6

SECOND READING – *Philippians 4.4-7*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.
Rejoice in the Lord, always;
and again, I say,
Rejoice.
Let your gentleness
be known to everyone.
The Lord is always near,
so do not worry about anything,
but in everything,
by prayer, and with thanksgiving,
let your requests be made known to God;
and the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds
in Christ Jesus.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 3.7-18*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

The crowds came out
to be baptised by John,
and he addressed them, saying:
'You brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee
from the judgement
that is coming?
Bear fruit worthy of repentance!
And do not begin to say,
"but we have Abraham as our father",
for I tell you,
God could turn these stones
into children of Abraham!
The axe is ready,
and any tree
that does not bear good fruit
will be cut down
and thrown into the fire!'
The crowds asked John the Baptist,
'What should we do?'
He said to them,
'Whoever has two coats
must share with anyone who has none;
and whoever has food must do likewise.'
Tax-collectors came to be baptised,
and they asked him,
'Teacher, what should we do?'
He said to them,
'Collect only what you have been ordered to collect.'
Soldiers also asked him,
'And what should we do?'
He said to them,
'Do not extort money
using threats and false accusations;
be content with your pay.'
The people were filled with expectation,
and were questioning in their hearts,
concerning John,
whether he might even be the Messiah.
John answered them, saying,
'I baptise you with water;
but one is coming
who is greater than me.
I am not worthy
even to be his servant.
He will baptise you
with the Holy Spirit,
and with fire,
and he will separate the wheat from the chaff.'
With these,
and many other
words and challenges,
John proclaimed the good news
to the people.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ADVENT 4

Sunday 19 December

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Micah 5.2-5a

A reading from the book
of the prophet Micah.

You, O Bethlehem,
are one of the smallest
of all the clans of Judah,
and yet from you
will come the one
who is to rule for me
in all Israel,
whose origin is long ago,
in ancient days.
There will be desolation
until
the one who is in labour
has given birth -
but then all Israel
will be gathered together,
and he shall stand tall,
and tend his flock,
in the strength of the Lord -
in the majesty
of the name
of the Lord his God.
The people will dwell in peace;
and his greatness will be known
to the ends of the earth.
This is the word of the Lord.

Canticle Magnificat

SECOND READING – Hebrews 10.1, 4-7, 10

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The old law
contained only a shadow
of the good things
that were to come.
Under the law,
the same sacrifices
were offered continually,
year after year,
demonstrating
that they can never make perfect
those who offer them;
for it is impossible
for the blood of bulls and goats
to take away sin.
Therefore,
when Christ comes into the world,
he says,
'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired.
In burnt-offerings, and sin-offerings,
you have taken no pleasure.
But a body you have given me.
See, O God, I have come to do your will.'

It is by God's will
that we have now been sanctified
through the offering
of the body of Jesus Christ,
once for all.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 1.39-55

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Mary set out
and went with haste
to a town
in the hill country of Judah,
where she entered the house of Zechariah,
and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the child leapt in her womb,
and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,
and said to Mary,

'Blessed are you amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

How has this happened to me,
that the mother of my Lord
has come to me?

For as soon as I heard your greeting,
the child in my womb leapt for joy.

Blessed is she who trusted
that the message
spoken to her from the Lord
would be fulfilled.'

And Mary said,

'My soul gives praise to the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices
in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour
on his lowly servant.

From this time forward,
all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One
has done great things for me.
Holy is his name!

His mercy is on all who honour him,
in every generation.

He has revealed his power,
and has scattered the proud in their vanity.

He has brought down the powerful,
and lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and has sent the rich away empty.

In his everlasting mercy
he has come to the aid
of his servant Israel,

fulfilling the promise
he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham
and to his descendants for ever.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MIDNIGHT MASS

Readings for Christmas Day Set I

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 9.2,6-7b*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light.

On those who dwell
in the land of deep darkness -
on them, the light will shine.

For unto us, a child is born;
unto us, a son is given,
and the government
shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government
and of peace
there shall be no end.

He will establish and uphold
the throne and kingdom of David,
with justice and righteousness,
from this time forwards,
and for evermore.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 96

SECOND READING – *Philippians 2.5-11*

A reading from the letter of Paul
to the Philippians.

Let the same mind
be in you
that was in Christ Jesus.

Though he was in the form of God,
he did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant.

Being born in human form,
he humbled himself,
through obedience,
even to the point of death,
even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him,
and has given him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus,
every knee should bow,
in heaven,
and on earth,
and under the earth,

and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 2.1,3-20*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

In those days, a decree went out
from Emperor Augustus
that all the world should be registered,
each in their own town.

As a descendant of David,
Joseph went from Nazareth, in Galilee,
to Judea, to the city of David, called Bethlehem.

He took with him Mary,
to whom he was engaged
and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came
for Mary to deliver her child,
and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son,
and wrapped him in bands of cloth,
and laid him in a manger,
because there was no room for them at the inn.

In that region there were shepherds, living in the fields,
keeping watch over their flocks by night.

An angel of the Lord stood before them,
and the glory of the Lord shone around them,
and they were afraid.

But the angel said to them,

‘Do not be afraid;
for I bring you
good news of great joy
for all the people:

to you is born, this day,
in the city of David,
a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

And this will be a sign for you:
you will find the child
wrapped in bands of cloth
and lying in a manger.’

And suddenly there was, with the angel,
a multitude of the heavenly host,
praising God, saying,

‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace to God’s people on earth!’

When the angels had left them,
and gone into heaven,
the shepherds said to one another,
‘Let us go now to Bethlehem,
and see this thing that has taken place,
which the Lord has made known to us.’

So they went with haste,
and found Mary and Joseph,
and the child lying in the manger.

The shepherds made known
what the angels had told them
about this child,
and all who heard it
were amazed.

And Mary treasured these words,
and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God
for all that they had heard and seen.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

CHRISTMAS MORNING

Readings for Christmas Day Set III

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 52.7-10*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger
proclaiming peace,
bringing good news,
announcing salvation,
and saying to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

Listen!

Your watchmen are lifting up their voices!
Together they are singing for joy!
For with their own eyes,
they see the return of the Lord to Zion.

Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem!
For the Lord has comforted
and redeemed his people.

The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 98

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 1.1-4*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Long ago,

God spoke to our ancestors
in many and various ways
by the prophets,

but in these last days,

God has spoken to us
by a Son,

appointed by God
as inheritor of all things,
the one through whom

God created the universe.

He is the reflection

of God's glory,

the exact imprint

of God's very being,

and he sustains all things

by his powerful word.

When he had made purification for sins,

he sat down

at the right hand

of the Majesty on high,

having become

as much superior to angels

as the name he has inherited

is more excellent than theirs.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 1.1-12,14*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning
with God.

All things came into being through him,
and without him
not one thing
came into being.

In him was life,
and that life
was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness
has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.

He came as a witness
to testify to the light,
so that all might believe
through him.

He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light.

The true light,
which enlightens
all people,
was coming into the world.

He was in the world,
and the world came into being through him;
yet the world did not know him;
he came to his own,
and his own did not receive him.

But all who did receive him,
who believed in his name,
he called to become children of God.

The Word became flesh
and dwelt amongst us,
and we have seen his glory,
glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Sunday 26 December

United Benefice Service in Gressingham
for the Patronal Festival of Saint John the Evangelist
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – 1 Kings 19.11-13a

A reading from the first book of Kings.

The Lord said to Elijah,
‘Go out
and stand on the mountain
before the Lord,
for the Lord is about to pass by.’
Then there came a great wind,
so strong
that it was splitting mountains,
and breaking rocks in pieces,
before the Lord;
but the Lord was not in the wind.
And after the wind, an earthquake;
but the Lord was not in the earthquake.
And after the earthquake, a fire;
but the Lord was not in the fire.
And after the fire,
a sound of sheer silence.
When Elijah heard it,
he wrapped his face
in his cloak
and went out,
and stood at the entrance of the cave.
Then came
the voice of the Lord.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 4.9-12, 16b

A reading from the first letter of John.

God’s love was revealed in this:
that God sent his only Son
into the world
that we might live
through him.
In this is love:
not that we loved God,
but that God loved us,
and sent his Son
to be the sacrifice for our sins.
Beloved,
since God loved us so much,
we also
ought to love one another.
No one has ever seen God;
and yet if we love one another,
God lives in us,
and God’s love
is perfected in us.
God is love,
and those who live in love
live in God,
and God lives in them.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 1.1-12, 14, 16-18

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning
with God.
All things came into being through him,
and without him
not one thing
came into being.
In him was life,
and that life
was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness
has not overcome it.
There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.
He came as a witness
to testify to the light,
so that all might believe
through him.
He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light.
The true light,
which enlightens
all people,
was coming into the world.
He was in the world,
and the world came into being through him;
yet the world did not know him;
he came to his own,
and his own did not receive him.
But all who did receive him,
who believed in his name,
he called to become children of God.
The Word became flesh
and dwelt amongst us,
and we have seen his glory,
glory as of a father’s only son,
full of grace and truth.
From these riches,
we have received
grace upon grace,
for while the law was given through Moses
grace and truth
came through Jesus Christ.
No one has ever seen God,
but the one Son of God,
who is close to the Father’s heart,
has made God known.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

THE EPIPHANY
Sunday 2 January
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 60.1-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.
Arise, and shine,
for your light has come;
and the glory of the Lord
has risen upon you.
For darkness has covered the earth,
and thick darkness has covered the nations;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and the glory of the Lord
will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings shall come
to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around:
they gather together,
they come to you.
Your sons shall come from far away,
and your youngest daughters shall be carried here
on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see,
and be radiant.
Your heart shall thrill and rejoice;
for the abundance of the sea
shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations
shall come to you.
Camels, from Egypt, and Arabia,
will fill the land.
They will bring gold and frankincense,
and they will proclaim
the praise of the Lord.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalms 72.1-7, 10-14

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 3.2-3a, 5-6*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.
By the grace of God,
and for your sake,
I have been commissioned
to make known
a glorious truth
that was unknown
to former generations.
But now, by the Holy Spirit,
this glorious truth has been revealed
to God's apostles and prophets
through the gospel:
that the Gentiles
are our brothers and sisters
in Christ -
members of the same body,
and inheritors of the same promise.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Matthew 2.1-12*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.
In the time of King Herod,
after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea,
Magi from the East
came to Jerusalem, asking,
'Where is the child
who is born
to be king of the Jews?'
For we observed his star, at its rising,
and we have come to pay him homage.'
When King Herod heard this,
he was troubled,
and all Jerusalem with him.
He called together
the chief priests and the scribes,
and enquired of them
where the Messiah was to be born.
They told him,
'In Bethlehem of Judea;
for it is written in the prophets:
"You, O Bethlehem,
in the land of Judah,
are by no means least
amongst the rulers of Judah;
for from you
shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel."
Then Herod secretly called for the Magi,
and learned from them
the exact time
when the star had appeared.
Then he sent them
to Bethlehem, saying,
'Go and search diligently for the child;
and when you have found him,
bring me word,
so that I may also go
and pay him homage.'
So the Magi set out,
and there, ahead of them, went the star
that they had seen at its rising;
until it stopped over the place
where they would find the child.
When they saw
that the star had stopped,
they were overwhelmed with joy.
On entering the house,
they saw the child,
with Mary his mother,
and they knelt down,
and paid him homage.
Then, opening their treasure-chests,
they offered him gifts
of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
And having been warned in a dream
not to return to Herod,
they left for their own country
by another road.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 1

Sunday 9 January

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 43.1b-3a,4a,5a,7*

A reading from prophet Isaiah.

The Lord says: Do not fear,

for I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name, and you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.

When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you;

for I am the Lord your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

Do not fear, for I am with you.

I called you by name, and created you for glory,

and you are precious in my sight.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 29

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 2.6-11,14-15,17-18*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

In the psalms, it says:

‘What are human beings,

that you are mindful of them,

or mortals, that you care for them?

You have made them, for a little while,

lower than the angels;

and yet you have set them to rule

over all that you have made,

and crowned them with glory and honour.’

We do not yet see this fully accomplished

for all human beings,

but we do see Jesus, who, for a little while,

was indeed made lower than the angels,

and, by the grace of God,

having tasted death for everyone,

is now indeed crowned with glory and honour.

He calls us his brothers and sisters,

because we share the same Father,

the creator of all that exists.

And having shared with us in our sufferings,

he has become the pioneer of our salvation,

leading many to glory.

By sharing in our flesh and blood,

through his death, he has destroyed

the devil, and the power of death,

and has freed those

who were held captive

in the fear of death.

By becoming like us, in every respect,

he was able to serve

as a faithful and merciful high priest,

making a sacrifice of atonement

for the sins of the people;

and having been tested himself,

by what he suffered,

he is able to help

those who face the same trials.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 2.22-40*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Luke.

In the law of the Lord, it is written,

that every firstborn male

shall be dedicated to the Lord;

so on the fortieth day after his birth,

Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem

to present him to the Lord,

and to offer a sacrifice,

in accordance with the law of the Lord,

‘a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.’

Now there was, in Jerusalem,

a man whose name was Simeon.

Simeon was righteous, and devout,

looking forward to the consolation of Israel;

and the Holy Spirit rested upon him.

It had been revealed to Simeon, by the Holy Spirit,

that he would not see death

until he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.

Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple;

and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,

to do for him what was customary under the law,

Simeon took the child in his arms,

and praised God, saying,

‘Lord, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,

in accordance with your word;

for my eyes have now seen your salvation,

which you have prepared

in the presence of all peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and the glory of your people Israel.’

And the child’s father and mother were amazed

at what was being said about him.

Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary,

‘This child is destined

for the falling and the rising of many in Israel,

and is destined

to be a sign that will be opposed.

The inner thoughts of many will be revealed,

and a sword shall pierce even your own soul.’

There was also a prophetess, Anna

the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.

She was of a great age,

having lived with her husband seven years

after her marriage,

then as a widow, to the age of eighty-four.

She never left the temple,

but worshipped there, with fasting and prayer,

night and day.

She began to praise God,

and to speak about the child

to all who were looking

for the salvation of Jerusalem.

When the parents of Jesus

had finished everything

required by the law of the Lord,

they returned to Galilee,

to their own town of Nazareth.

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;

and the favour of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 2

Sunday 16 January

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Jeremiah 1.4-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

‘Before you were even born,
I chose you,
and appointed you
to be a prophet to the nations.’

And I said,

‘O Lord,
I do not know how to speak,
for I am only a boy.’

But the Lord said to me,

‘Do not be afraid,
and do not say, “I am only a boy”;
for I am with you
to protect you,
and you will speak my word
to many peoples.’

Then the Lord reached out his hand
and touched my lips, saying,

‘Now I have put my words in your mouth.

See, today I appoint you
over nations and over kingdoms,
to uproot, and tear down,
to destroy, and overthrow,
to build up, and to plant anew.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 148

SECOND READING – 1 Corinthians 12.4-11

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

There are many different gifts,
but all from the same Spirit.

There are different kinds of ministry,
but all from the same Lord.

And there are different ways of working,
but it is the same God at work
in all of them, in everyone.

The work of the Spirit in each individual
is given for the good of all.

Through the Spirit,
one receives the gift of wisdom.

Another, through the same Spirit,
receives the gift of knowledge.

By the same Spirit,
another receives the gift of faith;
another receives gifts of healing;
and another receives the gift
of the working of miracles.

Another receives the gift of prophecy,
another, the gift of discernment,
another, the gift of languages,
and another, the gift of interpretation.

All these are the work of the one Holy Spirit,
who distributes these gifts to each individual
as the Holy Spirit determines.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 2.41-52

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Every year,

the parents of Jesus
went to Jerusalem
for the festival of the Passover;
and when he was twelve years old,
they went up as usual
for the festival.

At the end of the festival,

when they set out
to return to Nazareth,
the boy Jesus
stayed behind in Jerusalem,
but his parents did not know it.

Assuming that he was in the group of travellers,

they went a day’s journey,
then started to look for him
amongst their relatives and friends.

When they did not find him,
they returned to Jerusalem
to search for him.

After three days,

they found him in the temple,
sitting amongst the teachers.

He was listening to them,

and asking them questions -
and all who heard him were amazed
at his understanding
and his answers.

When his parents saw him,

they were overwhelmed;
and his mother said to him,
‘Child, why have you treated us like this?

Your father and I have been searching for you
in great anxiety.’

Jesus said to them,

‘Why were you searching for me?

Did you not know

that I must be in my Father’s house?’

But they did not understand what he said to them.

Then Jesus returned with them to Nazareth,

and he was obedient to them;

and his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature,

and in divine and human favour.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 3

Sunday 23 January

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Nehemiah 8.1-4a, 7-10

A reading from the book of Nehemiah.

On the first day of the seventh month,

all the people gathered together
in the public square
by the city's main well.

The priest Ezra brought out

the book of the law of Moses,
which the Lord had given
to the people of Israel.

He brought it before the assembly,
which included both men and women,
and all who were old enough to understand.

He stood on a wooden platform
which had been built for the purpose,
and read from the book of the law,
from early morning, until midday.

All the people

gave their full attention
to the reading of the book of the law,
and the Levites
gave the interpretation, and the meaning,
so that the people could understand
all that was being read.

And the people wept

when they heard and understood
the words of the law.

But Nehemiah the governor,

and Ezra the priest,
and the Levites who taught the people,
said to the people,

'Do not mourn or weep,

for this day is holy
to the Lord your God.

Make a feast of the best food and wine,

and send portions to any
who have nothing to prepare,
for this day is holy to the Lord.

Do not grieve,

for rejoicing in the Lord
is your strength.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 19

SECOND READING – 1 Corinthians 12.12-20,27-31

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

Just as the body

is one body, with many parts,
so we, though many,
are one body, in Christ.

For in the one Spirit

we were all baptised
into one body -
whether Hebrews or Greeks, slaves or free -
and we all receive
the same Holy Spirit.

And this body
does not consist
of one part,
but of many.

The foot

is no less a part of the body
than the hand.

The ear

is no less a part of the body
than the eye.

If the whole body were an eye,

it would not be able to hear.

If the whole body were an ear,

it would have no sense of smell.

But God has arranged

that many parts
make up the whole body.

Now you are the body of Christ,
and each individually a part of it.

God has appointed in the church
apostles, prophets, and teachers;
works of power, gifts of healing,
roles of support and leadership,
and various kinds of tongues.

Not all are apostles, or prophets, or teachers;

not all work miracles or gifts of healing;

not all speak in tongues or interpret.

