

LECTIONARY 2021

Part 2

from

Easter Day 4 April 2021

to

Christ the King 21 November 2021

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

EASTER DAY - Sunday 4 April

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 25.6-9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

On this holy mountain,
the Lord of hosts
will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food and fine wine.
The Lord will take away
the cloud of darkness
that hangs over peoples and nations.
The Lord will destroy the power of death for ever.
The Lord God will wipe away
the tears from all faces,
and will take away the disgrace of the people
from all the earth;
for the Lord has spoken.
It will be said, on that day,
'Truly, this is the Lord our God,
in whom we trusted.
Let us be glad and rejoice,
for the day of our salvation has come.'
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 118.15-25

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 15.1-10a*

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

I would remind you, brothers and sisters,
of the good news that I proclaimed to you -
the good news that you received,
the good news in which you stand,
the good news in which are saved:
that Christ died for our sins
(in accordance with the scriptures);
that he was buried;
and that he was raised up on the third day
(in accordance with the scriptures);
that he appeared then to Cephas,
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,
then 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 – *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 he 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 11 April

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Acts 8.26-38

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

An angel of the Lord said to Philip,
'Get up and go toward the south,
to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.'
(This is a wilderness road.)

So Philip got up and went.

Now there was an Ethiopian,
a eunuch, who was the court official
of the queen of the Ethiopians
who was in charge of her entire treasury.

He had come to Jerusalem to worship,
and was returning home.

Seated in his chariot,
he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

The Spirit said to Philip,
'Go over to the chariot and join it.'

So Philip ran up to it
and heard the court official
reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Philip asked,
'Do you understand what you are reading?'

He replied,
'How shall I understand,
unless someone guides me?'

And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.
Now the passage from Isaiah that he was reading
was this:

'Like a sheep, he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb, silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.
In his humiliation, justice was denied him.
Who can speak of his posterity?
For his life is taken away from the earth.'

He asked Philip,
'Is the prophet saying this about himself,
or about someone else?'

And starting with this scripture,
Philip made known to him
the good news about Jesus.

As they were going along the road,
they came to some water;
and the court official said, 'Look, here is water!
What is to prevent me from being baptised?'

He commanded the chariot to stop,
and both of them went down into the water,
and Philip baptised him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 133

SECOND READING – 1 John 1.1-5

A reading from the first letter of John.

We write to you, with great joy,
concerning the eternal Word of Life,
which existed from the beginning,
and which now, we have not only heard,
but have seen with our eyes,
and touched with our hands.

This eternal life, that was with the Father,
has been revealed, and we have seen it,
and declare it now to you.

We declare to you what we have seen and heard,
so that you may be in fellowship
not only with us,
but with the Father,
and with his Son Jesus Christ.

This is the message that we have received,
and now proclaim to you: that God is light,
and in God, there is no darkness at all.

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.'

And 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 retain 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 gathered again,
and Thomas was with them.

And though the doors were locked,
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
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 18 April

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Acts 10.9-23

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

At about midday,

Peter went up on the roof to pray.

He became hungry, and wanted something to eat;
and while it was being prepared,
he fell into a trance.

He saw the heaven opened,
and something like a large sheet coming down,
being lowered to the ground by its four corners.

In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures,
and reptiles, and birds of the air.

Then he heard a voice saying,

‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’

But Peter said,

‘By no means, Lord;
for I have never eaten anything
that is profane or unclean.’

The voice said to him again, a second time,

‘What God has made clean,
you must not call profane.’

This happened three times,
then the vision was suddenly taken
back up into heaven.

Now while Peter was greatly puzzled
about what to make of the vision that he had seen,
three men arrived,
having been sent by Cornelius of Caesarea.

They were standing by the gate, calling out,
asking whether Simon Peter was staying there.

While Peter was still thinking about the vision,
the Spirit said to him,

‘These three men are searching for you.

Now get up, go down,
and go with them without hesitation;
for I have sent them.’

So Peter went down to meet them, and said,

‘I am the one you are looking for;
what is the reason for your journey?’

They answered,

‘The centurion Cornelius
is an upright man, who honours God,
and is respected by the whole Hebrew nation.
He was directed, by a vision of an angel,
to send for you, to come to his house,
and to hear what you have to say.’

Peter invited them in, and gave them lodging;
and the next day,

Peter, and a small group of believers,
set off with them, towards the house of Cornelius.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 148

SECOND READING – 1 John 1.6 - 2.2

A reading from the first letter of John.

We cannot say

that we have fellowship with God
if we are walking in darkness;

but if we walk in the light,
we have fellowship with God and one another,
and the blood of Jesus
cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;
indeed we make God a liar,
and God’s word is not in us;

but if we confess our sins,
God, who is faithful and just,
will forgive us our sins,
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I will always warn you away from sin -

and yet if anyone does sin,
we have an advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ the righteous;

and he is the atoning sacrifice for sin,
for us and for all the world.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 24.36-48

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

While the eleven, and their companions,
were talking about what they had heard,
Jesus himself stood amongst them, and said,
‘Peace be with you.’

They were astonished,
and feared that they were seeing a ghost.

Jesus said to them,
‘Why are you afraid,
and why is there doubt in your hearts?
Look at my hands and my feet -

touch, and see -
for a ghost does not have flesh and bones
as you see that I have.’

And he showed them his hands and his feet.

Even now, in their joy,
they were doubting, and still wondering.

He said to them,
‘Do you have anything here to eat?’

They gave him a piece of cooked fish,
and he took it, and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them,
‘Everything that is written about me,
in the law of Moses, and in the prophets,
and in the psalms, must be fulfilled.’