But all should strive for the greater gifts -

and the greatest of all is love.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 4.14-21

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit,
returned from the wilderness to Galilee,

and a report about him

spread through all the surrounding country.

He began to teach in the synagogues

and everyone spoke well of him.

When he came to Nazareth,

where he had been brought up,

he went to the synagogue as usual

on the sabbath day.

He stood up to read,

and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.

He unrolled the scroll

and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

He rolled up the scroll,

gave it back to the attendant, and sat down.

The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

Then he began to say to them,

'Today, this scripture is being fulfilled

in your hearing.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 4

Sunday 30 January

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 1.17-19*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

‘Make yourself ready

to stand up and tell them

everything that I command you to say to them.

Do not be afraid,

for I will make you strong

like a fortified city,

like an iron pillar,

like a bronze wall,

to challenge the whole of the land of Judah:

to challenge the kings and the princes,

to challenge the priests, and the people.

They will fight against you;

but they shall not prevail against you,

for I am with you,

and I will deliver you.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 71.1-6

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 12.31 - 13.13*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Let me show you now

the most excellent gift of all.

If I speak in the languages

of both earth and heaven,

but do not have love,

I am a noisy gong

or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers,

and understand all mysteries

and all knowledge,

and if I have all faith,

so as to remove mountains,

but do not have love,

I am nothing.

If I give away all my possessions,

and if I hand over my body to martyrdom,

but do not have love,

I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind;

love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way;

it is not irritable or resentful;

it does not rejoice in wrongdoing,

but rejoices in the truth.

Love has faith, and hope, and patience,

that never fail.

Love never ends.

Our prophecies will come to an end,

our tongues will cease,

even our knowledge will come to an end,

for we know only in part,

and we prophesy only in part,

and when the complete comes,

the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child,

I spoke like a child,

I thought like a child,

I reasoned like a child;

but when I became an adult,

I put an end to childish ways.

In the same way,

while for now, we see only faintly,

as though through darkened glass,

in the fullness of time, we shall see face to face.

While now,

I know only in part;

then I will know fully,

even as I have been fully known.

But these three endure:

faith, and hope, and love;

and the greatest of these is love.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 4.21-30*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

In the synagogue at Nazareth,

after reading from the prophet Isaiah,

Jesus began to say to them,

‘Today, this scripture is being fulfilled

in your hearing.’

All the people spoke well of him,

marvelling at the gracious words

spoken by the son of Joseph,

one of their own.

Jesus said to them,

‘I know you will quote the proverb,

“Doctor, cure yourself,”

and ask me to do here,

in my home town,

the things that I did

at Capernaum.

But a prophet

is never received

in his home town.

There were many widows in Israel

during the famine,

in the time of Elijah,

yet Elijah was sent to none of them,

but to a widow at Sarepta, in Lebanon.

And there were many people with leprosy in Israel

in the time of the prophet Elisha,

but the only person healed of leprosy

was Naaman the Syrian.’

When those who were gathered

in the synagogue

heard this,

they were filled with indignation.

They rose up

and drove Jesus out of town,

and to the edge of the hill

on which the town was built,

as if to throw him off.

But he passed through the crowd

and went on his way.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 5

Sunday 6 February

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 6.1-8*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

In the year that King Uzziah died,
I saw the Lord,
sitting on a high throne,
in a robe
that filled the temple.
Angels, around the Lord,
called out to one another, saying:
'Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.'

Their voices shook
the very foundations
of the temple,
and the temple was filled with smoke.

And I said:

'I am ruined!
For I am a man of unclean lips,
and I live amongst a people
of unclean lips;
yet my eyes have seen the King,
the Lord of hosts!'

Then one of the angels flew to me,
and touched my lips
with a burning coal
that had been taken from the altar,
and said,
'Now that this has touched your lips,
your guilt is removed,
and your sin is forgiven.'

Then I heard the voice of the Lord,
saying, 'Is there anyone I can send?'

And I said,

'Here I am; send me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 138

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 15.1-10a*

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

Let me remind you again, my brothers and sisters,
of the good news
that I proclaimed to you,
which you received,
in which you now stand,
and in which are saved:

that Christ died for our sins, and was buried;
and that he was raised on the third day -
and all this in fulfilment of the scriptures.

After he was raised from the dead,
he appeared to Peter,
then to the twelve,
then to more than five hundred brothers and sisters
at one time,
most of whom are still alive.

Then he appeared to James,
and to all the apostles.

Last of all,
as to one untimely born,
he appeared also to me.
For I am the least of the apostles,
unfit to be called an apostle,
because I persecuted
the church of God.
But by the grace of God,
I am what I am,
and God's grace towards me
has not been in vain.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 5.1-11*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus was standing by the sea of Galilee,
and the crowd was pressing in on him
to hear the word of God.

There were two boats by the shore,
which the fishermen had left,
while washing their nets.

Jesus got into one of the boats
(the one belonging to Simon),
and asked him to put out a little way from the shore.

Then Jesus sat down
and taught the crowds from the boat.

When Jesus had finished speaking,
Jesus said to Simon,
'Put out into the deep water,
and let down your nets for a catch.'

Simon answered,
'Master, we have worked all night long
and have caught nothing.

Yet if you say so,
I will let down the nets.'

And they did so -
and caught so many fish
that their nets were beginning to break.

They signalled to their partners,
James and John (the sons of Zebedee),
to come and help them,
and they filled both boats
with so great a catch of fish
that they began to sink;
and they were all amazed
at the catch of fish that they had taken.

Simon Peter
fell to his knees before Jesus, saying,
'Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!'

Jesus said,
'Do not be afraid;
from now on,
you will be fishing for people.'

When they had brought their boats to shore,
they left everything,
and followed Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 6

Sunday 13 February

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Jeremiah 17.5-8

A reading from the book
of the prophet Jeremiah.
Woe to those who trust in mortals.
They make mere flesh their strength,
and their hearts turn away from the Lord.
They will be like
dried out plants in the desert.
They will not live
to see the day
when prosperity comes.
They shall live
in the dried out places
of the wilderness,
in desolate lands.
But blessed are those
who place their trust in the Lord.
They will be like trees
that are planted by water,
with roots by the flowing stream.
They will not fear the scorching heat.
Their leaves will stay green,
and they will bear fruit
even in the year of drought.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 1

SECOND READING – 1 Corinthians 15.12-20

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.
Christ himself
is proclaimed
as risen from the dead -
so how is it
that some of you say
that there is no resurrection of the dead?
If there is no resurrection of the dead,
then Christ has not been raised.
And if Christ has not been raised,
our proclamation has been in vain,
and your faith has been in vain.
We are even found
to be misrepresenting God,
because we testify that God
raised Christ from the dead.
But if the dead are not raised,
then Christ has not been raised.
And if Christ has not been raised,
your faith is futile,
and you are still lost in your sins,
and those who have died in Christ
have perished.
If it is
for this life only
that we have hoped in Christ,
then we are to be pitied.

But Christ has indeed
been raised from the dead!
And the Risen Christ
is the first fruits
of all those
who have died
and will be raised again to life!
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 6.17-26

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
Jesus came down from the mountain,
with the twelve disciples,
and stood on a level place,
amongst a great crowd
of his disciples,
and a great multitude of people
from all Judea and Jerusalem,
and from the coast
of Tyre and Sidon.
They had come to hear him,
and to be healed of their diseases.
Those who were troubled
with unclean spirits
were cured.
And all in the crowd
were trying to touch him,
for power came out from him,
and healed them.
Then Jesus looked up at his disciples,
and said:
'Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.
Blessed are you when people hate you,
exclude you,
revile you,
and defame you,
on account of the Son of Man.
Their ancestors
did the same to the prophets,
so rejoice
when they do the same to you,
for surely
your reward is great in heaven.
But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.
Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.
Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.
Woe to you when all speak well of you,
for that is how
their ancestors spoke
of the false prophets.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 7

Sunday 20 February

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – 1 Samuel 26.7-13,22-23,25a

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

David, and his nephew, went by night
to the place where Saul's army
had set up camp.

Saul lay sleeping, within the camp,
with his spear
stuck in the ground, by his head.

Saul's chief military officers, and his whole army,
lay around him.

David's nephew said to David,
'God has given your enemy into your hands.

Let me pin him to the ground,
with one stroke of his own spear.
I will not need to strike him twice.'

But David said to his nephew,

'Do not destroy him,
for you cannot raise your hand
against the Lord's anointed
and be guiltless.

As the Lord lives,
it is the Lord who will strike him down,
or his day may come to die,
or he will go into battle, and perish there.

But let us take his spear,
and his water jar, and go.'

And no one saw it, or knew of it,
and no one awoke,
for the Lord had made a deep sleep fall upon them.

The following morning,
on the other side of the valley,
David stood on a hill top,
and across that great distance,
called out to Saul.

'Here is your spear, O king!

Let one of the young men come over and retrieve it!

The Lord gave you into my hand today,
but I would not raise my hand
against the Lord's anointed,
for it is the Lord who will reward everyone
according to their righteousness
and their faithfulness.'

And Saul replied to David,

'Blessings be upon you, David my son;
you will accomplish great things.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 37.1-7

SECOND READING – 1 Cor 15.35-37a,42-44,47,49

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Some ask, 'How will the dead be raised,
and what kind of body will they have?'

Consider a seed, from a plant:

first it must die;
then it is planted in the ground,
and comes to life again.

You do not sow in the ground
the plant that the seed will become,
but only the dry seed.

And so it is
with the resurrection of the dead.

What is sown is mortal,
but what is raised
will live for ever.

Sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.
Sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

Sown a physical body,
it is raised a spiritual body.

We have lived in the image of Adam,
who came from the earth, from the dust;
we shall rise in the image of Christ,
who comes from heaven.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 6.27-38

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus said,

'Love your enemies.

Do good to those who hate you.

Bless those who curse you.

Pray for those who abuse you.

If someone strikes you on the cheek,
offer the other as well.

If someone takes away your coat,
offer your shirt as well.

Give to everyone who asks,
and if anyone takes what belongs to you,
do not demand it back.

Do to others
as you would have them do to you.

Even sinners
love those who love them,
do good to those
who do good to them,
and lend when they expect a return;

but I say to you:
love your enemies,
and do good, and lend,
expecting nothing in return,

for God also is kind,
even to the ungrateful,
and the wicked,
and your reward will be great.

Be merciful, as your Father is merciful.

Do not judge others,
and you will not be judged.

Do not condemn others,
and you will not be condemned.

Forgive others,
and you will be forgiven.

Give, and it will be given to you -
a good measure, pressed down,
shaken together, running over,
will be poured into your lap -
for the measure you give
will be the measure you receive.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EPIPHANY 8

Sunday 27 February

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 55.10-11, 13*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return there
until they have watered the earth,
making it fruitful with grain,
producing bread to eat,
and new seed to sow.

In the same way,
says the Lord,
the word that I speak
will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish
all that I intend,
and succeed
in the purpose for which I sent it.

Where once
there were thorns and brambles,
tall and blossoming trees will grow,
and this will be a memorial,
an everlasting sign,
to honour the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 92.1-4, 11-14

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 15.51-57*

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

Listen! I will tell you a mystery!

We will not all die.
But we will all be changed,
in a moment,
in the twinkling of an eye,
at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound,
and the dead will be raised,
and we will be changed.

The mortal
will be raised immortal,
and the perishable
will be raised incorruptible.

Then the scripture will be fulfilled:
'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'

The weapon of death was sin,
and the power of sin was the law,
but thanks be to God,
who has given us the victory
over sin and death,
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 6.39-49*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus taught them with these parables.

'If a blind person leads a blind person,
they will both fall into a pit.

The one who is following
can do no better
than the one who is leading;
the one who is taught
can reach no higher standard
than their teacher.

You cannot help
take the speck
from your neighbour's eye
until you have taken the log
from your own.

You do not find figs
on a thorn bush,
or grapes
on a bramble.

A bad tree
does not produce good fruit,
and a good tree
does not produce bad fruit.
You know the tree by its fruit.

And the good person
produces good words
and good deeds
from the good
stored up in their heart;
while the wicked person
produces wicked words and deeds
from the wickedness
stored up in their heart.

Now if you call me Lord,
you should surely act
on what I say.

If you come to me,
and you hear my words,
and you act on them,
you are building a house
on deep foundations,
dug down to the rock.

When the flood comes,
and the waves storm against it,
it stands secure.

But those who hear my words,
and do not act
on what they hear,
are building a house
without foundations,
and it crashes down
when the river
bursts out against it.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *2 Corinthians 5.20b - 6.2*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

In the name of Christ,
we urge you
to be reconciled to God.

God made
the one who knew no sin
to be sin, for us,
so that in him,
we might become
the righteousness of God.

The Lord says,
'Now is the day of salvation;
I have heard your cry,
and I have come to your aid.'

So we urge you once more
to welcome this gift of God's grace,
and be reconciled to God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

Jesus said to the disciples,
'Beware of practising your piety before others,
in order to be seen by them;
for if that is your purpose,
you will have no reward
from your Father in heaven.

When you give to the needy,
do not announce it with a fanfare,
in the synagogues and in the street,
as the hypocrites do,
seeking praise.

I tell you, they have received their reward.

But when you give to the needy,
do not let your left hand know
what your right hand is doing.
Let your giving be done in secret,
and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

And when you pray,
do not be like the hypocrites,
who love to stand and pray
in the synagogues,
and at the street corners,
where they may be seen by others.
I tell you, they have received their reward.

But when you pray,
go into your room, and shut the door,
and pray to your Father, who is in secret;
and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

And when you fast,
do not look dismal, like the hypocrites,
who disfigure their faces
to show others that they are fasting.
I tell you, they have received their reward.

But when you fast,
clean your hair, and wash your face,
so that your fasting may be seen
not by others
but by your Father;
and your Father,
who knows all things,
will reward you.

And do not put your heart
into storing up treasures on earth,
where everything decays,
and thieves break in and steal.

But put your heart, instead,
into storing up
everlasting treasures in heaven,
that no thief can take away.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

LENT 1 – Sunday 6 March

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Deuteronomy 26.1-11

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Moses spoke to the people, saying:

When you have entered the land
that the Lord your God is giving you,
and have possessed it, and settled in it,
you shall take the first fruits

of all that you harvest
from the soil of the land,
to the place

that the Lord your God will appoint
as a dwelling for his name.

You shall go to the priest there, and say,

‘Today I acknowledge,
before the Lord our God,
that I have entered into the land
that the Lord has given to us,
as the Lord promised
to our ancestors.’

The priest will take the offering,
and place it before the altar
of the Lord your God.

There you shall say,

‘A wandering Aramean was my father.

He went down into Egypt,
and lived there as a foreigner,
few, at first, in number;
but there became a great nation,
mighty and populous.

When the Egyptians treated us harshly,
and afflicted us,

imposing hard labour upon us,
we cried to the Lord,

the God of our ancestors,

and the Lord heard our voice,

and saw our affliction,
our toil, and oppression,

and brought us out of Egypt,

with a mighty hand,
and an outstretched arm,
and signs of almighty power.

And the Lord brought us to this place,

and gave us this land,

a land flowing with milk and honey.

So now I bring

the first fruits of the land
that you, O Lord, have given me.’

And you shall bow down

before the Lord your God.

Then, with the Levites,

and with the Gentiles who live amongst you,

you, and your household,

shall celebrate,

with all that the Lord your God has given to you.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 91.1-2, 9-16

SECOND READING – Romans 10.8b-13

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Scripture says:

‘The word is near to you;

it is on your lips, and in your heart’.

And this is now the word of faith that we proclaim -

that if you confess with your lips

that Jesus is Lord,

and believe in your heart

that God raised him from the dead,

you will be saved.

Scripture also declares

that no one who believes in him will be put to shame,

and that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
will be saved;

so there is no distinction between Jew and Greek;

the same Lord

is Lord of all,

and is gracious to all

who call upon him.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 4.1-13

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Luke.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit,

returned from his baptism in the river Jordan,

and was led, by the Spirit, into the wilderness,

where, for forty days, he was tempted by the devil.

Jesus ate nothing during those days

and while he was experiencing great hunger,

the devil said to him,

‘If you are the Son of God,

command this stone

to become bread.’

Jesus answered,

‘The scripture says,

“Life does not come

from bread alone.”

Then the devil led him up

and showed him in an instant

all the kingdoms of the world.

And the devil said to Jesus,

‘I can give you the glory of all these kingdoms,

and all this authority!

If you will worship me, it will all be yours!’

Jesus answered, ‘The scripture says,

worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’

Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem,

and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,

saying to him,

‘If you are the Son of God,

throw yourself down from here,

for the scripture says,

“He will command his angels to protect you,”

and “On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.”

Jesus answered, ‘It is also written,

“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

And the devil departed from him

until an opportune time.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

LENT 2 – Sunday 13 March

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 15.12-15,18b*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

As the sun was going down,
a deep sleep fell upon Abram,
and a deep and terrifying darkness
descended upon him.

And the Lord said to Abram,

‘For four hundred years,
your descendants
will live as foreigners
in a land that is not their own;
and they shall be slaves there,
and they shall be oppressed;

but I will bring judgement
on the nation
that enslaves them,
and they shall leave that place
with great possessions.

As for you, Abram,
you shall go to your ancestors in peace,
being buried at a great age.

And to your descendants,
I shall give this land,
from Egypt to Assyria.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 27

SECOND READING – *Philippians 3.18 - 4.1*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

My brothers and sisters, I write
with tears in my eyes,
as I say again
that there are many who live
as enemies
of the cross of Christ.

Their minds are set
on earthly things.

Greed is their god;
their only glory
is their shame,
and their end
is destruction.

But we belong
not to earth,
but to heaven,
and we look to the day
when our Saviour,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
with authority over all creation,
will transform our lowly bodies
to be like his glorious body.

So, my beloved brothers and sisters,
my joy and crown,
stand firm in the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 9.28-36*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus went up on the mountain to pray,
taking with him
Peter, John, and James.
And while he was praying,
the appearance of his face changed,
and his clothes became dazzling white.

And there with him, in glory,
were Moses, and Elijah,
and they were speaking together
of his departure,
which he was about to accomplish
at Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions
were weighed down with sleep;
but became fully awake
when they saw his glory
and Moses and Elijah standing with him.

As Moses and Elijah
were preparing to depart,
Peter said to Jesus,
‘Master, it is good for us to be here;
let us make three shelters,
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’
He did not know what he was saying.

While Peter was saying this,
a cloud came,
and covered them;
and they were afraid.

Then, from the cloud, came a voice, saying,
‘This is my Son, my Chosen;
listen to him!’

When the voice had spoken,
they looked, and saw Jesus alone.

And the disciples were silent,
and in those days,
they told no one
of what they had seen.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

LENT 3 – Sunday 20 March

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 55.6-7*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Seek the Lord

while he may be found,
and call upon him
while he is near.

Turn away

from your wicked ways;

turn away

from your plotting
for injustice.

Return to the Lord your God,

for God will have mercy,
and freely forgive.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 103

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 10.1-6,9-13*

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

My brothers and sisters,

when our ancestors
passed through the sea,
and were guided through the wilderness
by the cloud above them,

it was as though

they were baptised into Moses,
both in the sea,
and in the cloud.

They even ate spiritual food,

and drank spiritual drink
from the rock
that was Christ himself.

And still

they rebelled against God,
and were struck down
in the wilderness.

All this becomes a warning

for us, in our own time,
not to pursue evil as they did;
not to put Christ to the test,
or complain,
as led to their destruction.

So if you imagine

that you standing firm,
take care
that you do not fall.

But if you are fully aware of your trials,

be assured
that no testing has come upon you
that is not common to everyone;
and that God is faithful,
and will not let you be tested
beyond your strength,
but with the testing,
will always provide the way out,
that you may be able to endure it.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 13.1-9*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

There were some present

who told Jesus
about the Galileans
whose blood
Pilate had mingled
with their sacrifices.

Jesus said to them:

‘Do you think
that because these Galileans
suffered in this way
they were worse sinners than others?’

No, I tell you;

but unless you repent,
you will all perish as they did.

Or the eighteen who were killed

when the tower of Siloam
fell on them -

do you think that they
were worse offenders
than all the others
living in Jerusalem?

No, I tell you;

but unless you repent,
you will all perish as they did.’

And he told them this parable:

‘A man had a fig tree
planted in his vineyard;
and he came looking for fruit on it,
and found none.

So he said to the gardener,

“Look! For three years
I have come looking for fruit
on this fig tree,
and still I find none.

Cut it down!

Why should it be wasting the soil?”

The gardener replied,

“Sir, allow it one more year,
while I dig around it,
and put manure on it.

If it bears fruit next year, well and good;
and only if not, cut it down.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

LENT 4 – Sunday 27 March

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Joshua 5.9-12*

A reading from the book of Joshua.

After crossing the Jordan, to enter the promised land,
the people camped at Gilgal, in the plains of Jericho.

And there they kept the Passover,
on the evening
of the fourteenth day of the month.

The next day,
there was no miraculous food on the ground,
for now they were able to eat
the ordinary produce of the promised land.

That first day, they ate the produce of the promised land
as unleavened bread, and roasted grain.

And the Lord said to Joshua:

‘Today I have taken away
the disgrace you suffered in Egypt.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 32

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 5.17-20*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

By God’s grace,
we have been reconciled to God, in Christ.

And now God has entrusted to us
the message of reconciliation.

God has made us ambassadors for Christ,
to proclaim this message to the world:

‘God no longer counts your trespasses against you!
Be reconciled to God!’

Anyone who is in Christ
is a new creation.

The old has passed away,
and everything is new.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 15.1-3, 11-32*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

The Pharisees and the scribes
complained against Jesus,
because he welcomed
the tax collectors and sinners
who came to listen to him,
and would even eat with them.

So Jesus told them this parable:

‘There was a man who had two sons.

The younger son said to his father,
“Give me my share of the property.”

So the father divided his property
between his two sons.

A few days later,
the younger son
gathered his belongings,
and travelled to a distant country,
and there
began to squander
all his wealth.

When he had spent all that he had,
a severe famine spread throughout that country.

So he went and hired himself out
to one of the farmers in that country,
who sent him to feed the pigs;
and he would gladly have eaten the waste
that the pigs were eating.

Eventually he came to himself, thinking,
“Here I am, dying of hunger,
while my father’s hired workers
have enough to eat, and more to spare.
I will go back to my father, and say,
‘Father, I have sinned against heaven,
and before you;
I am no longer worthy to be called your son;
treat me like one of your hired workers.’”

So he set off, and went to his father.

While he was still far off, his father saw him,
and was filled with compassion.

His father ran,
and put his arms around him, and kissed him.

The son said,
“Father, I have sinned against heaven,
and before you;
I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

But the father said to his servants,
“Go quickly, and bring, for my son, the finest clothes,
a ring for his finger, and sandals for his feet!
Bring the fatted calf, and kill it,
and let us celebrate with a feast,
for this son of mine was dead, and is alive again;
he was lost, and now he is found.”

And the celebration began.

All this time, the elder son was working in the field.

When the elder son approached the house,
he heard music and dancing.

He called one of the servants,
and asked what was happening.

The servant explained,
“Your brother has returned, alive,
and your father has killed the fatted calf,
to celebrate.”

The elder son became angry, and refused to go in.

His father came out and pleaded with him, but he said,

“For all these years,
I have worked like a slave for you,
and I have never
disobeyed your command;
and you have never given me
even a young goat
to celebrate with my friends.

But this son of yours has come back,
having squandered your wealth with harlots,
and you have killed the fatted calf for him!”

Then the father said to him,

“Son, you are always with me,
and all that is mine is yours.
But we must celebrate,
because this brother of yours was dead,
and has come to life;
he was lost, and is found.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

LENT 5 – Sunday 3 April

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 43.15-21*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord, your Redeemer,
the Holy One of Israel, says:

I am the Lord your God,
the Creator of Israel, your King.

I made for you
a way through the sea,
a path through the mighty waters.

I drew out the Egyptians behind you,
chariots and horses,
an army of warriors;
but now they lie down,
they cannot rise,
they are extinguished,
quenched like a wick.

Yet now I say:
recount this history no more,
nor dwell on events of the past;
for now I begin something new.

Already it springs up;
look, and see.

I will make a safe route
through the wilderness,
and rivers will flow
in the desert,
to refresh my chosen people,
the people I formed for myself,
that they might declare my praise;
and even the wild animals will honour me.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 126

SECOND READING – *Philippians 3.4b-14*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

If anyone else has reason
to be confident in the flesh,
I have more.

I was circumcised on the eighth day,
an Israelite,
of the tribe of Benjamin,
a Hebrew
born of Hebrews.

In the observation of the law,
I was a Pharisee.

In zeal,
I was a persecutor of the church.

In righteousness according to the law,
I was blameless.

I once thought these things were valuable -
but now I regard them as worthless;
indeed nothing has any value at all
compared to knowing
Christ Jesus as my Lord.

I have lost everything,
but I count it as no loss at all,
for what I have gained
is Christ.

United with Christ,
I depend no more
on a righteousness of my own,
derived from the law,
for I depend now, instead,
on a righteousness that comes from God,
through faith in Christ.

And now I press on
towards the goal
of knowing Christ more fully,
sharing in his sufferings,
and even becoming like him in his death,
in faith and trust
that I will also come to know
the power of his resurrection.

All this I choose,
just as Christ
has chosen me,
for this is God's high calling to us
in Christ Jesus.

So I forget all that lies behind,
and I press on to all that lies ahead,
in faith
that at the conclusion of it all
is the resurrection
from death to life.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 12.1-8*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Six days before the Passover,
Jesus came to Bethany,
to the home of Lazarus.

(Lazarus was the one
Jesus had raised from the dead.)

There they gave a dinner for Jesus.

Martha served,
and Lazarus was one of those
at the table with him.

Mary took a pound of costly perfume,
and used it to anoint Jesus's feet,
wiping his feet with her hair.

The house was filled
with the fragrance of the perfume.

But Judas Iscariot
(the disciple who was about to betray Jesus)
complained, saying,

'This perfume could have been sold
for a year's wages,
and the money given to the poor!'

(He said this not because he cared about the poor,
but because he was a thief.

He looked after the disciples' funds,
and would steal from them.)

Jesus said,

'Let her alone.
She has kept this perfume
for the day of my burial.

You will always have the poor with you,
but you will not always have me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PALM SUNDAY – Sunday 10 April

Readings for Year C

The Palm Procession reading is read outside at the beginning of the Palm Procession.

The Passion reading is usually read by the minister.

PALM PROCESSION – Luke 19.35-40

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

They brought the foal to Jesus,
and threw their cloaks across it.

As Jesus set off,
riding the foal,
down the Mount of Olives,
people spread their cloaks
on the road in front of him.

As they approached Jerusalem,
the whole crowd of disciples
began to praise God joyfully
for all the deeds of power
that they had seen,
shouting out,

‘Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest!’

Some of the Pharisees
in the crowd
said to Jesus,

‘Teacher, order your disciples to stop.’

Jesus said,
‘I tell you,
if the people were silent,
the stones would shout out.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MAIN LITURGY

FIRST READING – Isaiah 50.4-7

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord God has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain the weary
with a word.

Morning by morning
the Lord God wakens my ear
that I may listen and learn.

The Lord God has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I did not turn backwards.

I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard.
I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced.

I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 31.9-16

SECOND READING – Philippians 2.5-11

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Let the same mind be in you
that was in Christ Jesus.

Though he was in the form of God,
he did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant.
Being born in human form,
he humbled himself through obedience
even to the point of death -
even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him,
and has given him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus,
every knee should bow,
in heaven,
and on earth,
and under the earth,
and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

PASSION – Luke 22.14 - 23.56 or Luke 23.1-49

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Institution of The Lord's Supper

When the hour came,
Jesus took his place at the table,
and the apostles with him.

Jesus said to them,
‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you
before I suffer;
for I tell you, I will not eat it again
until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’

Then Jesus took a cup,
and after giving thanks, he said,
‘Take this and divide it amongst yourselves;
for I tell you

I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine again
until the kingdom of God comes.’

Then Jesus took bread,
and when he had given thanks,
he broke it, and gave it to them, saying,
‘This is my body, which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.’

And he did the same with the cup, after supper, saying,
‘This cup that is poured out for you
is the new covenant in my blood.
But see, the one who betrays me is with me,
and his hand is on the table.

For the Son of Man is going
as it has been determined,
but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!

Then they began to ask one another,
which one of them it could be who would do this.

Dispute about greatness

A dispute arose amongst the disciples
as to which one of them
was to be regarded as the greatest.
But Jesus said to them,
'The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them;
and those in authority over them
call themselves benefactors.
But it shall not be so with you.
The greatest amongst you
must become like the least,
and the leader
must become
like the one who serves -
just as I am amongst you
as one who serves.

Conferring the kingdom

You are the ones who have stood by me in my trials;
and I grant to you a kingdom -
the kingdom that my Father has granted to me.
You will eat and drink
at my table, in my kingdom,
and you will sit on thrones
judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Peter's denial foretold

Simon, Simon, listen!
Satan has demanded
to sift all of you, like wheat,
but I have prayed for you,
that your faith may not fail.
When you have returned,
strengthen your brothers.'
Simon Peter said to Jesus,
'Lord, I am ready to go with you
to prison and to death!'
Jesus said,
'I tell you, Peter,
the cock will not crow this day,
until you have denied three times
that you know me.'

Purse, bag and sword

Jesus said to the disciples,
'When I sent you out
without a purse, or bag, or sandals,
did you lack anything?'
And they said, 'No, not a thing.'
And Jesus said to them,
'But now, the one who has a purse
must take it, and likewise a bag.
And the one who has no sword
must sell his cloak and buy one.
For I tell you,
this scripture must be fulfilled in me:
"And he was counted amongst the lawless";
and indeed
what is written about me
is being fulfilled.'
They said, 'Lord, look, here are two swords.'
And Jesus replied, 'It is enough.'

Jesus prays on the Mount of Olives

Jesus came out and went, as was his custom,
to the Mount of Olives;
and the disciples followed him.
When they reached the place,
he said to them,
'Pray, that you may not come into the time of trial.'
Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw,
knelt down, and prayed,
'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me;
yet, not my will but yours be done.'
Then an angel from heaven appeared to him,
and gave him strength.
In his anguish he prayed more earnestly,
and his sweat became like great drops of blood,
falling down on the ground.
When Jesus got up from prayer,
he came to the disciples,
and found them sleeping, exhausted by grief.
He said to them,
'Why are you sleeping?
Get up and pray,
that you may not come into the time of trial.'

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus

While he was still speaking,
suddenly a crowd appeared,
and the one called Judas, one of the twelve,
was leading them.
Judas approached Jesus, to kiss him;
but Jesus said to him,
'Judas, would you betray the Son of Man,
with a kiss?'
When those who were around Jesus
saw what was happening, they asked him,
'Lord, should we strike with the sword?'
Then one of them struck the servant of the high priest
and cut off his right ear.
But Jesus said, 'No more of this!'
And Jesus touched the servant, by the wound,
and healed him.
Then Jesus spoke to those who had come for him -
the chief priests,
the officers of the temple police,
and the elders, saying:
'Have you come out with swords and clubs
as if I were a bandit?'
When I was with you day after day in the temple,
you did not lay hands on me.
But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

Peter denies Jesus

Then they seized Jesus, and led him away,
delivering him to the house of the high priest;
and Peter was following at a distance.
They kindled a fire
in the middle of the courtyard,
and sat down together;
and Peter sat amongst them.
Then a servant-girl, seeing Peter in the firelight,
stared at him and said,
'This man also was with him.'

But Peter denied it, saying,
‘Woman, I do not know him.’
A little later someone else, on seeing Peter, said,
‘You also are one of them.’
But Peter said,
‘Man, I am not!’
Then, about an hour later, still another kept insisting,
‘Surely this man also was with him;
for he is a Galilean.’
But Peter said,
‘Man, I do not know what you are talking about!’
At that moment, while Peter was still speaking,
the cock crowed.
The Lord turned and looked at Peter.
And Peter remembered the word of the Lord,
how he had said to him,
‘Before the cock crows today,
you will deny me three times.’
And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The mocking and beating of Jesus

Now the men who were holding Jesus
blindfolded him, and began to beat him;
and they mocked him, saying,
‘If you are a prophet, tell us who struck you.’
And they heaped many other insults on him.

Jesus before the council

When daylight came,
the assembly of the elders
(both the chief priests and the scribes)
gathered together,
and they brought Jesus to their council.
They said,
‘If you are the Messiah, tell us.’
Jesus replied,
‘If I tell you, you will not believe;
and if I were to question you,
you would not answer.’
But soon,
the Son of Man will be seated
at the right hand of the power of God.’
All of them asked,
‘Are you, then, the Son of God?’
Jesus said to them,
‘You say that I am.’
They said,
‘What further testimony do we need?
We have heard it ourselves, from his own lips!’

Jesus before Pilate

Then they rose
and took Jesus to Pilate
and began to accuse Jesus, saying,
‘We found this man perverting our nation,
forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor,
and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.’
Pilate asked Jesus,
‘Are you the king of the Jews?’
Jesus answered,
‘You have said so.’

Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds,
‘I find no basis for an accusation against this man.’
But they were insistent, and said,
‘He stirs up the people
by teaching throughout all Judea,
from Galilee where he began, even to this place.’

Jesus before Herod

When Pilate heard this,
he asked whether the man was a Galilean.
And when Pilate learned
that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction,
Pilate sent Jesus off to Herod,
who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.
When Herod saw Jesus, Herod was glad,
because Herod had been wanting to see Jesus
for some time.
Herod had heard about Jesus,
and was hoping to see Jesus perform a sign.
Herod questioned Jesus at some length,
but Jesus gave Herod no answer.
The chief priests and the scribes stood by,
furiously accusing Jesus.
Even Herod, with his soldiers,
began to treat Jesus with contempt, and mocked him.
Herod put an elegant robe on Jesus,
and sent him back to Pilate.
That same day, Herod and Pilate,
previously enemies, became friends.

Jesus sentenced to death

Pilate then called together the chief priests,
the leaders, and the people,
and said to them,
‘You brought me this man
as one who was perverting the people;
and here I have examined him in your presence,
and I have not found this man guilty
of any of the accusations
you make against him.
Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us.
Indeed, this man has done nothing to deserve death.
I will therefore have him flogged, and release him.’
Now Pilate was obliged to release someone for them
at the festival.
They all shouted out together,
‘Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!’
(Barabbas had been put in prison
for an insurrection that had taken place in the city,
and for murder.)
Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again;
but they kept shouting, ‘Crucify him!’
A third time, Pilate said to them,
‘Why, what evil has he done?’
I have found in him
no grounds for the sentence of death;
I will therefore have him flogged,
and then release him.’
But they kept shouting
that he should be crucified;
and their voices prevailed.

So Pilate gave his verdict:
that their demand should be granted.
He released the man they asked for,
(the one who had been put in prison
for insurrection and murder),
and he handed Jesus over, as they wished.

Simon of Cyrene

As they led Jesus away,
they seized Simon of Cyrene,
who was coming from the country,
and they laid the cross on him,
and made him carry it behind Jesus.

The women of Jerusalem

A great number of the people followed Jesus,
and amongst them were women
who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.
But Jesus turned to them and said,
'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me,
but weep for yourselves and for your children.
For the days are surely coming when they will say,
"Blessed are the barren,
and the wombs that never bore,
and the breasts that never nursed."
Then they will begin to say to the mountains,
"Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us."
For if they do this when the wood is green,
what will happen when it is dry?'

The crucifixion

Two others also, who were criminals,
were led away to be put to death with him.
When they came to the place that is called The Skull,
they crucified Jesus there,
with the criminals,
one on his right, and one on his left.
Jesus said,
'Father, forgive them;
for they do not know what they are doing.'
And they cast lots to divide his clothing.
And the people stood by, watching;
but the leaders scoffed at him, saying,
'He saved others;
let him save himself,
if he is the Messiah of God,
God's chosen!'
The soldiers also mocked him,
coming up and offering him sour wine,
and saying,
'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!'
There was also an inscription over him,
'This is the King of the Jews.'
One of the criminals crucified with him
kept deriding him, saying,
'Are you not the Messiah?
Save yourself and us!'
But the other rebuked him, saying,
'Do you not fear God,
since you are under the same sentence
of condemnation?

And we indeed have been condemned justly,
but this man has done nothing wrong.'
Then he said,
'Jesus, remember me,
when you come into your kingdom.'
Jesus replied,
'Truly I tell you,
today you will be with me in Paradise.'

The death of Jesus

At about noon,
the light of the sun failed,
and darkness came over the whole land
until three in the afternoon;
and the curtain of the temple
was torn in two.
Then Jesus cried out,
'Father, into your hands
I commend my spirit.'
And having said this,
he breathed his last.
When the centurion
saw what had taken place,
he praised God and said,
'Certainly this man was innocent.'
And when all the crowds
who had gathered there for this spectacle
saw what had taken place,
they returned home, beating their breasts.
And all those who knew Jesus,
including the women
who had followed him from Galilee,
stood at a distance, watching these things.