And he opened their minds
to understand the scriptures,
where it is written that the Messiah is to suffer,
and to rise from the dead on the third day;
and that repentance, and the forgiveness of sins,
will be proclaimed, in his name,
to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

And he said to them,

‘You are witnesses to these things.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 4 - Sunday 25 April

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Acts 10.24-48a

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Two days after Peter's vision,
Peter, and the believers travelling with him,
arrived in Caesarea.
Cornelius was expecting them,
and had called together his relatives
and close friends.
When Peter arrived,
Cornelius knelt before him,
and worshipped him.
But Peter made him get up, saying,
'Stand up; I am only a mortal.'
When Peter and the other believers went inside,
they saw the small crowd
that Cornelius had assembled.
Peter addressed them, saying,
'You know that it is unlawful for Hebrews
to associate with Gentiles.
But God has shown me
that I should not regard anyone
as profane, or unclean;
so when I was invited here,
I accepted without hesitation,
for now I truly understand
that God shows no partiality,
but in every nation,
anyone who honours God,
and does what is right,
is acceptable to God.'
Peter continued,
'The gospel of peace
was revealed to the people of Israel
in Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.
The message has spread through all Judea.
It began in Galilee,
with the preaching of John the Baptist.
Then Jesus of Nazareth
was anointed by God
with the Holy Spirit and with power.
He went about doing good,
and healing all who were oppressed by the devil,
for God was with him.
We ourselves are witnesses to all that he did
in Judea and in Jerusalem.
They put him to death on the cross,
but God raised him on the third day,
and allowed him to appear,
not to all the people,
but to us, chosen by God as witnesses;
and indeed we ate and drank with him
after he rose from the dead.
He commissioned us
to continue the proclamation of the gospel,
and to testify that he is the one, ordained by God,
as judge of the living and the dead.
All the prophets declare
that everyone who believes in him
receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

While Peter was still speaking,
the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were gathered.
The Hebrew believers,
who had travelled with Peter from Joppa,
were amazed to see
that the gift of the Holy Spirit
was now being poured out on the Gentiles,
for they heard them speaking in tongues
and praising the greatness of God.
Peter said,
'Surely no one
can withhold the water
for baptising these people,
who have received the Holy Spirit,
just as we have.'
And he ordered that they should be baptised
in the name of Jesus Christ.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 23

SECOND READING – 1 John 3.1-2

A reading from the first letter of John.
Such love the Father has given us,
to declare that we are children of God!
The world does not recognise this work of God in us,
even as it did not recognise Christ himself.
Beloved, we have indeed been made children of God;
and the even greater glory
of what we are yet to become
is still to be revealed.
What we do know is this:
that when he is revealed, we will be like him,
for we will see him as he is.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 10.11-18

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.
Jesus said to the Pharisees:
'I am the good shepherd,
who will lay down his life for the sheep.
The hired hand runs away
while the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep.
But I am the good shepherd.
I know my own sheep, and they know me;
just as the Father knows me,
and I know the Father.
And I lay down my life for the sheep.
I have other sheep,
that do not belong to this sheepfold;
they will also listen to my voice,
and come to me,
so that there will be one flock,
and one shepherd.
And now, in the love of the Father,
and as the Father has decreed,
I am ready to lay down my life,
and receive it back again.
No one takes my life from me:
I lay it down of my own accord.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.'

EASTER 5 - Sunday 2 May

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Acts 11.1-4, 15-18*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Now the apostles

and the believers in Judea
heard that the Gentiles also
were accepting the word of God.

But when Peter returned to Jerusalem,

some of the Hebrew believers
criticised Peter,
demanding to know why

Peter had accepted hospitality from Gentiles,
and had even eaten with them.

Peter explained the whole sequence of events,

from his vision in Joppa,
to his arrival in Caesarea;
and then he explained,

'As I began to speak,

the Holy Spirit fell upon them,
just as it had upon us, at the beginning.

And I remembered

that the Lord had said to us,
"John baptised with water,
but you will be baptised
with the Holy Spirit."

I saw that God was giving them

the same gift that God gave us
when we came to believe
in the Lord Jesus Christ -
so who was I to hinder God?'

When they heard this,

they were silenced;
and they praised God, saying,
'Then God has given,
even to the Gentiles,
the repentance that leads to life.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 98

SECOND READING – *1 John 3.16-24*

A reading from the first letter of John.

This is how we know what love is:

that Christ laid down his life for us.

In the same way,

we should lay down our lives
for one another.

How can the love of God

be known in anyone,
if they are not moved to compassion
when they see
a brother or sister in need?

So let us love,

not only in words,
but also in deeds;

and then we will know

that we belong to the truth,
and in place of any troubled conscience,
we will have peace in our hearts,
in the presence of God,
without doubt or fear,
and the confidence and faith
to make our requests known to God,
trusting that God will hear our prayers
as we do God's will.

And this is God's commandment:

that we should believe
in the name
of his Son Jesus Christ,
and love one another.

All who keep this commandment

live in God,
and God lives in them.

And we know

that God lives in us
by the Spirit
that God has given to us.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 15.1-8*

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine,
and my Father
is the keeper of the vineyard.

He removes every branch in me
that bears no fruit.

Every branch that does bear fruit,
he prunes, and cleans -
and you have been cleansed
by the words that I have spoken to you.

Now abide in me,
as I abide in you.

A branch cannot bear fruit by itself,
unless it abides in the vine,
and neither can you bear fruit,
unless you abide in me.

I am the vine,
you are the branches.

Those who abide in me, and I in them,
will bear much fruit,
but apart from me, you can do nothing:
whoever does not abide in me
is like a cut and withered branch
that is good only for firewood.

But if you abide in me,
and my words abide in you,
you may ask for whatever you wish,
and it will be done for you,
for there is glory for my Father in this:
that you bear much fruit
as my disciples.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 6 - Sunday 9 May

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Acts 15.1-2, 4-6, 8-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

While Paul and Barnabas
were once again in Antioch, in Syria,
some disciples came down to Antioch from Judea,
and began teaching the believers
that unless they kept
the entire law of Moses,
they could not be saved.