The burial of Jesus

Now there was a good and righteous man
named Joseph,
from the Jewish town of Arimathea,
who was waiting expectantly
for the kingdom of God.
Though he was a member of the council,
had not agreed to their plan and action.
He went to Pilate
and asked for the body of Jesus.
He took it down,
wrapped it in a linen cloth,
and laid it in an unused tomb,
which had been hewn from the rock.
It was the day of Preparation,
and the sabbath was beginning.
The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee
followed, and they saw the tomb,
and how his body was laid.
They returned,
and prepared spices and ointments,
but on the sabbath day, they rested,
in accordance with the commandment.

The Passion of the Lord.

MAUNDY THURSDAY 14 April

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 14.18-20a*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

King Melchizedek of Salem

was a priest of God Most High.

He brought out bread and wine,

and blessed Abram, saying,

‘Blessed be Abram,

by God Most High,

the maker of heaven and earth.

And blessed be God Most High,

who has delivered you

from the hand

of your enemies.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 116.10-17

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 11.23-26*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Beloved,

I received from the Lord

what I also handed on to you,

that the Lord Jesus,

on the night he was betrayed,

took bread,

and when he had given thanks,

he broke it and said,

‘This is my body, broken for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.’

In the same way,

after they had eaten,

he took the cup, and said,

‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this, as often as you drink it,

in remembrance of me.’

So when you eat this bread,

and drink this cup,

you proclaim the Lord’s death,

until he comes.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.24-35*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

When the crowd realised

that Jesus and his disciples

had left the place

where Jesus

had given the bread,

they got into the boats

and crossed the lake to Capernaum,

to look for him there.

When they found him,

they asked him,

‘Teacher, when did you come here?’

Jesus said,

‘You have come to find me

not because you understood the sign,

but because you ate your fill of bread!

Do not work for the food that perishes,

but work for the food

that endures for eternal life,

which the Son of Man will give you -

for it is on the Son of Man

that God the Father

has set his seal.’

They said to him,

‘What must we do

to be doing the work of God?’

Jesus said,

‘This is the work of God:

that you believe in the one

that God has sent.’

So they said to him,

‘What sign are you going to give us,

so that we may see it, and believe?

What work are you performing?

Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness;

it says, “He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

Jesus said to them,

‘It was not Moses

who gave you the bread from heaven;

it is my Father

who gives you the true bread from heaven.

The bread of God

is that which comes down from heaven

and gives life to the world.’

They said to him,

‘Sir, give us this bread always.’

Jesus said to them,

‘I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me

will never be hungry,

and whoever believes in me

will never be thirsty.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

GOOD FRIDAY 15 April – first two readings

FIRST READING – Isaiah 53.3-5

(no introduction at the beginning or response at the end – just read the passage as it appears below)

He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering,
and acquainted with infirmity.
As one from whom others hide their faces,
he was despised,
and we held him of no account.
Surely he has borne our infirmities,
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
and crushed for our iniquities.
Upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.

SECOND READING – Hebrews 4.14-16; 5.7-9

(no introduction at the beginning or response at the end – just read the passage as it appears below)

Since we have a great high priest
who has passed through the heavens,
Jesus, the Son of God,
let us hold fast to our confession.
For we do not have a high priest
who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses,
but we have one who
in every respect
has been tested as we are,
yet without sin.
Let us therefore approach the throne of grace
with boldness,
so that we may receive mercy,
and find grace to help in time of need.
In the days of his flesh,
Jesus offered up prayers and supplications,
with loud cries and tears,
to the one who was able to save him from death,
and he was heard
because of his reverent submission.
Although he was a Son,
he learned obedience through what he suffered;
and having been made perfect,
he became the source of eternal salvation
for all who trust in him.

**GOOD FRIDAY PASSION READINGS
BEGIN ON THE NEXT PAGE**

GOOD FRIDAY PASSION READING PART 1

John 18:1-27

(no introduction at the beginning or response at the end – just read the passage as it appears below)

Jesus went out with his disciples
across the Kidron valley
to a place where there was a garden,
which he and his disciples entered.
Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place,
because Jesus often met there with his disciples.
So Judas led a band of guards and officials,
from the high priests and the Pharisees,
to the place, and they arrived there
with lanterns and torches and weapons.
Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him,
came forward and asked them,
'Who is it
that you are looking for?'
They answered,
'Jesus of Nazareth.'
Jesus replied,
'I am he.'
Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.
When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,'
they stepped back and fell to the ground.
Again he asked them,
'Who is it
that you are looking for?'
And they said,
'Jesus of Nazareth.'
Jesus answered,
'I told you that I am he.
So if you are looking for me,
let these others go.'
This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken,
'I did not lose a single one
of those whom you gave me.'
Then Simon Peter, who had a sword,
drew it, struck the high priest's servant,
and cut off his right ear.
The servant's name was Malchus.
Jesus said to Peter,
'Put your sword back into its sheath.
Am I not to drink the cup
that the Father has given me?'
Then the guards and the officials,
arrested Jesus, and bound him.
After arresting Jesus,
they took him first to Annas,
who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas,
the high priest that year.
Caiaphas was the one
who had advised them
that it was better
to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter, and another disciple, followed Jesus.
That other disciple was known to the high priest,
and so was able to follow Jesus
into the courtyard of the high priest;
but Peter was left standing outside the gate,
until the other disciple
(the one who was known to the high priest)
went out
and spoke to the woman who guarded the gate,
and brought Peter in.
The woman said to Peter,
'Are you also
one of this man's disciples?'
Peter said,
'I am not.'
Now the servants and officials
had made a charcoal fire,
because it was cold,
and they were standing around it
and warming themselves.
Peter also was standing with them
and warming himself.
Then the high priest questioned Jesus
about his disciples and his teaching.
Jesus answered,
'I have spoken openly to the world.
I have always taught in the synagogue
and in the temple,
where the people gather.
I have said nothing in secret.
Why ask me,
when you can ask those who heard me.'
When Jesus had said this,
one of the temple police standing nearby
struck Jesus on the face, saying,
'Is that how you answer the high priest?'
Jesus answered,
'If what I have said is untrue, then say so;
but if what I have said is true,
why do you strike me?'
Annas sent Jesus, bound,
to Caiaphas the high priest.
Now Simon Peter
was still standing and warming himself;
and they asked him,
'Are you also one of his disciples?'
Peter denied it, and said, 'I am not.'
One of the servants of the high priest
(a relative of the man
whose ear Peter had cut off)
asked Peter,
'Did I not see you with him in the garden?'
Again Peter denied it;
and at that moment,
the cock crowed.

GOOD FRIDAY PASSION READING PART 2

John 18:28 - 19:16a

(no introduction at the beginning or response at the end – just read the passage as it appears below)

At first light,
they took Jesus from Caiaphas
to Pilate's headquarters.
They themselves did not enter the headquarters,
as that would have been a ritual defilement,
preventing them from eating the Passover.
So Pilate went out to them, and said,
'What accusation do you bring against this man?'
They answered,
'If this man were not a criminal,
we would not have handed him over to you.'
Pilate said to them,
'Take him yourselves
and judge him according to your law.'
They replied,
'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.'
(This was to fulfil what Jesus had said
when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)
Then Pilate entered the headquarters again,
summoned Jesus, and asked him,
'Are you the King of the Jews?'
Jesus answered,
'Do you ask this on your own,
or did others tell you about me?'
Pilate replied,
'I am a Roman, not a Jew.
Your own nation and chief priests
have handed you over to me.
What have you done?'
Jesus answered,
'My kingdom is not of this world.
If my kingdom were of this world,
my followers would be fighting to protect me.
But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'
Pilate asked him,
'So you are a king?'
Jesus answered,
'You are saying that I am a king.
I was born,
and I came into the world,
to testify to the truth.
Everyone who belongs to the truth
listens to my voice.'
Pilate said to him,
'What is truth?'
Pilate went again
to those who were outside,
and said to them,
'I find no case against him.
But you have a custom
that I release someone for you at the Passover.
Do you want me to release
the King of the Jews?'
They shouted in reply,
'Not this man, but Barabbas!'
Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.
And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns
and put it on his head,
and they dressed him in a purple robe.
They kept coming up to him, saying,
'Hail, King of the Jews!'
and striking him on the face.
Pilate went out again and said to them,
'Look, I am bringing him out to you
to let you know that I find no case against him.'
So Jesus came out,
wearing the crown of thorns
and the purple robe.
Pilate said to them,
'Behold the man!'
When the chief priests and the temple police saw him,
they shouted,
'Crucify him! Crucify him!'
Pilate said to them,
'Take him yourselves and crucify him;
I find no case against him.'
They answered him,
'We have a law,
and according to that law, he ought to die,
because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'
Now when Pilate heard this,
he was more afraid than ever.
He entered his headquarters again, and asked Jesus,
'Where are you from?'
But Jesus gave him no answer.
Pilate therefore said to him,
'Do you refuse to speak to me?
Do you not know
that I have the power to release you,
and the power to crucify you?'
Jesus answered him,
'You would have no power over me
had it not been given to you;
the one who handed me over to you
is guilty of a greater sin.'
On hearing this, Pilate sought to release Jesus,
but the people cried out,
'If you release this man,
you are no friend of the emperor,
for everyone who claims to be a king
sets himself against the emperor.'
Pilate brought Jesus outside,
and sat on the judge's bench,
at a place called The Stone Pavement,
(or in Hebrew Gabbatha).
It was the day of Preparation for the Passover,
close to midday.
He said to them,
'Behold your King!'
They cried out,
'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!'
Pilate asked them,
'Shall I crucify your King?'
The chief priests answered,
'We have no king but Caesar.'
Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them
to be crucified.

GOOD FRIDAY PASSION READING PART 3

John 19:16b-end

(no introduction at the beginning or response at the end – just read the passage as it appears below)

With Jesus carrying his own cross,
they led him out to 'The Place of the Skull',
which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.
There they crucified him;
and two others with him,
one on either side,
with Jesus between them.
Pilate also had an inscription written,
and put on the cross;
it read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.'
Many people read this inscription,
because the place where Jesus was crucified
was near the city,
and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.
Then the chief priests said to Pilate,
'Do not write, "The King of the Jews,"
but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."'
Pilate answered,
'What I have written, I have written.'
When the soldiers had crucified Jesus,
they took his clothes
and divided them into four parts,
one for each soldier.
But his tunic was seamless,
woven in one piece from the top,
so they said to one another,
'Let us not tear it,
but cast lots for it, to see who will get it.'
This was to fulfil what the scripture says:
'They divided my clothes amongst themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.'
Standing near the cross of Jesus
were his mother,
and his mother's sister,
Mary the wife of Clopas,
and Mary Magdalene.
When Jesus saw his mother,
and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her,
he said to his mother,
'Woman, here is your son.'
Then he said to the disciple,
'Here is your mother.'
And from that time on,
the disciple took her into his own home.
After this,
when Jesus knew that all was now finished,
he said (in order to fulfil the scripture),
'I am thirsty.'
A jar full of sour wine was standing there.
So they put a sponge full of the wine
on a branch of hyssop
and held it to his mouth.
When Jesus had received the wine, he said,
'It is finished.'
Then he bowed his head,
and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation,
the leaders of the people
did not want the bodies left on the cross
during the sabbath
(especially as that sabbath
was a day of great solemnity);
so they asked Pilate
to have the legs of the crucified men broken,
and the bodies removed.
The soldiers came
and broke the legs of the first,
and of the other,
who had been crucified with him.
But when they came to Jesus,
and they saw that he was already dead,
they did not break his legs.
Instead,
one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear;
and at once blood and water came out.
(He who saw this has testified,
so that you also may believe.
His testimony is true,
and he knows that he tells the truth.)
These things occurred
so that the scripture might be fulfilled:
'None of his bones shall be broken.'
And again, another passage of scripture says,
'They will look upon the one
whom they have pierced.'
Now Joseph of Arimathea
was a disciple of Jesus,
but secretly,
because of his fear
of the religious leaders.
After these things had taken place,
Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate
to let him take away the body of Jesus.
Pilate gave him permission;
so he came and removed Jesus's body.
Nicodemus,
who had first come to Jesus by night,
also came,
bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes,
weighing about a hundred pounds.
They took the body of Jesus,
and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths,
according to their burial customs.
Now there was a garden
in the place where he was crucified;
and in the garden there was a new tomb,
in which no one had ever been laid.
And so, because it was the day of Preparation,
and the tomb was nearby,
they laid Jesus there.

EASTER DAY – Sunday 17 April

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Isaiah 65.17-19

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

I will create new heavens,
and a new earth, says the Lord;
and the former things
will be remembered no more.
Be glad,
and rejoice for ever,
in what I am creating;
for I myself will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;
and the sound of weeping
will be heard no more.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalms 118.15-25

SECOND READING – 1 Corinthians 15.20-26

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Christ has been raised from the dead,
the first fruits
of those who have died.
Just as death
came through a human being,
so also
the resurrection of the dead
has come through a human being:
for as in Adam, all die,
so in Christ, shall all be made alive;
Christ the first fruits,
then those who belong to Christ.
Then comes the conclusion,
when Christ shall hand over the kingdom
to God the Father,
after he has overcome every ruler
and every authority and power,
for he must reign until he has put
all his enemies under his feet.
And the final enemy to be destroyed
will be death itself.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 20.1-18

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Early on the first day of the week,
while it was still dark,
Mary Magdalene came to the tomb
and saw that the stone
had been removed from the tomb.
So she ran,
and went to Simon Peter,
and the other disciple
(the one whom Jesus loved),
and said to them,
'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,
and we do not know where they have laid him.'

So Peter, and the other disciple, set out,
and went towards the tomb.
The two were running together,
but the other disciple outran Peter,
and reached the tomb first.
He bent down to look in,
and saw the linen wrappings lying there,
but he did not go in.
Then Simon Peter came, following him,
and went into the tomb.
Simon Peter saw the linen wrappings lying there,
and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head,
not lying with the linen wrappings,
but rolled up in a place by itself.
Then the other disciple,
who had reached the tomb first,
also went in;
and he saw, and believed;
(for until this point,
they had not understood the scripture,
that he must rise from the dead).
Then the two disciples returned to their homes;
but Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.
As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;
and she saw two angels in white,
sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying,
one at the head, and the other at the feet.
They said to her,
'Woman, why are you weeping?'
She said to them,
'They have taken away my Lord,
and I do not know where they have laid him.'
When she had said this, she turned around,
and saw Jesus standing there,
but she did not know that it was Jesus.
Jesus said to her,
'Woman, why are you weeping?
Who is it, that you are looking for?'
Supposing him to be the gardener,
she said to him,
'Sir, if you have carried him away,
tell me where you have laid him,
and I will take him away.'
Jesus said to her,
'Mary!'
Mary turned and said to him in Hebrew,
'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher).
Jesus said to her,
'Do not hold on to me,
because I have not yet ascended to the Father.
But go to my brothers, and tell them
that I am ascending to my Father and your Father,
to my God and your God.'
Mary Magdalene went,
and announced to the disciples,
'I have seen the Lord';
and she told them
that he had said these things to her.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 2 – Sunday 24 April

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 9.1-11,15,17-19a

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Saul, still breathing threats and murder
against the disciples of the Lord,
went to the high priest, and obtained letters
to the synagogues at Damascus,
allowing him to search for disciples there,
arrest them, and bring them to Jerusalem.
Now as Saul was approaching Damascus,
a light from heaven suddenly surrounded him.
He fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him,
'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?'
Saul asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'
and the reply came, 'I am Jesus,
the one you are persecuting.
Now get up, and enter the city,
and you will be told what to do.'
The men who were travelling with Saul
stood speechless,
because they heard the voice, but saw no one.
Saul got up from the ground,
and though his eyes were open,
he could see nothing;
so they led him, by the hand, into Damascus.
For three days, Saul was without sight,
and he neither ate nor drank.
Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias.
The Lord directed Ananias, in a vision,
to go to the place where Saul was staying.
The Lord said, 'Go to him, for I have chosen him
to lift up my name, before Gentiles, and kings,
and the people of Israel.'
So Ananias went, and entered the house
where Saul was staying.
He laid his hands on Saul, and said,
'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus,
who appeared to you on your way here,
has sent me to you, that you may regain your sight,
and be filled with the Holy Spirit.'
Immediately, something like scales
fell from Saul's eyes, and his sight was restored.
And Saul got up, and was baptised;
and after taking some food, he regained his strength.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 30

SECOND READING – Revelation 1.9-13,17-19

A reading from the book of Revelation.

From John, your brother, sharing with you
in the persecution, the patient endurance,
and the promise of the kingdom,
that are ours in Jesus Christ.
I was on the island of Patmos, because of
the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus.
I was in the spirit, on the Lord's day,
and I heard, behind me, a loud voice, like a trumpet,
saying: 'Write, in a book, what you see,
and send it, to the seven churches of Asia.'

I turned to see whose voice it was, that spoke to me,
and on turning, I saw seven golden lampstands,
and in the midst of them,
I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed in a long robe,
with a golden sash across his chest.
When I saw him, I fell at his feet, as though dead.
But he placed his right hand on me, saying,
'Do not be afraid;
for I am the first and the last, and the living one.
I was dead, and see, I am alive for evermore;
and I hold the keys of death and the underworld.
Now write down all that you have seen,
all that you see now, and all that is still to take place.'
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 20.19-31

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

It was evening, on the first day of the week,
and the doors of the house
where the disciples had met
were locked, because they were afraid.
Jesus came and stood amongst them,
and said, 'Peace be with you.'
Then he showed them his hands, and his side;
and the disciples rejoiced
as they looked upon the Lord.
Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'
Then he breathed on them,
and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.
If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven;
but if you cling on to those sins, they are retained.'
Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve,
was not with them when Jesus came.
So the other disciples told him,
'We have seen the Lord.'
But Thomas said to them,
'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands,
and put my finger in the mark of the nails,
and put my hand in his side, I will not believe.'
A week later, the disciples were again inside,
with the doors locked, and Thomas was with them.
Jesus came and stood amongst them, and said,
'Peace be with you.'
Then Jesus said to Thomas,
'Put your finger here, and see my hands.
Reach out your hand, and put it in my side.
Do not doubt, but believe.'
Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!'
Jesus said to him,
'Have you believed because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen,
and yet have come to believe.'
Now Jesus did many other signs
in the presence of his disciples,
which are not written in this book.
But these are written so that you may come to believe
that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,
and that through believing,
you may have life in his name.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 3 – Sunday 1 May

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 9.19b-20,23,25-28

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

After several days with the disciples in Damascus,
Saul began to proclaim
in the synagogues there
that Jesus is the Son of God.