After Paul and Barnabas
had argued and debated with them
for some time,
it was decided that Paul and Barnabas,
and some of the other believers,
would go up to Jerusalem
to discuss this question
with the apostles
and the elders.

When they arrived in Jerusalem,
they were welcomed
by the apostles and the elders,
and by the whole church,
and they reported
all that God was doing
amongst the believers in Antioch.

Now amongst the believers in Jerusalem
were some
who were also loyal
to the Pharisees,
and they insisted
that the believers in Antioch
should be ordered
to keep the entire law of Moses.

So the apostles and the elders
met to consider the matter.

After much debate,
Peter stood up, and said to them,
'It seems that God, who knows every human heart,
has poured out the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles,
just as God poured out the Holy Spirit upon us.
And in cleansing their hearts by faith,
God has made no distinction between them and us.

Why would we now challenge
what God has done for them,
by placing upon them
a burden so great
that neither our ancestors
nor we ourselves
have been able to bear it?

We have come to believe
that we will be saved
through the grace of the Lord Jesus -
and surely
it is through the grace of the Lord Jesus
that the Gentiles also will be saved.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 67

SECOND READING – 1 John 4.7-10

A reading from the first letter of John.

Beloved,
let us love one another,
because love is from God.

Everyone who loves
is born of God
and knows God.

Whoever does not love
does not know God,
for God is love.

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
as the sacrifice for our sin.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 15.9-17

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me,
so I have loved you;
now abide in my love.

If you keep my commandments,
you will abide in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and abide in his love.

I have said these things to you
so that my joy may be in you,
and your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment -
that you love one another
as I have loved you.

There is no greater love
than for someone to give up their life for you.

And that is how I will be for you,
and that is how you will be for one another,
if you keep my commandment
that you love one another
as I have loved you.

I do not call you servants,
because the servant does not know
what the master is doing.

I call you friends,
and I have made known to you
everything that I have heard from my Father.

You did not choose me;
I chose you,
and I appointed you to go and bear fruit,
fruit that will last.

And now, whatever you ask in my name,
the Father will give you.

This is my commandment:
that you love one another.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER 7 - Sunday 16 May

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Acts 15.12-20,29

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The whole assembly kept silence,
listening to Barnabas and Paul,
as they told of all the signs and wonders
that God had done through them
amongst the Gentiles.

After Barnabas and Paul

finished speaking, James replied,

‘We have heard today
that God has looked favourably on the Gentiles,
to take from amongst the Gentiles
a people to be known by God’s name.

In the scriptures, God declares:

“I will return
to rebuild the city of David
from its ruins;
and I will set it up,
so that all may seek the Lord,
including all the Gentiles
I shall call by my name.”

This we now see being fulfilled
in what we have heard.

Therefore I have reached the decision

that we should not place burdens
on these Gentiles, who are turning to God,
but should write to them, telling them only
to abstain from association with idolatry,
to abstain from sexual immorality,
and to abstain from meat with the blood still in it;
and that if they keep themselves from these,
they will do well.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalms 150

SECOND READING – 1 John 4.11-12,16b,18-21

A reading from the first letter of John.

Beloved,

since God loved us so much,
we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God,
but 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.

There is no fear in love,
for perfect love
casts out all fear.

Where love is perfected,
no one suffers the burden of fear.

And we love
because God first loved us.

No one can rightly claim
to love the God we cannot see
if they hate the brother or sister they can see.

The commandment we have from God is this:

those who love God
must love their brothers and sisters also.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 17.6-19

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

Jesus looked up to heaven, and prayed:
‘Father,

I have made your name known
to those you gave me from the world.

They were yours,
and you gave them to me;
and they have trusted your word.

They know that everything I have
comes from you.

I have passed on to them
the words that you gave to me,
and they have received them.

And they know that I myself
came from you.

I pray for them now;
praying not for the whole world,
but for those you have given to me,
because they are yours,
and they have honoured me.

Now I am departing from the world,
to return to you;
but they will remain in the world.

Holy Father, protect them,
for the honour of your name
that you entrusted to me.
May they may be one,
as we are one.

While I have been with them,
I have protected them,
and none has been lost
(except the one who was destined to be lost,
as the scriptures foretold).

And now,
as I am coming to you,
my prayer
is that they may have within them
a profound and sustaining joy.

The world has hated them
because they do not belong to the world,
(just as I do not belong to the world).

I am not asking you
to take them out of the world,
but I ask you to protect them
from all evil and harm.

You sent me into the world,
and now I send them into the world.

Father, make them holy
in the truth of your word.

It is for their sakes
that I offer myself up
entirely to you.

May they also be entirely yours.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PENTECOST - Sunday 23 May

Readings for Year B

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 Galileans.
How is it that we all hear them
speaking about God's deeds of power
in our own native languages,
from Asia and Arabia,
from 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 does 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 8.22-26

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

The whole creation is groaning,
as if in labour pains;
and we ourselves,
who have the first fruits of the Spirit,
groan inwardly,
as we await our final adoption
as children of God,
and the redemption
of our whole being.
In this hope we were saved,
and although for now
we see only
the first fruits of the Spirit,
we await
with patience and confidence
our final adoption
as children of God.
And the Spirit
helps us in our weakness;
for we do not know
how to pray as we ought,
but the Spirit intercedes for us,
with sighs too deep for words.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 15.26, 16.12-15

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

'From the Father,
I will send to you
the Spirit of truth,
to be with you,
and to speak for me.
I have so many things still to say to you;
more than you can know.
The Spirit of truth will come to you,
and guide you into all truth.
All that the Father has is mine,
and the Spirit of truth
will take what is mine
and declare it to you.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

TRINITY SUNDAY - Sunday 30 May

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 6.1-8*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

It was in the year that King Uzziah died
that I saw the Lord,
sitting on a throne, on high;
and his robe filled the temple.

Seraphs were in attendance above him,
each with six wings,
and they 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 foundations of the temple,
and the temple was filled with smoke.

And I said:

'Now surely I am lost,
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 seraphs flew to me,
holding a live coal
that had been taken from the altar.

The seraph touched my lips with it, saying:

'Now your guilt is taken away.
Your sins are forgiven.'

Then I heard

the voice of the Lord, saying,
'Is there any that I may send?
Who will go for us?'

And I said,

'Here I am; send me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 29

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;

for we have received
a spirit of adoption,
not a spirit of slavery and fear.

The spirit of adoption
that we have received

unites with our spirit
to make us children of God,
crying out, 'Abba! Father!'

As children of God,

we are truly brothers and sisters of Christ,
inheriting, with him,
both suffering and glory.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 3.1-17*

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

The Pharisee Nicodemus

came to Jesus by night, saying,
'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher
who has come from God;
for no one can do the signs
that we see you do
apart from the presence of God.'

Jesus answered him,

'No one can see the kingdom of God
without being reborn, from above.'

Nicodemus said to him,

'How can anyone be born a second time?'

Jesus answered,

'No one can enter the kingdom of God
without being born
of both water and spirit.

What is born of the flesh is flesh,
and what is born of the spirit is spirit,
so do not be taken aback when I say
"You must be reborn, from above."

The wind blows where it chooses,
and you hear the sound of it,
but you do not know where it comes from
or where it goes.

So it is with everyone

who is born of the Spirit.'

Nicodemus said to Jesus,

'How can this be?'

Jesus answered him,

'You are a teacher of Israel,
and yet you do not understand?

If you do not believe

when I speak of these earthly things,
how can you believe
when I speak of heavenly things?

No one has ascended into heaven -

but the Son of Man came down from heaven.

And the Son of Man must be lifted up

(as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness),
so that whoever believes in the Son of Man
may have eternal life.

God so loved the world

that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish
but have eternal life.

And God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world,

but in order that the world might be saved
through him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 6 JUNE

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Genesis 3.8-15*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The man and the woman
heard the Lord God
walking in the garden
at the time of the evening breeze,
and they hid themselves
from the presence of the Lord God
amongst the trees of the garden.
The Lord God called to the man,
and said to him, 'Where are you?'
The man said,
'I heard the sound of you in the garden,
and I was afraid,
because I was naked;
and I hid myself.'
The Lord God said,
'Who told you
that you were naked?
Have you eaten the fruit from the tree
that I commanded you not to eat?'
The man said,
'The woman you gave
to be with me -
she gave me fruit from the tree,
and I ate.'
The Lord God said to the woman,
'What is this
that you have done?'
The woman said,
'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.'
The Lord God said to the serpent,
'Because you have done this,
you are cursed
amongst all animals
and wild creatures.
You shall go upon your belly,
and eat dust,
all the days of your life.
And there will be perpetual conflict
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
they will strike you on the head,
and you will strike them on the heel.'
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 130

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 4.13-15*

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

The Psalmist wrote,
'I believe, and so I speak,
even though I am afflicted'.
In the same spirit of faith,
we believe and speak.

We believe

that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead
will raise us up,
and bring us into his presence,
and will bring you into his presence also.

And so we speak,
so that God's grace may be made known to you,
and to countless more,
all giving ever-greater praise and glory to God.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 3.20-35*

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

The crowd gathered once again,
so that Jesus and his companions
were not even able to eat.
When his family heard of it,
they went there
to try to take charge of him,
saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.'
Meanwhile, the scribes
(who came from Jerusalem) said,
'He is possessed by the devil.'
And that is how he casts out demons!
Jesus said to them,
'How can Satan cast out Satan?
If a kingdom, or a household, is divided against itself,
it cannot stand;
so if Satan is divided against himself,
he is already defeated!
But hear this:
you cannot enter a strong man's house
and plunder his property
without first tying him up!
People will be forgiven their sins,
and forgiven whatever blasphemies they utter;
but this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit
is unforgivable.'
(Jesus said this
because they had accused him
of working
not by the Holy Spirit
but by the devil.)
Then his mother and his brothers arrived,
but they remained outside,
because of the crowds.
The crowds around Jesus
said to him,
'Your mother and your brothers are outside,
and they are asking for you.'
Jesus said to them,
'Who are my mother and my brothers?'
And looking at those sitting around him, he said,
'Here are my mother and my brothers!
Whoever does the will of God
is my mother and sister and brother!'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 13 JUNE

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Ezekiel 17.22-24*

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

I myself will take a cutting
from the top of a fine cedar tree,
from the highest of its green branches.

I will plant it
on the mountain-side in Israel,
that it may grow,
and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.

Every kind of bird will come
and nest in its branches.

And all the trees of the field
shall know that I am the Lord,
the one who can bring down the mighty,
and raise up the lowly,
dry up the green tree,
and make the dry tree flourish.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 92.1-4, 11-14

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 4.16 - 5.1*

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

Our outer nature is wasting away,
but every day
our inner nature is renewed,
so we do not lose heart.

The temporary afflictions that we suffer
are as nothing
when compared
to the eternal glory
for which they are preparing us.

We are not concerned with the visible,
which is temporary,
but with the invisible,
which is eternal.

Our earthly tent
may be destroyed,
but in God
we have a secure and eternal home
in the heavens.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 4.1-2,26-34*

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

Jesus began to teach at the lake-side.

Such a large crowd
gathered around him
that he got into a boat,
and pushed out
on to the lake,
and taught from there,
while the crowd remained on land.

And he taught them in parables,
saying,

‘The kingdom of God is like this.

A farmer sows seed in the ground;
then sleeps and rises,
night and day,
and the seed sprouts, and grows;
the farmer does not know how.

Out from the soil
comes first the stalk,
and then the head,
and then the full grain;
and when the grain is ripe,
the farmer goes in with a sickle,
because the harvest has come.