Soon, some of the leaders of the synagogues
were plotting against Saul, even to kill him,
but the disciples took Saul by night,
and let him down through an opening in the wall,
lowering him in a basket.

Saul returned to Jerusalem,
and there he attempted to join the disciples;
but they were all afraid of him,
for they did not believe that he was now a disciple.

So Barnabas took Saul to the apostles,
and described for them how, on the road,
Saul had seen the Lord,
and the Lord had spoken to Saul,
and how, in Damascus,
Saul had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.

So Saul was accepted by the disciples in Jerusalem,
and Saul spoke boldly there
in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 86.1-10

SECOND READING – Revelation 5.11-14

A reading from the book of Revelation.

As I looked,

I heard the voices of thousands angels,
and the living creatures, and the elders,
surrounding the throne, and singing in full voice:
'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
to receive all wisdom and power
and honour and glory and blessing!'

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth,
and under the earth, and in the sea,
singing to the one who was seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb:

'Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever!'

And the four living creatures said, 'Amen!'

And the elders fell down and worshipped.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 21.1-19

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Some of the disciples gathered by the sea of Galilee:
Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin,
Nathaniel, the sons of Zebedee, and two others.

Simon Peter decided to go fishing,
and the others went with him -
but all night, they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach;
but the disciples did not know
that it was Jesus.

Jesus asked them whether they had any fish,
and they said 'no'.

He said to them, 'Cast the net
on the other side of the boat, and you will find some.'
So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in
because there were so many fish.

That disciple whom Jesus loved
immediately said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!'
On hearing this, Simon Peter jumped into the lake
and headed towards the shore.

The other disciples followed in the boat,
dragging the net full of fish.

Going ashore, they saw a charcoal fire,
with fish on it, and bread.

Jesus said to them,
'Bring some of the fish that you have caught.'

So Simon Peter went back to the boat
and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish,
a hundred and fifty-three of them;
and even though there were so many,
the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them,
'Come and have breakfast.'

None of the disciples doubted;
they knew it was the Lord.

Jesus took the bread, and gave it to them;
and then the fish.

This was now the third time
that Jesus appeared to the disciples
after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast,
Jesus said to Simon Peter,

'Simon son of John,
do you love me more than these?'

Simon Peter said to Jesus,
'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.'
Then a second time, Jesus said to him,
'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Simon Peter said to Jesus,
'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.'
Then a third time, Jesus said to him,
'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Peter was distressed that Jesus asked him
a third time, 'Do you love me?'

Peter replied to Jesus:

'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said to Peter,
'Feed my sheep.

Truly, I tell you,
when you were younger,
you used to fasten your own belt
and go wherever you wished.
But when you grow old,
you will stretch out your hands,
and someone else will fasten a belt around you
and take you where you do not wish to go.'

(Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death
by which Peter would glorify God.)

Then Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Follow me.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 4 – Sunday 8 May

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 11.19-23,25-26

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The disciples who fled

from the persecution in Jerusalem
travelled as far as Lebanon, Syria,
Antioch, and Cyprus,
preaching the word at first
only in the synagogues.

But amongst them

were some who came originally
from Cyprus, and North Africa.

On arriving in Antioch,

these disciples proclaimed the Lord Jesus
not only in the synagogues,
but also amongst the wider population.

The hand of the Lord was with them,

and a great number became believers,
turning to the Lord.

News of this reached the church in Jerusalem,

and they sent Barnabas to Antioch
to report back to them.

On arriving in Antioch,

Barnabas was delighted to see
the grace of God at work,
and he encouraged them all
to remain committed and faithful to the Lord.

Then Barnabas travelled on to Tarsus,

to look for Saul;
and when Barnabas found Saul,
Barnabas brought Saul back to Antioch.

And so it was, that for an entire year,

Barnabas and Saul
met with the church in Antioch,
and taught a great many people.

And it was in Antioch

that the disciples were first called Christians.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 23

SECOND READING – Revelation 7.9-12,14b-17

A reading from the book of Revelation.

After this, I looked,

and there before me
was a great multitude,
from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

They were standing before the throne,

and before the Lamb,
robed in white,
and with palm branches in their hands.

They were declaring, with one voice,

'Salvation belongs to our God,
and to the Lamb!'

The angels around the throne

fell on their faces
and worshipped God, singing,

'Glory and blessing and honour and power

and wisdom and praise
to our God for ever!'

One of the elders addressed me,
saying,

'These are the ones

who have come out of the great ordeal.

They have washed and purified their robes
in the blood of the Lamb.

Now they are now before the throne of God,

serving continually within God's temple;
and the one who is seated on the throne
will shelter them.

They will hunger no more,

and thirst no more;

the sun will not strike them,

nor any scorching heat;

for the Lamb on the throne

will be their shepherd,

and will guide them

to the spring of the water of life.

And God will wipe away

every tear from their eyes.'

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 10.22-30

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

It was the time

of the winter festival of Hanukkah,

and Jesus was in the temple.

The religious leaders gathered around Jesus,

and said to him,

'How long will you keep us in suspense?

If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'

Jesus said,

'I have told you already.

And you see all that I do

in my Father's name.

And yet

still you do not believe.

My sheep listen to my voice.

I know them,

and they follow me.

I give them eternal life,

and they will never perish.

No one will snatch them

out of my hand.

My all-powerful Father

has given them to me.

No one can snatch them

out of the Father's hand -

and I and the Father are one.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 5 – Sunday 15 May

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 16.9-15

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

During the night, Paul had a vision
of someone standing and pleading with him, saying,
'Come over to Macedonia, and help us.'

We immediately tried
to cross over to Macedonia,
convinced that God had called us
to proclaim the gospel there.

We sailed direct from Troas
to the island of Samothraki,
then the following day
to the coastal port
of Neapolis.

From there we went inland to Philippi,
which is a leading city of Macedonia,
and a Roman colony.

We remained in Philippi
for several days.

On the sabbath day,
we went out of the city
to a place of prayer by the river,
and we sat down,
and spoke to the women who had gathered there.

A woman named Lydia,
a worshipper of God,
was listening to us.

She was from the city of Thyatira,
a dealer in purple cloth.

The Lord opened her heart
to receive Paul's message,
and she and her household
were baptised.

She urged us to stay at her home,
if we judged her to be faithful to the Lord,
so that is where we stayed.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 67

SECOND READING – Revelation 21.1-7

A reading from the book of Revelation.

Then I saw a new heaven,
and a new earth;
for the first heaven, and the first earth,
had passed away.

And I saw the holy city,
the new Jerusalem,
coming down out of heaven
from God,
prepared as perfectly
as a bride
adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice
from the throne, saying,
'See, the home of God
is amongst mortals.
They will be my people,
and I shall dwell amongst them.

I will wipe away
every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain
will be no more.

See, I am making all things new.

Write this,
for these words
are trustworthy and true.

It is done!
I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end.

To the thirsty,
I will give water,
as a gift,
from the spring
of the water of life.

Those who conquer
will inherit these things,
and I will be their God,
and they will be my children.'
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 13.31-35

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

As soon as Judas left the supper,
Jesus said to his disciples:

'The time has come
for the Son of Man to be glorified,
to the glory of God,
and in the glory of God.

I am with you only a little longer,
and where I am going,
you cannot come.

But I give you a new commandment:
that you love one another
as I have loved you.

It is by this
that all will know
that you are my disciples -
if you love one another.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 6 – Sunday 22 May

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 16.16-34

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer,
we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination.

She brought her owners a great deal of money
by fortune-telling.

She followed us around, crying out,

‘These men are servants of God Most High!

They proclaim the way of salvation!’

This went on for many days,

until Paul, in exasperation, turned and said,

‘I order you, in the name of Jesus Christ,
to come out of her;’

and the spirit of divination immediately left her.

When her owners saw

that their hope of making money was gone,

they seized Paul and Silas,

and dragged them into the market-place,

and before the magistrates, saying,

‘These men are disturbing our city;

they are Jews,

and they are advocating customs

that it is not lawful for us, as Romans,

to adopt or observe.’

The crowd joined in, until the magistrates

had Paul and Silas flogged, and imprisoned,

ordering the jailer to keep them securely.

The jailer put Paul and Silas in the innermost cell,

and fastened their feet in chains.

About midnight,

Paul and Silas were praying, and singing hymns,

and the prisoners were listening to them.

Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent

that the foundations of the prison were shaken;

and all the doors of the prison were opened,

and everyone’s chains came undone.

The jailer awoke,

and saw that the prison doors were wide open.

Assuming that the prisoners had escaped,

he drew his sword, and was about to kill himself.

But Paul shouted out,

‘Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.’

The jailer called for lights, and rushed in,

falling down trembling before Paul and Silas.

Then he led them out, and asked them,

‘What must I do to be saved?’

Paul and Silas answered, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus,

and you will be saved - you and your household.’

And they proclaimed the word of the Lord to the jailer,

and to all his household.

And there, that same night,

the jailer washed their wounds;

and the jailer, and his entire family, were baptised,

rejoicing at their new faith in God.

And they welcomed Paul and Silas

as guests in their home.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 97

SECOND READING – Revelation 21.10,22-27 & 22.1-2

A reading from the book of Revelation.

In the spirit, the angel carried me away

to a great high mountain,

and showed me the holy city, the new Jerusalem,

coming down out of heaven from God.

I saw no temple in the city, for its temple

is the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb.

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,

for the glory of God is its light,

and its lamp is the Lamb.

All nations will walk by its light,

and the kings of the earth

will bring their glory into it.

The gates of the city will always be open by day -

and there will be no night.

People will bring into that city

the glory and honour of the nations.

There will be no evil or falsehood there,

for those who enter

will be the ones

whose names are written

in the Lamb’s book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river

of the water of life, bright as crystal,

flowing from the throne of God, and of the Lamb,

and on through the middle of the street of the city.

On each side of the river, I saw the tree of life,

with its twelve kinds of fruit,

one for each month of the year;

and the leaves of the tree

are for the healing of the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 14.23-29

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘I speak only the words

of the Father who sent me.

Those who love me will live by my words;

and my Father will love them,

and we will come to them,

and make our home with them.

I say these things to you

while I am still with you,

but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,

whom the Father will send in my name,

will teach you everything,

and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you -

a peace that the world cannot give.

Do not let your hearts be troubled,

and do not be afraid.

You have heard me say

that I am going away, and then I will come to you.

If you love me, you will rejoice

that I am going to the Father,

because the Father is greater than me.

And I tell you this now,

so that when it comes about, you may believe.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ASCENSION DAY – Thursday 26 May

FIRST READING – Acts 1.1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

I wrote previously
about all that Jesus did and taught
from the beginning,
until the day when he was taken up to heaven,
after he had given instructions,
through the Holy Spirit,
to the apostles whom he had chosen.

After his suffering,
he presented himself alive to them,
by many convincing proofs,
appearing to them during forty days,
and speaking about the kingdom of God.

During this time,
he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem,
but to wait there for the promise of the Father.
'This,' he said, 'is what you have heard from me:
John baptised with water,
but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit
not many days from now.'

So when they had come together,
they asked him,
'Lord, is this the time
when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?'

He replied,
'It is not for you to know the times or seasons
that the Father has set by his own authority.
But you will receive power
when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,
in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth.'

When he had said this,
as they were watching,
he was lifted up,
and a cloud took him out of their sight.

While he was going,
and they were gazing up towards heaven,
there appeared two men in white robes,
standing by them,
who said to them,
'Men of Galilee,
why do you stand looking up towards heaven?
This Jesus,
who has been taken up from you into heaven,
will return
in the same way
you saw him go.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Ephesians 1.17-23a

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of glory,
may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation
as you grow in knowledge of him,
that with all the saints,
you may know in your heart (filled with light)
the joyful confidence to which he has called you,
the riches of his glorious inheritance,
and the immeasurable greatness of his power
for all who believe.

God put this power to work in Christ
when he raised him from the dead,
and seated him at his right hand
in the heavenly places,
far above all rule and authority,
above all power and dominion,
and above every name that is named,
not only in this age,
but also in the age to come.
And he has put all things under his feet,
and has made him the head over all things,
for the sake of the church,
which is his body.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 24.44-53

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus said to the disciples,
'Everything that is written about me,
in the law of Moses, in the prophets,
and in the psalms, must be fulfilled.'

And he opened their minds
to understand the scriptures, saying:

'It is written
that the Messiah is to suffer,
and to rise from the dead,
on the third day;
and that repentance
and forgiveness of sins
will be proclaimed in his name
to all nations,
beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things.

And see,
I am sending upon you
what my Father promised;
so stay here in the city
until you have been clothed
with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany,
and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.

While he was blessing them,
he withdrew from them
and was carried up into heaven.

And they worshipped him,
and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;
and they were continually in the temple,
praising God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 7 – Sunday 29 May

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 17.16-34

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul was disturbed to find
that Athens was full of idols.

Daily, in both the synagogue and the market-place,
he set out the good news
about Jesus and the resurrection.

Some of the philosophers accused him
of speaking nonsense,
or promoting foreign gods,
but some wanted to know more.

Indeed all those who gathered in Athens
were keen to hear all that was new.

So Paul stood before them, and said,

‘People of Athens,

I see how extremely religious you are in every way;
for as I went through the city,
and looked carefully at the objects of your worship,
I found amongst them
an altar with the inscription:

“To an unknown god.”

That which you worship as unknown,

I now proclaim to you.

The God who made the world, and everything in it,
the Lord of heaven and earth,
does not live in any shrine made by human hands,
or depend (like your idols) on human care,
but is the one who gives, to all human beings,
life, and breath, and all things.

From one ancestor, God made all nations
to inhabit the whole earth
(determining their various times and places in history)
so every nation equally
can search for God, reach out for God, and find God;
and indeed God is not far away from any one of us.

For as your own poets have said:

“In him we live, and move, and have our being”,
“for we are his offspring.”

As God’s offspring, we should not think of God
as an image, in gold, or silver, or stone,
created by human art or imagination!

God has graciously overlooked
the times of human ignorance,
but God now calls upon all people everywhere
to repent.

God has set the date
on which the world will be judged, in righteousness,
by a human being God has appointed,
and raised from the dead, that all might believe.’

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead,
some scoffed; but others said,

‘We will hear you again about this.’

Some joined Paul, and became believers,
including a member of the council,
and a woman named Damaris,
and others with them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 66.7-18

SECOND READING – Rev 22.12-14, 16-17, 20-21

A reading from the book of Revelation.

I heard a voice saying:

‘I, Jesus, sent my angel to you
with this vision, and this message, for the churches.

I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last,
the beginning and the end.

I am both the root, and the descendant, of David,
and the bright morning star.

Blessed are those who wash their robes,
and enter the city by the gates,
for they will have access to the tree of life.’

And the voice said,

‘See, I am coming soon,
bringing my reward for each,
according to their deeds.’

And now the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come’.

Let everyone who hears say, ‘Come’.

Let all who are thirsty
come to receive
the free gift of the water of life.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus
be with all the saints. Amen.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 17.20-26

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Jesus said: ‘Holy Father,

I ask not only on behalf of these,
but also on behalf of those
who will believe in me through their word.
May they all be one.

As you, Father, dwell in me,
and I dwell in you,
may they also dwell in us;
and by this, may the world come to believe
that you have sent me.

The glory that you have given me, I have given them,
that they may be one, as we are one;
and that I may dwell in them, as you dwell in me;
that the world may know that you sent me,
and that you have loved them, as you loved me.

Father, I pray also
that those you have given me
may continue to be with me,
to see the glory you have given me,
having loved me
since before the foundation of the world.

Righteous Father,
the world does not know you,
but I know you;
and these know that you have sent me.

I have made your name known to them,
and I will continue to make your name known,
so that the love
with which you have loved me
may be in them,
as I dwell in them.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PENTECOST – Sunday 5 June

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Acts 2.1-21

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When the day of Pentecost came,
the disciples were all together in one place.
Suddenly from the sky there came a sound
like the rush of a violent wind,
and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
Flames, or tongues of fire, appeared amongst them,
and rested upon each of them,
and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit,
and began to speak in other languages,
as the Spirit enabled them.
Now there were devout Jews,
from every nation under heaven,
staying in Jerusalem,
and at this sound, the crowd gathered,
and was bewildered,
because each one heard their own language
being spoken.

Amazed and astonished, they said,
'Surely all these who are speaking
are from Galilee.
How is it that we all hear them
speaking about God's deeds of power
in our own native languages,
from Asia, Arabia, Egypt and North Africa,
from Judea, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and the Balkans,
from Crete and from Rome,
both Jews and converts?'

All were amazed and perplexed,
saying to one another,
'What can this mean?'

Others sneered and said,

'They are filled with new wine.'

But Peter, standing with the eleven,
raised his voice and addressed them, saying:
'Men of Judea, and all who are here in Jerusalem,
I tell you that these are not drunk, as you suppose,
for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

No; this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

"In those days, God declares,
I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh:
your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
the young will see visions,
and your elders will dream dreams.

Upon my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

I will show wonders in the heavens above,
and signs on the earth below:
blood, and fire, and clouds of smoke;
the sun will be turned to darkness,
and the moon to blood,
before the coming
of the Lord's great and glorious day;
and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
shall be saved."

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 104.1-2, 29-36

SECOND READING – Romans 8.14-17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

All who are led
by the Spirit of God
are children of God.
You did not receive
a spirit of slavery,
to fall back into fear,
but you have received
a spirit of adoption,
that allows us to cry, 'Abba! Father!'
That same spirit
bears witness
with our spirit
that we are children of God.
And as children of God,
we inherit all
that Christ inherited -
not only his suffering,
but also his glory.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 14.8-17

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Philip said to Jesus,

'Lord, show us the Father.'

Jesus said,

'Philip, have I been with you all this time,
and still you do not know me?

Whoever has seen me
has seen the Father,

for I am in the Father,
and the Father is in me.

The words that I say to you
I do not speak on my own;
they are the words of the Father
who dwells in me.

And you see other works of the Father in me,
so that you may believe
that I am in the Father
and the Father is in me.

And now,
those who believe in me
will do all that I have done,
and more,
because I am returning to the Father.

And I myself will do
whatever you ask in my name,
that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you love me,
you will keep my commandments,
and I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate,
to be with you for ever.

The world cannot receive this Spirit of Truth,
for the world
neither knows nor sees the Spirit of Truth;
but you will know the Spirit of Truth,
who will dwell with you,
and within you.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

TRINITY SUNDAY – Sunday 12 June

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Proverbs 8.1-3, 22-31

A reading from the book of Proverbs.