Or the kingdom of God
is like a mustard seed,
which is the smallest of all seeds;
yet when it is sown,
it grows into a great tree,
and the birds of the air
come and nest in its branches.’

With these and many other parables,
Jesus spoke the word to the crowds,
as they could understand it.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 20 JUNE

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Job 38.1-13*

A reading from the book of Job.

The Lord answered Job

out of the whirlwind and the storm,
saying,

'Who is this mortal,
questioning my wisdom
with ignorant words?

Prepare yourself,
for I will challenge you,
and you must answer!

For it was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that laid the foundations of the earth,
and measured out its dimensions.

It was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that set the cornerstone of the earth,
as the morning stars sang,
and the angels shouted for joy.

It was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that enclosed the wild ocean
within its boundaries,
when it sprang forth
at its birth,
with storm-clouds
and thick darkness.

It was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that defined the boundaries of the ocean,
setting its limits, saying,
"This far and no further!
Here shall your mighty waves be stopped!"

It was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that directed the sun
to rise in the east
every morning
since your days began,
to lift the earth
like a sheet,
and shake the wicked away.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 107.1-3, 23-32

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 5.6-10*

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

Brothers and sisters,

while we are at home in this earthly body,
we are
(in the body at least)
away from the Lord.

Of course we would rather be away from the body,
and at home with the Lord.

But even while we are here the body,
and away from the Lord,
we have confidence,
for we walk by faith,
and not by sight.

And whether we are at home or away,
we make it our aim
to be pleasing and acceptable to the Lord;
for we shall all appear
before the judgement seat of Christ
to receive due reward
for all that has been done
while here in the body,
both good and ill.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 4.35-41*

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

As evening began to fall,
Jesus, already in the boat,
said to his disciples,
'Let us go across to the other side.'

So they set off,
and others followed.

A great storm arose,
and the waves beat into the boat,
so that the boat
began to fill with water.

Jesus was asleep
at the back of the boat.

They woke him,
and said to him,
'Teacher, do you not care
that we are perishing?'

Jesus stood up,
and rebuked the wind,
and said to the sea,
'Peace! Be still!'

Immediately the wind stopped,
and there was a dead calm.

Jesus said to them,
'Why are you afraid?
Have you still no faith?'

And were overwhelmed,
and said to one another,
'Who is this,

that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST - Sunday 27 June

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

FIRST READING – Isaiah 11.1-5,10a

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

A new son of David will appear,
and the spirit of the Lord will be with him:
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of authority and strength,
the spirit of knowledge
and of honouring the Lord;
and his delight will be
in serving the Lord.

He will not judge by appearances,
but with righteousness
he will declare justice
for the poor;
the power of his words
will shake the earth
and strike down the wicked.
Righteousness and faithfulness
will be his strength,
and all the nations
will turn to him.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 2 Corinthians 5.14-21

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

When Christ died for us all,
we all died,
so that while we live,
we might live
no longer for ourselves,
but for Christ,
who died for us,
and rose again.

Previously, we regarded everyone,
even Christ,
from a human point of view;
but now we know
that if anyone is in Christ,
there is an entirely new creation:
everything old has passed away,
and everything has become new.

In Christ, God is reconciling the world to himself,
no longer counting our trespasses against us.
And God is making us ambassadors for Christ,
in the message and ministry of this reconciliation.
On behalf of Christ, we make this appeal:
be reconciled to God!

For our sake,
Christ entered into the consequences of our sin,
so that in Christ
we might enter into the righteousness of God.

And so,
the love of Christ urges us on.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Matthew 3.1-12

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

In those days,
John the Baptist appeared,
in the wilderness of Judea,
proclaiming,
'Repent,
for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'

In this way,
John the Baptist
fulfilled the word
of the prophet Isaiah,
who spoke of
'The voice of one
crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight."
John wore clothing made from camel's hair,
with a leather belt around his waist,
and his food was locusts
and wild honey.

People from Jerusalem,
and all Judea,
and all the region along the Jordan,
were going out to hear John,
and they were baptised by him
in the river Jordan,
confessing their sins.

When John saw
that many religious leaders
were coming for baptism,
he said to them,
'You brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee
from the wrath that is to come?

You must bear fruit
that is worthy of repentance!

Do not imagine
that it is enough
to have Abraham as your ancestor!

God could raise up,
from these stones,
children to Abraham!

The axe is ready,
and any tree
that does not bear good fruit
will be cut down
and thrown into the fire.

I baptise you with water, for repentance,
but after me
comes another
who is more powerful,
and I am not worthy
even to carry his shoes.

He will baptise you
with the Holy Spirit
and with fire.

He will separate the wheat from the chaff,
gathering the wheat into his barn,
and throwing the chaff into the fire.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 4 JULY

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Ezekiel 2.1-5*

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

When the heavens were opened,
and I saw visions of God,
I bowed down
with my face to the ground.
Then I heard a voice, saying:
'Mortal, stand up,
and I will speak with you.'
A spirit entered into me,
and set me on my feet.
The voice continued,
'Mortal, I am sending you
to the people of Israel,
for they are
a nation of rebels.
They, and their ancestors,
have rebelled against me.
To this very day,
they are shameless and stubborn.
I am sending you
and you shall say to them,
"This is what the Lord God says."
And whether they hear,
or refuse to hear,
they shall know
that there has been a prophet amongst them.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 123

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 12.2-10*

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

I know a person in Christ
who, fourteen years ago,
was caught up into the third heaven.
Whether this was in the body,
or out of the body,
I do not know;
only God can know.
But I know that this person
was caught up into Paradise,
and into an experience
that no words can describe,
and no mortal can tell.
On behalf of such a person,
I could boast -
but on my own behalf,
I will not boast,
except of my weaknesses.
If I were to boast,
I would not be a fool,
for I would be speaking the truth;
but I refrain from boasting,
so that you may judge me
solely by what you see in me
and hear from me;

for despite

the exceptional character
of the revelations,
and to keep me from vanity,
I was given a thorn in the flesh,
like a messenger of Satan,
to torment me.

Three times

I appealed to the Lord
that it would leave me,
but the Lord has said to me,
'My strength is made perfect in weakness',
and 'My grace is all that you need'.
So I boast all the more gladly
of my weaknesses,
that the power of Christ
may dwell in me.
Indeed,
I am content with weaknesses,
insults, hardships, persecutions, and more,
for the sake of Christ;
for when I am weak,
then I am strong.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 6.1-6*

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

Jesus came to his home town,
and his disciples followed him.
On the sabbath,
he began to teach in the synagogue,
and many who heard him were astounded.
They said,
'Where did he get these teachings,
and the power to do such works?
Surely this is the carpenter,
the son of Mary.
His sisters are here with us,
and his brothers -
James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude.'
And they took offence at him.
Then Jesus said to them,
'Prophets are honoured everywhere,
except in their home town,
amongst their own people,
and in their own house.'
And he could do
no work of power there,
except that he laid his hands
on some who were sick,
and healed them.
And he was amazed
at their unbelief.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 11 JULY

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Amos 7.7-15

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

The Lord showed Amos a vision

of a master-builder,
measuring a wall,
with a plumb-line in his hand.

And the Lord said to Amos,

‘See, I have set a plumb-line
to judge my people Israel,
and have found them to be untrue.

And so,

the high places of the land
will be made desolate,
the sanctuaries will be laid waste,
and I will rise against the king
with the sword.’

So Amos spoke

as the Lord had directed:

‘The king shall die by the sword,
and all Israel will be sent into exile.’

The priest of Bethel

sent a message to the king, saying,

‘Amos has conspired against you,

here at the very heart
of the house of Israel.

The nation cannot tolerate his words!’

And the priest of Bethel

said to Amos,

‘Flee away!

Go to the land of Judah!

Earn your bread there,

and work your prophecy there,

but never again speak here at Bethel,

for it is the king's temple and sanctuary!’

But Amos answered him, saying:

‘I am no prophet,

nor any son of a prophet;

but a shepherd,

and a tender of fig trees.

But the Lord took me

from following the flock,

and said to me,

“Speak these words

to my people Israel.”

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 85.8-13

SECOND READING – Ephesians 1.1-8a

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

From Paul,

an apostle of Christ Jesus

by the will of God.

To the saints in Ephesus,

the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Grace to you, and peace,

from God our Father,

and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who has blessed us in Christ

with every spiritual blessing,

having chosen us, in Christ,

before the foundation of the world,

to be holy and blameless before him, in love.

God has adopted us in Jesus Christ,

redeeming us through his blood,

forgiving our trespasses,

and freely pouring out upon us

the riches of his glorious grace.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 6.7-13

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Mark.

Jesus called the twelve,

and began to send them out,

two by two,

giving them authority

over the unclean spirits.

He ordered them

to take nothing for their journey,

except a staff;

no bread, no bag,

no money in their belts;

and to take only sandals,

and one set of clothes.

He said to them,

‘Wherever you enter a house,

stay there until you leave that place.

If the place will not welcome you -

if they refuse to hear you -

shake the dust of the place

off your feet

as you leave.’

So they went out

and proclaimed

that all should repent.

They cast out many demons,

and anointed with oil

many who were sick,

and healed them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 18 JULY

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 23.1-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

This is what the Lord,
the God of Israel, says,
concerning the shepherds
who shepherd my people.
Woe to the shepherds
who destroy and scatter
the sheep of my pasture.
You have not attended to them.
You have driven them away.
You have scattered my flock.
But I will attend to you
for your evil doings,
says the Lord.
Then I myself
will gather the remnant of my flock
out of all the lands
where I have driven them.
I will bring them back to their sheepfold,
and they will thrive,
and become many.
I will raise up shepherds over them
who will tend them,
and they shall no longer
be afraid or dismayed,
and none shall be missing,
says the Lord.
And the days are surely coming
when I will raise up
a new son of David,
who will reign as king,
and deal wisely,
and bring justice and righteousness
to the land.
In those days,
Judah will be saved,
and Israel will live in safety.
And his name shall be:
'The Lord is our righteousness.'
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 23

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 2.12-22*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Previously,
you who are Gentiles, by birth,
did not know Christ.
You were excluded from Israel.
You were strangers to the covenants
and the promises of God -
without God, and without hope.
But now,
you who were once far off
have been brought near
by the blood of Christ.

For Christ is our peace.

In his flesh,
he has made the two into one,
and has broken down the hostility
which had been
like a dividing wall
between us.

He has abolished the law,
with its commandments and ordinances,
that he might create in himself
one new humanity, in place of the two,
making peace,
and reconciling both groups to God,
in one body, through the cross,
by which he put to death their hostility.

So he came and proclaimed peace
to you who were far off,
and peace to those who were near;
and through him
we all now have access,
in one Spirit,
to the Father.

So now,
you are no longer strangers and foreigners,
but fellow citizens, with the saints -
fellow members of the household of God,
built upon the foundation
of the apostles and the prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.

In Christ,
the whole structure is joined together,
and grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
And you also are built
into this dwelling-place for God,
in the Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 6.30-34*

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

The apostles returned from their mission.
They gathered around Jesus,
and told him all that they had done and taught.

Jesus said to them,
'Let us go away,
to some deserted place,
by ourselves, and rest a while,'
(for many were coming and going,
and they had no respite, even to eat).

So Jesus and the disciples left by boat
for a remote place, by themselves.
But many saw them leave,
and realised where they were going;
and people hurried there on foot,
from all the towns,
and arrived ahead of them.