Wisdom calls out,

and Understanding raises her voice.

On the heights,

above the road,

and at the crossroads,

she takes her stand;

and at the city gates,

she declares:

‘I was created

as the first

of the works of the Lord.

Before the beginning of the earth,

I was established.

Before the mountains and the hills

had been formed,

before there were springs of water,

before there was even

dust upon the ground,

I, Wisdom,

was brought forth.

When the Lord established the heavens,

I was there.

When the Lord drew a circle

on the face of the deep,

made firm the skies above,

and set the boundaries of the oceans,

I was the skilled apprentice

at his side.

I was daily

the Lord’s delight,

rejoicing in the presence of the Lord,

and rejoicing

in the whole of creation,

and in the whole human race.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 8

SECOND READING – Romans 5.1-5

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Having been reconciled with God by faith,

we now have peace with God

through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is by faith

in our Lord Jesus Christ

that we have obtained access

to the grace of God

in which we stand,

and the joyful confidence

that we shall share

in the glory of God.

We rejoice even in our sufferings,

knowing that suffering produces endurance,

and endurance produces character,

and character produces hope.

And we know

that this hope

will not be disappointed -

for God’s love

has been poured into our hearts

through the gift

of the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 16.12-15

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘I still have many things to say to you.

You cannot bear them now,

but the Spirit of truth will come to you,

and guide you into all truth:

receiving from me,

and giving to you;

disclosing to you

the things that are to come,

and honouring me,

by making my will

known to you.

All that the Father has is mine.

The Spirit of truth

will take what is mine

and make it known to you.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 19 JUNE
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 65.2-5, 8b*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.
I hold out my hand to them, all day long,
even though they are a rebellious people,
says the Lord.

For they walk in wicked ways,
provoking me continually,
offering sacrifices in their gardens
offering incense on bricks,
dwelling amongst the tombs,
eating forbidden foods,
then calling themselves holy
as they banish others from their presence.

They are like smoke in my nostrils
from a fire that burns all day long!
And yet, for the sake of the righteous amongst them,
I will not destroy them all, says the Lord.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 63

SECOND READING – *Galatians 3.21-29*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians.

The law can bring
neither life nor righteousness;
yet it served as our guardian,
until Christ came,
to reconcile us to God
not by law, but by faith.

But now we are no longer subject to the law
as our guardian,
for by faith in Christ Jesus,
we are all alike made children of God.

And amongst those who are baptised into Christ,
there is no longer Jew or Greek,
slave or free, male and female,
for all are one in Christ Jesus,
and all inherit together
the promises made to Abraham.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 8.1-3,26-39*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
Jesus travelled, through towns and villages,
proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God,
Amongst those who accompanied him
were the twelve,
and some women
who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities,
including Mary Magdalene
(from whom seven demons had gone out),
Joanna
(the wife of a leading member of Herod's court),
Susanna,
and many others,
who provided for them
from their own means.

Jesus and the disciples travelled by boat
to the eastern side
of the sea of Galilee.

As Jesus stepped out on land,
he was met by a man of the city
who was tormented by demons.
He was kept under guard,
bound with chains and shackles,
but he would break out
and live wild amongst the tombs.
When Jesus commanded
the unclean spirit
to come out of him,
the man fell down before Jesus,
and shouted, at the top of his voice,
'What business have you with me,
Jesus,
Son of God Most High?
I beg you,
do not torment me.'

Jesus asked,
'What is your name?'
and the man said,
'Legion';
for many demons had entered him;
and they begged Jesus
repeatedly
not to order them
into the abyss.
A large herd of pigs
was feeding there
on the hillside,
and the demons begged Jesus
to let them enter these instead,
and Jesus permitted them.
So the demons came out of the man,
and entered into the pigs,
and the entire herd
rushed down the steep bank
into the lake,
and was drowned.

When those who were responsible for the pigs
saw what had happened,
they fled,
telling everyone,
in the town
and in the surrounding countryside,
what had happened.

When people came to see,
they found the man
sitting at the feet of Jesus,
clothed, and calm.
Overcome with fear,
they asked Jesus to leave.
The man begged
that he might go with Jesus,
but Jesus returned to the boat to leave,
saying,
'Return to your home,
and tell everyone
all that God has done for you.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Sunday 26 June

Arkholme Patronal Festival of Saint John the Baptist is celebrated with a United Benefice Service on the last Sunday in June
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 40.1-8*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.

Let her know

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has already received
from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

Now a voice cries out:

'In the wilderness,
prepare the way of the Lord.

Fill the valleys, level the hills,
straighten the paths,
and make the rough ways smooth;

for the Lord declares
that all who live
shall see the glory of the Lord revealed.'

Declare to the people
they they are like grass,
and their faithfulness
like the flower of the field:

the grass withers, and the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
but the word of our God
will stand for ever.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Galatians 5.1, 13-25*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians.

It is for freedom

that Christ has set us free,
so take care, my brothers and sisters,
that you do not become enslaved
once again.

Do not use your freedom
as an opportunity for self-indulgence,
but in love,
choose to serve one another;

for the whole law is summed up
in a single commandment:
'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

If instead

you are constantly
biting and devouring one another,
take care
that you are not consumed by one another!

When you find the spirit,
and the desires of the flesh,
to be in conflict with each other,
choose to live by the spirit,
because it is when you are truly led by the spirit
that you are freed from all law.

The desires of the flesh,
in opposition to the spirit,
are obvious:
sexual immorality and excess,
idolatry, sorcery, conflict, hatred, discord,
jealousy, anger, rivalry, division,
factions, and drunkenness and the like.

I say again: those who do such things
are not inheriting the kingdom of God!
By contrast, the fruit of the spirit
is love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

There is no law against these!
Those who belong to Christ Jesus
have crucified the flesh
with its passions and desires.

We live by the spirit.
Let us be led by the Spirit.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 1.57-66, 80*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

The time came for Elizabeth to give birth,
and she bore a son.

Her neighbours and relatives
heard that the Lord
had shown her great mercy,
and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day, at the temple,
they all expected
that the boy would be named Zechariah,
after his father,
but Elizabeth said, 'No,
he is to be called John.'

They said to her,
'None of your relatives has this name.'

And they began motioning
to the boy's father, Zechariah,
to find out what name
he wanted to give to the boy.

Zechariah asked for a writing-tablet, and wrote,
'The boy's name is John' -
and all of them were amazed.

Immediately Zechariah's mouth was opened,
and his tongue was freed,
and he began to speak,
praising God.

They were all overwhelmed,
and soon
this was being talked about
through the entire hill country of Judea.

All who heard it
wondered, saying
'What will this child become?' -
for indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

The child grew
and became strong in spirit.
And he was in the wilderness
until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 3 JULY

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 66.10-14a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Rejoice with Jerusalem,
and be glad for her,
all you who love her!

Rejoice with Jerusalem,
and mourn for her no longer,
for you will see her prosperity restored,
and you will comforted
like a child
at its mother's breast.

For the Lord now declares:

I will extend peace to Jerusalem like a river,
and the wealth of the nations
like an overflowing stream.

You shall be carried on her arm,
and held in her lap.

As a mother comforts her child,
so I will comfort you
in Jerusalem.

When you see it,
your heart will rejoice,
and you will flourish like the grass,
and all who serve the Lord will know
that the hand of the Lord
is with them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 66.1-8

SECOND READING – *Colossians 1.3-4,9-14*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

In our prayers for you, we always thank God,
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus,
and the love that you have for all the saints.

And we pray for you,
asking that you may be filled
with spiritual wisdom and understanding,
and with the knowledge of God's will,
so that you may lead lives
worthy of the Lord,
and fully pleasing to the Lord,
as you bear fruit in every good work,
and as you grow in the knowledge of God.

May you be made strong
with all the strength
that comes from God's glory and power.

And may you be prepared
to endure everything with patience,
always giving thanks, joyfully, to the Father,
who has enabled you to share
in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has rescued us from the power of darkness
and transferred us into the kingdom
of his beloved Son,
who bought our freedom
and forgiveness.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 10.1-11, 17-20, 23-24*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

The Lord appointed seventy more,
and sent them on ahead of him, in pairs,
to every town and place
where he himself intended to go.

He said to them:

'The harvest is plentiful,
but the workers are few.

May the Lord of the harvest bless you
as you go now to work in the harvest fields.

As you go, remember
that you will be like lambs amongst wolves.

Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals;
and greet no one on the road.

Whatever house you enter,
first say, "Peace to this house!"

If anyone is there who shares in peace,
your peace will rest upon them -
and if not, your peace will return to you.

Remain in the same house,
eating and drinking whatever they provide,
for the labourer deserves to be paid.

Do not move from house to house.

Whenever you enter a place,
and its people welcome you,
eat whatever is set before you.

Cure the sick who are there,
and say to them,

"The kingdom of God
has come near to you."

When you enter a place
and they do not welcome you,
go out into its streets and say,

"Even the dust of this place,
that clings to our feet,
we wipe off in protest against you.

Yet know this:
the kingdom of God has come near."

The seventy returned with joy, saying,
'Lord, in your name
even demons submit to us!'

Jesus said to them,

'I watched Satan fall
like a flash of lightning from the sky;
for I have given you authority
over all the power of the enemy,
and nothing can hurt you.

And the greater joy is this:
that your names are written in heaven.

Blessed are the eyes
that see what you have seen!
For prophets and kings
longed to see what you see,
and to hear what you hear.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 10 JULY

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Deuteronomy 30.10-14*

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Return to the Lord your God

with all your heart, and with all your soul.

Trust in the Lord your God,

and observe

the commandments and decrees

that are written

in this book of the law.

The word that I bring to you today

is not too hard for you,

or too far away.

You do not need to say,

‘Who will go up to heaven,

or cross the ocean,

to bring it to us,

that we may hear it and observe it?’

No, the word is very near to you.

It is on your lips, and in your heart.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 25.1-10

SECOND READING – *Colossians 1.15-20*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Christ is the image

of the invisible God;

and the firstborn,

from before all creation.

In Christ, all things

in heaven and on earth

were created,

both the visible and the invisible

(the thrones, rulers, dominions and powers).

All things were created through Christ,

and for Christ.

Christ existed before all things,

and it is in Christ

that all things hold together.

Christ is also the head

of the body which is the church -

its beginning,

as the firstborn from the dead.

Christ has first place in everything,

for in Christ,

all the fullness of God

is pleased to dwell,

and through Christ,

God reconciles all things

in heaven and on earth

to God,

making peace

through the sacrifice of the cross.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 10.25-37*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

A lawyer stood up to test Jesus.

‘Teacher,’ he said,

‘what must I do

to inherit eternal life?’

Jesus said to him,

‘What is written in the law?

What do you read there?’

The lawyer answered,

‘You shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart, with all your soul,

with all your mind, and with all your strength;

and you shall love your neighbour as yourself.’

Jesus said to him,

‘You have given a good answer;

do this, and you will live.’

But wanting to justify himself,

he asked Jesus,

‘And who is my neighbour?’

Jesus replied,

‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho,

and fell into the hands of robbers,

who stripped him, beat him, and went away,

leaving him half dead.

Now by chance

a priest was going down that road;

and when he saw the wounded man,

he passed by on the other side.

In the same way,

when a Levite came to the place,

seeing the wounded man,

he also passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, while travelling,

came near the wounded man;

and when he saw him,

he was moved with pity.

The Samaritan went to the wounded man,

and poured oil and wine on his wounds,

and bandaged them.

Then the Samaritan put the wounded man

on his own animal,

brought him to an inn,

and took care of him.

The next day,

the Samaritan took out two coins,

gave them to the innkeeper,

and said,

‘Take care of him;

and when I come back,

I will repay you

whatever more you spend.’

Which of these three, do you think,

was a neighbour

to the man

who fell into the hands of the robbers?’

The lawyer said,

‘The one who showed him mercy.’

Jesus said to him,

‘Go and do likewise.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 17 JULY
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 18.1-10a*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The Lord appeared to Abraham

by the oaks of Hebron,
as Abraham sat
at the entrance of his tent
in the heat of the day.

Abraham looked up

and saw three men
standing near him.

He ran to meet them,

and bowed down to the ground, saying,

‘My Lord,

if I have found favour in your sight,
do not pass by your servant.

Rest here under the tree,

and let me bring water to wash your feet,
and bread,

that you may eat,
and be refreshed

before you continue on your way.’

Abraham hurried

into the tent
to Sarah, saying,
‘Prepare three measures
of the best flour;
and knead it quickly
to make bread.’

Abraham ran to the herd,

and took a calf, tender and good,
and gave it to the servant,
who hastened to prepare it.

Then Abraham took butter, and milk,

and the meat of the calf,
and set it before the three men;
and he stood by them
under the tree
while they ate.

They said to Abraham,

‘Where is Sarah, your wife?’

And Abraham said,

‘Here, in the tent.’

And one of them said,

‘I will surely return to you
this time next year,
and your wife Sarah
shall have a son.’

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Colossians 2.12-14, 3.1-2*
A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

When we were buried with Christ in baptism,
we were also raised with him,
through faith in the power of God
who raised Christ from the dead.

We had been dead in our trespasses,
and in the corruption of our flesh,
but God raised us to life, together with Christ,
when he forgave us all our trespasses,
and erased the record that stood against us
(with its legal demands),
setting it aside,
nailing it to the cross.

Now that you have been raised with Christ,
set your minds
not on the things of earth,
but on the things that are above,
where Christ is,
seated at the right hand of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 10.38-42*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus and his disciples

entered a certain village,
where a woman named Martha
welcomed him into her home.

Martha had a sister named Mary,

who sat at the Lord’s feet,
and listened to what he was saying.

But Martha was distracted by her many tasks;
so she came to Jesus, and said,

‘Lord, do you not care
that my sister has left me
to do all the work by myself?

Tell her
that she is to help me!’

But the Lord answered her,

‘Martha, Martha,
you are worried and distracted by many things.

There is need of only one thing.
Mary has chosen the better part,
which will not be taken away from her.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Psalm 15

SUNDAY 24 JULY

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 18.20-21,23-32*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The Lord said to Abraham,

‘How great is the outcry
against Sodom and Gomorrah,
and how very grave their sin!
I must go down and see
whether they have indeed done
according to the outcry that has come to me.’

Then Abraham approached and said,

‘Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?
Suppose there are fifty righteous in the city.
Will you sweep the whole place away,
including the fifty righteous who are in it?
Far be it from you to do such a thing,
to slay the righteous with the wicked!
Surely the Judge of all the earth will do what is just?’

And the Lord said,

‘If I find fifty righteous in the city,
I will forgive the whole place for their sake.’

Abraham answered,

‘Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord,
even though I am but dust and ashes.
Suppose there are only forty-five
righteous in the city?
Will you destroy the whole city
for the lack of five?’

And the Lord said,

‘I will not destroy the city
if I find forty-five righteous there.’

Again Abraham spoke to the Lord,

for forty, and thirty, and twenty, concluding:
‘Oh do not let the Lord be angry
if I speak just once more.
Suppose ten righteous are found there.’

The Lord answered,

‘For the sake of ten righteous
I will not destroy the city.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 138

SECOND READING – *Colossians 3.12-17*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved,

clothe yourselves with compassion,
kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another,

and if anyone has a complaint against another,
forgive each other.

Just as the Lord has forgiven you,

so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love,

which binds everything together
in perfect harmony.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

Always be thankful.

And let the word of Christ dwell richly within you.

Teach and encourage one another in all wisdom,
and with grateful hearts,
sing to God

with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

And whatever you do, in word or deed,

do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 11.1-13*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus was praying in a certain place,

and when he had finished,
one of his disciples said to him,
‘Lord, teach us to pray,
as John taught his disciples.’

Jesus said to them,

‘When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we ourselves

forgive everyone

who trespasses against us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.’

And Jesus said to them,

‘Suppose one of you has a friend,

and you go to him at midnight,

and you say to him,

“Friend, lend me three loaves of bread;

for a guest has arrived,

and I have nothing to set before him.”

And your friend answers from within,

“Do not bother me;

the door is already locked,

and we are all in bed;

I cannot get up and give you anything.”

I tell you,

even though he will not get up and give you anything

because he is your friend,

eventually, because of your persistence,

he will get up and give you whatever you need.

So I say to you: ask, and it will be given to you;

search, and you will find;

knock, and the door will be opened for you.

For everyone who asks receives,

and everyone who searches finds,

and for everyone who knocks,

the door will be opened.

If your child asks for a fish,

would you give a snake?

Or if your child asks for an egg,

would you give a scorpion?

If you then, who are evil,

know how to give good gifts to your children,

how much more

will the heavenly Father

give the Holy Spirit

to those who ask him!’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 31 JULY
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Ecclesiastes 1.12-14; 2.18-23*

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes.

When I, the Teacher,
was king over Israel
(in Jerusalem),
I applied my mind,
to seek, to search out,
and to understand, by wisdom,
all that is done under heaven.
And it is a tiresome burden
that God has given
to occupy humankind.
I saw all the deeds
that are done
under the sun;
and look,
this is what I saw:
that all is vanity,
and a chasing after wind.
I came to despise
all that I had done,
and all that I had laboured to achieve,
seeing that I must leave it all
to those who come after me -
not knowing
whether they will be wise,
or foolish.
Yet they will be master
over everything for which I laboured -
everything to which
I applied by my wisdom;
this also is vanity.
So I gave up my heart to despair
concerning all my toil,
because even one who has laboured
with wisdom and knowledge and skill
must leave it all
to be enjoyed by another
who did not work for it.
This also is vanity,
and a great injustice.
What do mortals have
for all the work they have done
under the sun?
For their days are full of pain,
and their tasks are a burden;
and even at night,
their minds do not rest;
this also is vanity.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 49.1-12

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 10.32-36*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

In those early days,
when you first received the light of Christ,
you endured great suffering,
with slanders, and persecutions.
And through it all, you stood side by side
with those who were suffering the same.
You had compassion on those who were in prison,
and you cheerfully accepted
the loss of your possessions,
knowing that you have a greater possession
that does not pass away.
Hold fast to this faith
with confidence,
for it brings a great reward.
Persevere in doing the will of God,
and you will receive
all that God has promised.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 12.13-21*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
Someone in the crowd said to Jesus,
'Teacher, tell my brother
to divide the family inheritance with me.'
But Jesus said to him,
'Who appointed me
to judge between you?'
And turning to the crowd, Jesus said
'Take care!
Be on your guard against all kinds of greed!
For the richness of your life
is not found
in the quantity of your possessions!'
And he told them a parable:
'The land of a rich man
produced a great harvest.
And he wondered,
"What shall I do,
for I have no place to store my crops?"
Then he said to himself,
"I know what I will do.
I will pull down my barns and build larger ones,
and there I will store
all my grain and all my possessions.
And having goods laid up
for many years,
I will relax, eat, drink, and be merry."
But God said to the rich man,
"You fool!
This very night
your life is being taken from you.
And the things you have acquired -
whose will they be?"
This is how it will be
for those who store up
treasure for themselves on earth,
but before God
have no riches at all.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 7 AUGUST

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 12.1-7*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The Lord said to Abram,
'Leave your country, and your people,
and your father's house,
and go to the land
that I will show you.