So as Jesus went ashore,
he saw a great crowd.

And he had compassion on them,
for they were like sheep without a shepherd;
and he began to teach them many things.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 25 JULY

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *2 Kings 4.42-44*

A reading from the second book of Kings.

During the famine in Gilgal,

a traveller arrived,
from a village in the mountains,
with an offering of twenty bread rolls,
made from barley,
from the first fruits of the harvest.

He presented the twenty bread rolls to Elisha.

Elisha said to his servant,

‘Give them to the people, and let them eat.’

But Elisha’s servant said,

‘How can I serve twenty bread rolls
to a hundred people?’

Elisha repeated,

‘Give them to the people, and let them eat,
for the Lord says,
that they shall eat, and have some left over.’

So the servant set them before the people,

and they ate, with bread to spare,
as the Lord had made known to Elisha.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 145.10-19

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 3.14-21*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I pray to God, the Father of all,

that through the Holy Spirit,
you may be strengthened,
in your inner being,
from the riches of God’s glory.

I pray that Christ may dwell in your hearts,

that you may be
rooted and grounded in love;

and indeed that you,

with all the saints,
may come to know

the full breadth, and length, and height, and depth,

of the love of Christ,
that surpasses all knowledge.

By the power that is at work within us,

God is able to accomplish
far more
than we can ever ask,
or even imagine.

To God be glory,

in the church, and in Christ Jesus,
through all generations, for ever!

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.1-21*

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

Jesus crossed to the far side
of the Sea of Galilee.

A large crowd kept following him,

because they saw the signs that he was doing
for the sick.

Jesus went up on the hillside,

and sat down there, with his disciples.

It was just before the Hebrew festival of the Passover.

When Jesus looked up,

and saw the large crowd, coming towards him,
he said to Philip,

‘Where are we to buy bread
for all these people to eat?’

Jesus said this to test Philip,

for Jesus himself knew what he was going to do.

Philip answered Jesus,

‘Six months wages would not buy enough bread
for each of them to have even a small piece.’

The disciple Andrew

(the brother of Simon Peter)

said to Jesus,

‘There is a boy here
who has five barley-loaves and two fish.
But what are they amongst so many?’

Jesus said,

‘Tell the people to sit down.’

There was grass there,

and the people sat down;
about five thousand in all.

Then Jesus took the five barley-loaves,

and when he had given thanks,
he distributed them to those who were seated;
and in the same way, the fish,
as much as they wanted.

When they had all had enough to eat,

Jesus said to his disciples,
‘Gather up the pieces left over,
so that nothing is wasted.’

And they filled twelve baskets,

gathering up the pieces
left over by those who had eaten.

When the people saw the sign that Jesus had done,

they began to say,
‘This is surely the prophet
who was to come into the world.’

When Jesus realised

that they were about to take him by force
to make him their king,
he withdrew again to the mountain
by himself.

When evening came,

and it was becoming dark,
Jesus had still not returned.

The disciples went down to the lake,

got into a boat,
and set out to cross the lake, in the dark.

The lake became rough,

with a strong wind blowing.

When they had rowed about three or four miles,

they saw Jesus walking on the lake towards the boat,
and they were filled with fear,

but Jesus said to them,

‘Do not be afraid.’

As soon as they received him into the boat,

they found that they had
safely reached the shore.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 1 AUGUST

Readings for Year B

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.

Psalms 78.23-29

SECOND READING – Ephesians 4.1-6

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I urge you to lead a life
that is worthy of the calling that you have received,
a life of humility, gentleness, and patience,
forgiving and accepting one another in love,
working always to live in unity and peace;
for there is one body, and one Spirit,
one hope to which we are called,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of all.

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,
'Rabbi, when did you come here?'

Jesus said,
'You came 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 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 8 AUGUST

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *1 Kings 19.4-8*

A reading from the first book of Kings.

Elijah went a full day's journey
into the wilderness.

He sat down

in the shade of a single tree,
and asked that he might die:

'It is enough, now, O Lord;

take away my life,

for I am no better than my ancestors.'

Then he lay down,

in the shade of the tree,
and slept.

He was woken by an angel,

saying, 'Get up and eat.'

He looked around,

and there, next to where he had been lying,
was some bread, baked on hot stones,
and a jar of water.

He ate and drank,

and lay down again.

The angel of the Lord came a second time,

touched him, and said,

'Get up and eat,

or the journey

will be too great for you.'

Elijah got up,

and ate, and drank.

And he went, in the strength of that food,

forty days and forty nights,

to Horeb, the mountain of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 34.1-8

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 4.11-16*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Christ himself

gives to the church

apostles and prophets,

evangelists, pastors and teachers,

to build up the body of Christ,

to equip the saints

for the work of ministry,

to lead us to unity

of faith and understanding,

and to lead us to maturity,

and the full stature of Christ.

We will no longer be like children,

vulnerable to trickery and deceit,

but will grow up in every way,

in truth and in love,

into Christ, who is the head,

with each part of the body

joined and connected together,

and working as it should,

growing in the strength of love.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.35,41-51*

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

Jesus said,

'I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me

will never be hungry,

and whoever believes in me

will never be thirsty.'

They began to complain about Jesus,

because he said,

'I am the bread that came down from heaven.'

They were saying,

'Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph,

whose father and mother we know?

How can he now say,

"I have come down from heaven"?''

Jesus said,

'Do not complain amongst yourselves.

Everyone who comes to me

is drawn by the Father who sent me;

and I will raise them up on the last day.

It is written in the prophets,

"They shall all be taught by God,"

and while none have seen the Father

(except the one who comes from God)

all who hear and learn from the Father

come to me.

Truly, I tell you,

whoever believes has eternal life.

And truly, I tell you,

I am the bread of life.

Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness,

and they died;

but here is the bread

that comes down from heaven,

which you may eat, and not die.

I am the living bread

that came down from heaven.