I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
and I will make your name great,
to be a blessing.

I will raise up those who speak well of you,
and bring down those who dishonour you;
and through you,
all the world shall be blessed.'

So Abram went,
as the Lord had told him.

He was seventy-five years old
when he departed from Haran.

He took his wife Sara,
and his nephew Lot,
and all their possessions,
and all the people of their household.

When they came to the land of Canaan,
they passed through the land
and its people
to a great oak in the centre of the land.

There the Lord appeared to Abram, saying,
'To your offspring, I will give this land.'

And Abram built an altar there, to the Lord.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 33.12-22

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 11.1, 8-10*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for;
and confidence, in things not yet seen.

It was by faith
that Abraham obeyed
when he was called to set out
for a place
that would become his inheritance.

It was by faith
that he set out,
not knowing where he was going.

It was by faith
that he stayed in that land,
as if in a foreign land,
living without any settled home,
as did Isaac and Jacob after him.

For by faith, they looked forward, in expectation,
to the city that has a true foundation,
whose architect and builder is God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 12.22-36*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples,
'Do not worry about your life,
what you will eat,
or about your body,
what you will wear.

There is more to life than food,
and there is more to the body
than clothing!

Consider the birds:
they do not plant, or harvest,
they have no storehouse or barn,
and yet God feeds them.

Surely you are more valuable
than the birds of the air!

Worrying will not add
a single hour
to your span of life.

Or consider the wild flowers,
how they grow:
they do not weave or sew,
and yet not even Solomon
in all his glory
was clothed
as finely as these!

If God clothes
the grass of the field
in this way -
grass which is alive today, and dried up tomorrow -
how much more
will God clothe you!

So have faith!
So do not be anxious
for what you will eat
or what you will drink.

Do not worry about these things,
for your Father knows that you need them.

Work instead
for the kingdom of God,
and all these other things
will be given to you as well.

Do not be afraid,
for your Father longs
to give you the kingdom.

Sell your possessions,
and give to those in need.

Put your heart
into storing up
treasure in heaven,
where nothing decays,
and no thief can come near.

And be ready to serve,
like those who are waiting faithfully
for their master to return.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 14 AUGUST

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 23.25-29*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

I have heard the false prophets,
who speak lies and delusions in my name,
says the Lord.

Like those who went before them,
they make my people
forget my name,
by the lies
that they tell one another.

Let the prophets who have delusions
tell their delusions -
but let the prophets who have my word
proclaim it with confidence.

They differ
like straw from grain;
for my word is powerful,
like fire,
or like a hammer
that breaks a rock.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 82

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 12.1-3*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Let us run with perseverance
the race that is set before us,
inspired by all the saints
who have gone before,
throwing off every burden
that would hold us back,
and looking to Jesus,
the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

Confident in the greater joy
that lay beyond,
Jesus endured the cross,
disregarding its shame;
and now he seated in glory
at the right hand of God.
May his patient endurance
of such hostility from sinners
be our inspiration,
that we may never grow weary
or lose heart.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 12.49-56*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I came to bring fire to the earth,
and how I long
to see it burning.

I have a baptism
to undergo,
and I am distressed
until it is completed.

You think
that I have come
to bring peace
to the earth.

But I tell you -
also division.

Even households
will be divided,
three against two, and two against three;
father against son,
mother against daughter,
members of the household against each other.

When you see clouds in the west,
you know that rain is on its way.
And when you see wind from the south,
you know there will be scorching heat.

You know how to interpret
the appearance of earth and sky,
and yet you do not know
how to interpret the present time!

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 21 AUGUST

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 58.9-14*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

If you remove the burdens
from from the weary amongst you,
and refrain from
pointing of the finger,
and speaking evil -
if you offer food to the hungry,
and attend to the needs of the suffering -
then your light
shall rise in the darkness,
your gloom
will become
like the brightness
in the middle of the day,
and when you cry for help,
the Lord will answer.
The Lord will guide you,
provide for you,
and strengthen you.
You will flourish like a garden
by a stream
that never runs dry.
You will rebuild the city from its ruins,
restoring its streets and its homes.
Then if you refrain from
trampling the sabbath -
from pursuing your own interests
on God's holy day -
if you call the sabbath 'a delight',
and honour it,
not going your own ways,
or serving your own interests,
or pursuing your own affairs,
then you shall find true joy in the Lord,
and in all the gifts
the Lord has given.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 103

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 12.14,22-24,28-29*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Pursue peace with everyone,
and holiness,
without which none can see the Lord.
For we have come to Mount Zion,
the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.
We have come to the place
where angels, beyond number, gather to rejoice;
where those who have gone before
are enrolled into heaven,
and the spirits of the righteous
are made perfect.
We have come to God, the judge of all,
and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant,
and to redemption by his blood.
As we enter into a kingdom
that cannot be shaken,
let us offer our worship
with reverence, thanksgiving, and holy fear,
for our God is a consuming fire.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 13.10-17*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues
on the sabbath.
A woman was there, who had a spirit
that had crippled her for eighteen years.
She was bent over,
and unable to stand up straight.
When Jesus saw her,
he called her over to him, and said to her,
'Woman, you are set free from your illness.'
As he spoke, he laid a hand upon her,
and immediately, she stood fully upright,
and began praising God.
But the leader of the synagogue
was indignant
because Jesus had cured on the sabbath.
The leader of the synagogue
kept saying to the crowd,
'There are six days
on which work should be done.
Let healing be done on those six days,
not on the sabbath.'
The Lord said,
'You hypocrites!
Every one of you, on the sabbath,
unties your ox or your donkey,
and leads it to water.
Should not this woman,
a daughter of Abraham,
bound by Satan for eighteen years,
be set free from her bondage
on the sabbath day?'
His opponents were put to shame;
and the entire crowd was rejoicing
at the wonderful things
that he was doing.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 28 AUGUST

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING - *Deuteronomy 16.9-12*

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

From the time when the first of the harvest is cut,
you shall count seven weeks.

Then you shall keep the Festival of Weeks
to the Lord your God,
making a freewill-offering
in proportion to the blessing that you have received
from the Lord your God.

Then you shall celebrate before the Lord your God:
you,

and your sons and daughters,
and your servants,
and the descendants of Levi resident in your towns,
and the foreigners,
and the orphans,
and the widows,
who are amongst you.

Celebrate at the place
that the Lord your God will choose
as a dwelling for his name.

Remember that you were a slave in Egypt,
and diligently observe these laws.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 119.33-40

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 13.1-8, 15-16*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Keep on loving one another
as brothers as sisters in Christ.

Show hospitality also
to the foreigner, the stranger and the outsider,
for by doing this,
some have hosted prophets and angels
without knowing it.

Remember those who are in prison,
as though you were in prison alongside them.
Remember those who are being tortured,
as though you yourselves were being tortured.

Be content with what you have.

Keep your lives free from the love of money;
and let the marriage bed kept undefiled.

God has said,

'I will never leave you, nor forsake you',
so we can say with confidence,
'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.'

Remember your leaders,
who spoke the word of God to you.

Consider the outcome of their way of life,
and imitate their faith.

Jesus Christ is the same
yesterday, today, and for ever.

Through him, then,
let us continually offer to God,
with our voices,
a sacrifice of praise;
and be diligent in doing good,
sharing all that we have,
for this also
is a worthy offering.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 14.1, 7-14*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

One sabbath day,
Jesus was dining, as a guest,
in the house
of a leader of the Pharisees.

When Jesus noticed
how the guests chose the places of honour,
he told them a parable.

'When you are invited by someone
to a wedding banquet,
do not sit down at the place of honour,
in case someone
more distinguished than you
has been invited by your host;
and the host who invited both of you
may come and say to you,

"Give this person your place,"

and then in disgrace
you would have to move
to the lowest place.

But when you are invited,
go and sit down at the lowest place,
so that when your host comes,
he may say to you,
"Friend, move up higher";

then you will be honoured
in the presence of all
who sit at the table with you.

For all who exalt themselves
will be humbled,
and those who humble themselves
will be exalted.'

And to the one who had invited him,
Jesus said:

'When you give a lunch or dinner,
do not invite your friends, or your brothers,
or your relatives, or rich neighbours,
in case they may invite you in return,
and you would be repaid.

But when you give a banquet,
invite the poor, the crippled,
the lame, and the blind;
and you will be blessed,
because they cannot repay you;
and you will be repaid
at the resurrection of the righteous.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Deuteronomy 30.15-20*

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

I have set before you today
life and prosperity,
or death and adversity.
If you obey the commandments
of the Lord your God
that I set before you today,
by loving the Lord your God,
walking in God's ways,
and observing
these commandments, laws and decrees,
then you shall live and become numerous,
and the Lord your God will bless you
in the land that you are entering to possess.
But if your heart turns away
and you do not hear,
and you are led astray
to bow down to other gods, and serve them,
I declare to you today
that you shall perish;
you shall not live long in the land
that you are crossing the Jordan
to enter and possess.
I call heaven and earth
to witness against you today
that I have set before you
life or death,
blessings or curses.
Choose life
so that you and your descendants may live,
loving, trusting, and holding fast
to the Lord your God,
for this means life to you,
and length of days;
so that you may live in the land
that the Lord promised to your ancestors,
to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 1

SECOND READING – *Philemon 10,12-17*

A reading from the letter of Paul to Philemon.

I appeal to you for Onesimus,
who has become like a son to me
during my imprisonment.
In sending him
back to you,
I am sending my own heart.
I wanted to keep him with me,
so that he might be of service to me
during my imprisonment for the gospel;
but I preferred to do nothing
without your consent,
in order that your good deed
might be voluntary,
and not out of necessity.

Perhaps he was separated from you
for a while
so that you might have him back
for ever,
no longer as a servant,
but as a brother -
both as a fellow human being,
and as a brother in the Lord.
So I ask you to welcome him
as you would welcome me.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 14.25-33*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Large crowds were now following Jesus.

He turned to them, and said,

'Whoever comes to me,
to be my disciple,
must be ready to forsake
father and mother,
wife and children,
brothers and sisters,
and even life itself.

Whoever wishes to be my disciple
must be ready to carry their cross
and follow me.

If you intend to build a tower,
you first sit down
and estimate the cost,
to see whether you have enough
to complete it.

Otherwise,
when you have laid a foundation,
and you are then unable to finish,
all who see it will mock,
saying, "They began to build,
and were not able to finish."

And you know that a king,
going to war,
will first sit down and consider
whether he is able,
with ten thousand,
to oppose the one
who comes against him
with twenty thousand.

If he cannot,
then while the other is still far away,
he will send a delegation
to ask the terms for peace.

In the same way,
you cannot be my disciple
unless you are ready
to give up
all that you have.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Exodus 32.7-8,10-11,13-14*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

At the top of Mount Sinai,
the Lord said to Moses,
'Go down at once,
for your people -
the people you led
out of the land of Egypt -
have corrupted themselves.
They have been quick to turn aside
from the way that I commanded them.
They have cast for themselves
an image of a calf,
and have worshipped it,
and sacrificed to it,
even declaring that this is the god
who brought them out of the land of Egypt.
Now let me alone,
so that my wrath
may burn hot against them
and I may consume them;
and of you alone
I will make a great nation.'
But Moses pleaded with the Lord his God, saying,
'O Lord, why does your wrath
burn hot against your people,
whom you brought
out of the land of Egypt
with great power
and with a mighty hand?
Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants,
how you swore to them, by your own self,
that you would multiply their descendants
like the stars of heaven,
and give them this land
as their inheritance for ever.'
And the Lord drew back
from the disaster
that he had planned
to bring upon them.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 51.1-10

SECOND READING – *1 Timothy 1.12-17*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to Timothy.

I give thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord,
for he has appointed me to his service,
he has judged me faithful,
and he has given me the strength to endure,
even though I was formerly
a persecutor, blasphemer, and aggressor.
But I received mercy
because I had acted
in ignorance and unbelief,
and the grace of our Lord
overflowed for me,
with the faith, and the love,
that are in Christ Jesus.

The saying is sure,
and worthy of acceptance by all:
that Christ Jesus
came into the world
to save sinners.
I was surely the worst of them all,
and for that very reason,
I received mercy,
so that in me (the worst of sinners),
Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience,
making me an example
to all those who would come to believe in him,
and in so doing, receive eternal life.
To the King of the ages,
immortal, invisible, the only God,
be honour and glory for ever.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 15.1-10*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
Tax-collectors and sinners
were amongst those
who gathered around Jesus
to listen to him,
and the Pharisees and the scribes
were grumbling and saying,
'This fellow welcomes sinners
and eats with them.'
So Jesus told them this parable:
'Which one of you,
having a hundred sheep,
and losing one of them,
does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness
and go after the one that is lost
until you find it?
When you have found it,
you lay it on your shoulders and rejoice,
and when you come home,
you call together your friends and neighbours,
saying "Rejoice with me,
for I have found my sheep
that was lost."
In the same way, I tell you,
there will be more joy in heaven
over one sinner who repents
than over ninety-nine righteous persons
who need no repentance.
Or what woman, having ten silver coins,
if she loses one of them,
does not light a lamp,
sweep the house,
and search carefully
until she finds it?
When she has found it,
she calls together her friends and neighbours,
saying, "Rejoice with me,
for I have found the silver coin that I had lost."
In the same way, I tell you,
there is joy in the presence of the angels of God
over one sinner who repents.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Amos 8.4-7

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

Hear this,

you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin
the poor of the land!

You long for the new moon festival to be over

so that you may return to selling grain.

You long for the sabbath to be over,

so that you may return to selling wheat.

You make dishonest measures,

balances, and weights.

You buy the poor for silver,

and the needy

for a pair of sandals,

and you sell

the sweepings of the wheat.

The Lord has sworn,

by the pride of Jacob:

Surely I will never forget your deeds.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 113

SECOND READING – 1 Timothy 2.1-8

A reading from the first letter of Paul to Timothy.

I urge that supplications,

prayers, intercessions,

and thanksgivings

be made for everyone:

including for kings

and all who are in authority,

so that we may lead

a quiet and peaceable life

in all godliness and dignity.

This is right, and is acceptable

in the sight of God our Saviour,

who longs for everyone to be saved

and to come

to the knowledge of the truth.

There is one God,

and one mediator

between God and humankind -

Christ Jesus, himself human,

who gave himself as a ransom for all.

For this I was appointed

a herald and an apostle,

a teacher of the Gentiles

in faith and truth.

And I long that in every place,

everyone will be able to pray,

lifting up holy hands,

without argument or dissent.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 16.1-13

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus told this parable to the disciples.

‘There was a rich man,

whose manager was accused

of wasting his possessions.

So the rich man summoned the manager,

and said to him,

“What is this that I hear about you?

Finalise all your accounts,

because you cannot be my manager any longer.”

The manager said to himself,

“What will I do,

now that my master

is taking my employment away from me?

I am not strong enough to dig;

and I would be too ashamed to beg.

I need to decide what to do,

so that when I am dismissed as manager,

people will still welcome me into their homes.”

So he summoned his master’s debtors, one by one.

He asked the first,

“What do you owe my master?”

And the answer was,

“One hundred jugs of olive oil.”

So the manager said to him,

“Take your account, sit down quickly,

and change it to fifty.”

Then the manager asked another,

“And how much do you owe?”

And the answer was,

“One hundred containers of wheat.”

The manager said to him,

“Take your account, and change it to eighty.”

And the rich man was impressed

by the dishonest manager,

because he acted shrewdly.

See how the children of this age

are more shrewd than the children of light

in dealing with their own generation!

So I tell you, use worldly wealth

to make friends for yourselves,

so that you have friends that will still welcome you

into their homes

when all your worldly wealth is gone.

For whoever is faithful with minor things

will be faithful also with greater things;

and whoever is unfaithful in minor things

will be unfaithful also with greater things.

Do what is right with worldly wealth,

and you will be entrusted with true riches.

Do what is right for others,

and they will do what is right for you.

You cannot serve two masters;

for either you will hate the one, and love the other,

or you will be devoted to the one,

and despise the other.

In the same way,

you cannot serve

both God and worldly wealth.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MICHAELMAS

Sunday 25 September

Whittington Patronal Festival
of Saint Michael the Archangel
is celebrated with a United Benefice Service
on the last Sunday in September
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Exodus 3.1b-6, 9-15*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses led his flock beyond the wilderness,
and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.
There the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses,
in a flame of fire, out of a bush.
Moses looked, and the bush was blazing,
yet it was not consumed.
Moses said, 'I must turn aside,
and look at this great sight,
and see why the bush is not burned up.'
When the Lord saw
that Moses had turned aside to see,
God called to Moses out of the bush:
'Moses, Moses!'
Moses said, 'Here I am.'
And the Lord said, 'Come no closer!
Remove the sandals from your feet,
for the place on which you are standing
is holy ground.
I am the God of your father,
the God of Abraham,
the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob.'
And Moses hid his face,
for he was afraid
to look at God.
Then the Lord said,
'The cry of the Israelites has come to me;
I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them.
So come, I will send you to Pharaoh,
to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.'
But Moses said to God,
'Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh,
and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?'
God said, 'I will be with you;
and this shall be the sign for you,
that it is I who sent you:
when you have brought the people out of Egypt,
you shall worship God on this mountain.'
But Moses said to God,
'If I come to the Israelites and say to them,
"The God of your ancestors has sent me to you",
and they ask me, "What is his name?"
what shall I say to them?'
And God said to Moses, 'I am who I am,
and this is my name, for ever,
my title for all generations.
You shall say to the Israelites,
"I am' has sent me to you -
the Lord, the God of your ancestors,
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob".'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Timothy 6.6-12a, 17-19*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to Timothy.
There is great gain in godliness
combined with contentment.
We brought nothing into the world,
and we can take nothing out of it,
so if we have food and clothing,
let us be content with these.
Those who want to be rich
fall into temptation, and are trapped
by many senseless and harmful desires
that plunge people into ruin and destruction.
For the love of wealth
is the root of all manner of evil,
and in their eagerness to be rich
some have wandered away from the faith
and pierced themselves with many pains.
You, seeking to be godly, should flee from all this,
to pursue righteousness, godliness,
faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.
Work to be strong in the faith,
taking hold of the eternal life
to which you were called.
As for those who, in the present age, are rich,
command them not to be haughty,
or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches,
but rather to set their hopes on God
who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.
They are to do good, to be rich in good works,
and to be generous, and ready to share,
thereby storing up for themselves
the treasure of a good foundation for the future,
and knowing the life that is truly life.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 24.1-9*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
On the first day of the week, at early dawn,
the women who had accompanied Jesus
came to the tomb,
bringing the spices that they had prepared.
They found the stone rolled away from the tomb,
but when they went in, they did not find the body.
While they were perplexed about this,
suddenly two men in dazzling clothes
stood beside them.
The women were terrified
and bowed their faces to the ground,
but the men said to them,
'Why do you look for the living amongst the dead?
He is not here, but has risen.
Remember how he told you,
while he was still in Galilee,
that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners,
and be crucified, and on the third day, rise again.'
Then they remembered Jesus' words,
and returning from the tomb,
they told all this to the eleven
and to all the others.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday 2 October

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Exodus 16.2-4, 9-15

A reading from the book of Exodus.

The Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron:

'If only we had died,
by the hand of the Lord,
in the land of Egypt,
where we ate our fill of meat and bread;
but you have brought us out into this wilderness
to die of hunger.'

Then the Lord said to Moses,

'I am going to rain down bread from heaven for you;
and each day, the people shall go out,
and gather enough for that day.

In this way I will test them,
whether they will follow my instruction or not.'

Moses said to Aaron,

'Say to the whole gathered people of Israel,
"Draw near to the Lord,
for the Lord has heard your complaining."

And as Aaron spoke to the people,
they looked towards the wilderness,
and the glory of the Lord
appeared in a cloud.

The Lord said to Moses,

'Say to the people,
"At twilight you shall eat meat,
and in the morning, you shall have your fill of bread;
then you shall know
that I am the Lord your God."

In the evening,
quails came up and covered the camp;
and in the morning
there was a layer of dew around the camp.

When the layer of dew lifted,
there on the surface of the wilderness
was a fine flaky substance,
as fine as frost on the ground.

When the Israelites saw it,
they said to one another, 'What is it?'
for they did not know what it was.

Moses said to them,
'It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 78.23-29

SECOND READING – Philippians 4.4-9

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Rejoice in the Lord always.

Again, I say, Rejoice.

Let your gentleness
be known to everyone.

The Lord is near.

Do not worry about anything,
but in everything,
by prayer and supplication,
with thanksgiving,
let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds
in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved,
whatever is true, whatever is honourable,
whatever is just, whatever is pure,
whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable,
if there is any excellence,
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.

Whatever you have learned and received
from all that I have said and done,
put this into practice also.

And the God of peace
will be with you.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 6.27-35

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Jesus said,

'Do not work for the food that perishes,
but work for the food
that endures for eternal life,
which the Son of Man will give you -
for it is on the Son of Man
that God the Father
has set his seal.'

They said to him,

'What must we do
to be doing the work of God?'

Jesus said,

'This is the work of God:
that you believe in the one
that God has sent.'

So they said to him,

'What sign are you going to give us,
so that we may see it, and believe you?
What work are you performing?
Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness;
it says, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

Jesus said to them,

'It was not Moses
who gave you the bread from heaven;
it is my Father
who gives you the true bread from heaven.
The bread of God
is that which comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.'

They said to him,

'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them,

'I am the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me
will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me
will never be thirsty.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – 2 Kings 5.1-3, 5b, 9-15b

A reading from the second book of Kings.

Naaman was the commander
of the army of Aram.

He was highly respected,
because by him
the Lord had given victory to Aram.

And yet this mighty warrior
suffered from leprosy.

Now the army of Aram,
on one of their raids,
had taken a young girl captive
from the land of Israel,
and she was now a servant
to Naaman's wife.

This servant girl
told her mistress
that there was a prophet in Samaria
who could cure Naaman of his leprosy.

So with the consent of the king,
Naaman travelled
to see the prophet in Samaria.

When Naaman arrived,
with his horses and chariots,
and silver, and gold, and fine garments,
at the entrance of the place,
the prophet Elisha
sent out a messenger, saying,
'Go, wash in the river Jordan seven times,
and your flesh shall be restored
and you shall be clean.'

But Naaman became angry, saying,
'Surely he could at least have come out of his house,
and called on the name of the Lord his God,
and waved his hand over the leprosy, to cure it!
We have rivers of our own in Aram
as good as any in Israel!'
And he turned to leave in anger.

But his servants approached and said to him,
'Sir, if the prophet had commanded you
to do something difficult,
would you not have done it?
So surely you can do as the prophet commands
when all he says is
"Wash and be clean".'

So Naaman went
and washed seven times
in the river Jordan,
as Elisha, the prophet of God, had instructed.

And Naaman's flesh was restored
like the flesh of a child,
and he was clean.

Then Naaman returned, with all his servants,
and stood before Elisha, and said,
'Now I know
that there is no God
in all the earth
except in Israel.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 111

SECOND READING – 2 Timothy 3.11b-17

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

I have endured so many persecutions,
and yet the Lord has rescued me
from all of them.

All who seek to live a godly life in Christ Jesus
will be persecuted.

Wickedness and deception
will increase.

But hold fast
to all that you have learned
and firmly believed,
trusting those who taught you,
and trusting in the holy scriptures
that you have known from childhood,
which gave you the wisdom
to be ready
for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ.

All scriptures, inspired by God,
are useful not only
for teaching and learning,
but for growing in righteousness,
strengthening and equipping us
for all that God calls us to do.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 17.11-19

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

On the way to Jerusalem,
Jesus was going through the region
between Samaria and Galilee.

In one village,
ten lepers approached him,
keeping their distance,
and calling out,
'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'

When Jesus saw them,
he said to them,
'Go and show yourselves to the priests.'

And as they went,
they were made clean.

One of them,
when he saw that he was healed,
turned back,
praising God with a loud voice.

He fell at Jesus' feet,
and thanked him.

And he was a Samaritan.

Jesus said,
'Were there not ten made clean?
Where are the other nine?
Has none returned
to give glory to God
except this foreigner?'

And he said to the Samaritan,
'Get up, and go on your way;
your faith has made you well.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Genesis 32.22-30*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

While it was still dark,
they got up,
and Jacob led
his two wives,
his two maids,
and his eleven children,
to the place
where they could ford the Jabbok river.

Jacob sent them all across,
ahead of him,
carrying everything they had,
until Jacob was left alone.

And there,
someone wrestled with Jacob
until daybreak.

Still failing to overpower Jacob,
he struck Jacob on the hip,
putting Jacob's hip out of joint,
and said to Jacob,
'Let me go,
for the day is breaking.'

But Jacob said,
'I will not let you go,
unless you bless me.'

The one who had been wrestling with Jacob
asked Jacob's name,
and then said,
'You shall no longer be called Jacob,
but Israel
(which means, "wrestling with God"),
for you have wrestled
with God,
and with mortals,
and have prevailed.'

Jacob said,
'Please tell me your name.'

But the one who had been wrestling with Jacob
said, 'Why would you ask my name?'
and blessed Jacob.

So Jacob called the place Peniel
(which means, "the face of God"),
saying,
'I have seen God face to face,
and yet my life is preserved.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 121

SECOND READING – *2 Timothy 4.2-5*

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

Proclaim the message;
and be persistent,
whether the time is favourable or not.

Argue, debate,
teach, and encourage,
with the utmost patience,
for the time is coming
when people will no longer listen
to sound teaching,
but having itching ears,
will choose to take instruction
from teachers
who suit their own purposes,
turning away from the truth,
and chasing after fantasies.

So fulfil your ministry
by keeping a clear mind in every situation,
enduring through every hardship,
and proclaiming the good news!
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 18.1-8a*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus told this parable to his disciples,
about the need to pray,
and not lose heart.

'In a city,
there was a judge,
who neither feared God
nor cared for the people.
In the same city,
there was a widow,
who kept coming to the judge, and saying,
"Grant me justice against my opponent."

At first, the judge refused;
but later he said to himself,
"I have no fear of God
and no respect for anyone,
but because this widow keeps bothering me,
I will grant her justice,
before she wears me out
with her constant demands."

And surely, so much more,
God will grant justice,
and quickly,
for God's chosen ones,
when they call out to God
night and day.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 14.7-8a,21,22b*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Our offences cry out to you, O Lord,
and our trespasses are many,
for we have rebelled against you.

Even so, help us, O Lord,
for the sake of your name,
O hope of Israel,
our saviour in time of trouble.

Do not reject us,
or dishonour your glorious throne,
but remember the covenant you made.

We set our hope on you,
O Lord our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 84.1-7

SECOND READING – *2 Timothy 4.6-8, 17-18*

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

For my part,
I am already
being poured out
like an offering,
and the time for my departure has come.

I have fought the good fight.
I have finished the race.
I have kept the faith.

Having been reconciled with God,
what lies ahead
is to receive the crown
which the Lord,
the righteous judge,
will present to me
on that day -

and not only to me
but to all
who have longed
for the Lord's appearing.

The Lord has stood by me,
rescued me,
and strengthened me,
so that the message
might be fully proclaimed
to the Gentiles.

And the Lord will surely protect me
from every assault,
and deliver me safely
to his heavenly kingdom.
To the Lord be the glory
for ever and ever!

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 18.9-14*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus told this parable
to some
who had great confidence
in their own righteousness,
and regarded others
with contempt.

'Two men
went up to the temple
to pray.

One was a Pharisee,
the other was a tax-collector.

The Pharisee,
standing by himself, said:
"O God, I thank you
that I am not like other people -
all thieves and adulterers -
or even like this tax-collector!
For I fast twice a week,
and give a tenth of all my income!"

The tax-collector,
standing far off,
would not even look up to heaven,
but beat his breast, and said,
"God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"

I tell you,
it is the tax-collector,
not the Pharisee,
who returned home
righteous in God's eyes;
for all who raise themselves up
will be brought down,
and all who remain humble
will be raised up.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

4 BEFORE ADVENT – ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

Sunday 30 October

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 25.6-9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Here on this holy mountain,

the Lord of Hosts
will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food
and fine wine.

The Lord will destroy

the shroud
that is cast over the peoples,
the shadow
that hangs over the nations.

The Lord God

will swallow up death for ever,
and wipe all tears away.

And the disgrace of the Lord's people

will be taken away.

They will say on that day,

'We trusted in God to save us.

And now we rejoice,

for the day of the Lord's salvation is here.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 24

SECOND READING – *2 Thessalonians 1.1-4, 11-12*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Thessalonians.

From Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy.

To the church in Thessalonika.

Grace to you, and peace,

from God our Father,
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God

for you, always,
brothers and sisters,
for your strong and growing faith,
and for the love you have
for one another.

Indeed we tell others of your example

of faith remaining steadfast
in the face of
hardships and persecutions.

We also pray for you,

asking that God will make you
worthy of your calling;

that God may powerfully fulfil

your every desire
to do good,

and strengthen you

in every work of faith.

In this way,

may the name of our Lord Jesus
be glorified in you.

And may you be glorified in him,

by the grace of our God,

and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 19.1-10*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Jesus was passing through Jericho

on his way to Jerusalem.

Zacchaeus,

a wealthy chief

tax-collector,

was trying to see who Jesus was,

but because he was short in stature,

he could not see

through the crowds.

So he ran ahead,

and climbed into a tree

on the route

that Jesus was following.

When Jesus reached the place,

he looked up, and said,

'Zacchaeus,

come down at once,

for I must stay at your house today.'

So Zacchaeus

came down quickly

from the tree,

and was delighted

to welcome Jesus

into his home.

All who saw this

began to complain,

saying that Jesus

had gone

to be the guest

of someone

completely unworthy.

But Zacchaeus

stood before Jesus, and said,

'My Lord,

half of my possessions

I will give to the poor;

and if I have cheated anyone of anything,

I will pay back four times over.'

And Jesus said,

'Today, salvation has come to this house,

because this man also

is a son of Abraham,

and the Son of Man came

to seek out

and to save the lost.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

3 BEFORE ADVENT

Sunday 6 November

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – Job 19.23-27a

A reading from the book of Job.

Let this be written down -

recorded in a book,
and engraved in stone:

'I know that my Redeemer lives.

And I know that the day will come
when he will stand upon the earth.

And I know

that when the suffering
of this present age
is ended,

with my own eyes

I shall see God."

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 17

SECOND READING – 2 Thessalonians 2.16 - 3.5

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Thessalonians.

God our Father,

and the Lord Jesus Christ,

in their love for us,

have given us confidence and trust
for the future.

I pray that they may now

give you peace in your hearts,

and strengthen you

in every good word that you speak,

and in every good work that you do.

And I ask you also,

my brothers and sisters,

to pray for us.

Pray that the word of the Lord

may continue to spread,

so that God may be glorified everywhere,

just as God is glorified amongst you.

Pray also

that we may be protected

from any who would do us harm,

for not all have faith.

But the Lord is faithful.

And we are confident

that as you continue

in all that we taught you,

the Lord will strengthen you,

and protect you from evil,

and lead you on

in the love of God

and in faithfulness to Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 19.41-48

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

As Jesus approached Jerusalem,

and saw the city,

he wept over it, saying,

'O Jerusalem,

if only you had recognised

the things that make for peace!

But now they are hidden from your eyes!

And the day will come

when your enemies

will surround you on every side!

They will crush you to the ground -

you, and your children within you -

and there will not be one stone

left upon another,

because you did not recognise the time

when God would call you to account.'

Then he entered the temple

and began to drive out

those who were trading there,

saying,

'Scripture says

"My house shall be a house of prayer" -

but you have made it a den of thieves!'

Every day, he was teaching in the temple;

and the chief priests, the scribes,

and the leaders of the people,

kept looking for a way to destroy him;

but they did not find

anything they could do,

because the people were eager

to hear his every word.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

2 BEFORE ADVENT

Sunday 13 November

Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *Malachi 4.1-2a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi.

See, the day is coming, says the Lord,
when the arrogant,
and all evildoers,
will be burned up like stubble.

But for you,
who honour my name:
on you,
the sun will rise -
the sun of righteousness.

There will be healing
in its light,
and you shall play
like young calves in the field.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 98

SECOND READING – *2 Thessalonians 3.6-13*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Thessalonians.

My brothers and sisters,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
keep away from those
who are being idle and disruptive,
departing from the tradition
that you received from us.

We were not idle
when we were with you.

We did not eat anyone's bread
without paying for it.

We worked night and day,
so that we might not be a burden
to any of you.

We may have had the right
to ask you to support us,
but we preferred
to set an example
for you to imitate.

Indeed, even when we were with you,
we made it a rule
those those who expect to eat
should be willing to work!

And yet we hear
that some amongst you
are being both idle and disruptive -
not working themselves,
and interfering
with everybody else's work.

Our instruction and appeal to them,
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
is to do their work quietly,
and to earn their own living!

Brothers and sisters,
never be weary
in doing what is right.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 21.5-19*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Some of the disciples
were admiring the temple,
with its fine stones,
and many gifts and offerings.

Jesus said,
'The day will come
when not one of these stones
will be left upon another.
They will all be thrown down.'

The disciples asked Jesus,
'When will this be?
And what will be the sign
to show that this is about to take place?'

Jesus said,
'Beware that you are not led astray.
Many will come in my name, saying,
"I am the one," and "the time is near".
Do not follow them.

And when you hear of wars and rebellions,
do not be afraid,
for these things must happen,
but they do not mean
that the end is near.

Nation will rise against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom.
There will be earthquakes,
famines, and plagues;
and terrifying sights in the sky.

Even before all this,
they will arrest you
and persecute you.

They will hand you over
to courts, and prisons,
and to kings, and governors,
because of my name.

There,
you will be my witnesses.

Do not worry in advance
about your defence,
for I will give you words,
and a wisdom,
that no one
will be able
to oppose or contradict.

You will be betrayed
even by parents, brothers,
relatives, and friends.

Some of you
will be put to death.

But even when you are hated by all
because of my name,
you will come to no harm,
for by your patient endurance,
you will gain your soul.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

CHRIST THE KING
Last Sunday before Advent
Sunday 20 November
Readings for Year C

FIRST READING – *2 Samuel 5.1-3*

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

All the tribes of Israel

came to David at Hebron,
and said,

‘Look, we are your own flesh and blood.

Even while Saul has been king over us,
you have been the one
who has led us out
and brought us in.

And we know that the Lord has spoken to you,
declaring that you will be
the shepherd and leader
of Israel.’

So King David

made a covenant with them,
at Hebron, before the Lord,
and they anointed David
king over Israel.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 46

SECOND READING – *Colossians 1.13-20*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

God has rescued us

from the power of darkness
and has transferred us
into the kingdom
of God’s beloved Son.

It is here in Christ
that we find
the forgiveness of sins.

And it is to Christ
that we now belong.

Christ is the image
of the invisible God;
and the firstborn,
from before all creation.

In Christ, all things
in heaven and on earth
were created,
both the visible and the invisible
(the thrones, rulers, dominions and powers).

All things were created through Christ,
and for Christ.

Christ existed before all things,
and it is in Christ
that all things hold together.

Christ is also the head
of the body which is the church -
its beginning,
as the firstborn from the dead.

Christ has first place in everything,
for in Christ,
all the fullness of God
is pleased to dwell,
and through Christ,
God reconciles all things
in heaven and on earth
to God,
making peace
through the sacrifice of the cross.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 23.33-43*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

When they came to the place
that is called The Skull,
they crucified Jesus there,
with the criminals,
one on his right, and one on his left.

Then Jesus said,
‘Father, forgive them;
for they do not know
what they are doing.’

And they cast lots
to divide his clothing;
and the people stood by, watching.

But the leaders mocked him, saying,
‘He saved others;
let him save himself,
if he is the Messiah,
God’s chosen one!’

The soldiers also taunted him,
offering him bitter wine,
and saying, ‘If you are
the King of the Jews,
save yourself!’

There was also an inscription over him,
which read,
‘This is the King of the Jews.’

One of the criminals crucified with him
also mocked him, saying,
‘Are you not the Messiah?
Save yourself and us!’

But the other said to him,
‘Have you no fear of God?
And we are being punished for our crimes,
but this man has done nothing wrong.’

Then he said,
‘Jesus, remember me
when you come into your kingdom.’

Jesus replied,
‘Truly I tell you,
today you will be with me in Paradise.’
This is the Gospel of the Lord.