Whoever eats this bread

will live for ever.

And my body

is the bread that I give

for the life of the world.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 15 AUGUST

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Proverbs 9.1-6*

A reading from the book of Proverbs.

Wisdom has built her house,
strong on seven pillars.
She has prepared her feast,
mixed her wine,
and set her table.
She has sent out her servant-girls
to announce,
from the highest places in the town,
'You that seek wisdom, gather here!'
To all who seek understanding, she says,
'Come, eat my bread, and drink my wine.
Lay aside all foolishness.
Walk in the way of insight, and live!'
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 34.9-14

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 4.25 - 5.2*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Rid yourselves of all dishonesty;
let us speak the truth to our neighbours,
for we are members of one another.

When you become angry,
do not give in to sin;
do not let the sun go down on your anger;
allow no opportunity for the devil.

Let none be a thief,
but let all do honest work;
and then share
what they have
with the needy.

When you speak,
let it never be harmful,
but useful for building up.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit,
whose presence within you
marks you as God's own
for the day of salvation.

Put away all bitterness,
wrath, anger, dispute,
slander, and malice.

Be kind to one another,
tender-hearted,
forgiving one another,
as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Walk in the ways of godliness and love,
following the example of Christ,
who loved us,
and in that love,
became a perfect offering
to God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.51-58*

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

Jesus said,

'I am the living bread
that came down from heaven.

Whoever eats this bread
will live for ever.

And my body
is the bread that I give
for the life of the world.'

They then disputed amongst themselves, saying,
'How can this man give us his body to eat?'

So Jesus said to them,
'Truly, I tell you,
unless you eat the body
of the Son of Man,
and drink his blood,
you have no life in you.

Those who eat my body
and drink my blood
have eternal life,
and I will raise them up
on the last day;

for my body is true food
and my blood is true drink.

Those who eat my body
and drink my blood
abide in me,
and I in them.

Just as the living Father sent me,
and I live because of the Father,
so whoever eats of me
will live because of me.

This is the bread
that came down from heaven.

It is not like the bread from heaven
that your ancestors ate,
and they died,
for all who eat this bread
will live for ever.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 22 AUGUST

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Joshua 24.1, 14-18*

A reading from the book of Joshua.

Joshua gathered the tribes of Israel,
with the elders, the leaders,
the judges, and the officers;
and they presented themselves before God.

Joshua addressed them, saying:

'It is the Lord your God
who has brought you to this place,
and to this day.

Now put away the gods
that your ancestors served,
and honour the Lord your God
with all your heart.

And if you are unwilling to serve the Lord,
choose this day the gods you will serve,
whether the gods of your ancestors,
or the gods of the those
in whose land you are living.

But as for me and my household,
we will serve the Lord!

And the people answered,

'Far be it from us
that we should forsake the Lord our God
to serve other gods;

for it is the Lord our God
who brought us, and our ancestors,
out of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of slavery,
giving many great signs in our sight.

It is the Lord our God
who protected us along the way,
and gave us this land to possess.

Therefore we also
will serve the Lord,
for the Lord is our God.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 34.15-22

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 6.10-20*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Finally, be strong
in the power of the Lord.

Put on the whole armour of God,
so that you may be able to stand
against all the deceits of the devil.

For our struggle is not against enemies
of flesh and blood,
but against the spiritual rulers,
authorities, and cosmic powers
of this present darkness.

Therefore put on
the whole armour of God,
so that you may be able to stand firm
against every assault of the devil.

Fasten the belt of truth around your waist.

Put on the breastplate of righteousness;
and on your feet, the gospel of peace.

Take the shield of faith,
which will quench
the flaming arrows
of the evil one.

Take the helmet of salvation;
and the word of God,
which is the sword of the Spirit.

At all times,
pray in the Spirit,
making your requests known to God.

Stay alert,
and persevere in prayer
for all the believers.

Pray also for me,
that whenever I speak,
I may be given the words
to proclaim with boldness
the gospel
for which I am an ambassador
in chains.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.60-69*

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

When many of the disciples
heard these things,
they said,
'This teaching is difficult;
who can accept it?'

Jesus said,
'Does this offend you?

What if you were to see
the Son of Man
ascending to the place
from which he came?

It is the spirit that gives life;
the flesh counts for nothing,
and the words that I have spoken to you
are spirit and life;

and yet still, amongst you,
there are some who do not believe,'
(for Jesus knew who did not believe -
and he knew who would betray him).

Jesus said,
'No one can come to me
unless it is granted by the Father.'

Many of the disciples now turned back,
and no longer went about with him.

Jesus asked the twelve,
'Do you also wish to go away?'

Simon Peter answered him,
'Lord, to whom can we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
We have come to believe and know
that you are the Holy One of God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 29 AUGUST

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Deuteronomy 4. 1a,2,6-8*

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Moses said to the people:

‘You must observe and keep
the laws and statutes
of the Lord your God,
that I set before you this day,
neither adding to them,
nor taking anything away.

When other nations hear of these laws,
they will say,

‘Surely this is a wise and discerning people!’
For no other nation
has laws and statutes
to establish such justice and righteousness
as the laws and statutes
given to us by the Lord our God.

And no other nation has a god so near
as the Lord our God is to Israel
whenever we call upon him.’

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 15

SECOND READING – *James 1.19-27*

A reading from the letter of James.

My brothers and sisters,
there is wisdom in this:
be quick to listen,
but slow to speak,
and slow to anger,
for your anger
does not produce
God’s righteousness.

Cleanse yourselves
from all wickedness.
And welcome with humility
the word of God
that is planted in your heart,
for it has the power to save your soul.

Be doers of the word,
and not merely hearers,
who deceive themselves.
Those who are hearers of the word,
and not doers,
they are like those
who look in a mirror,
and as soon as they turn away,
forget what they look like.

But those who look into the perfect law -
the law that brings freedom -
and do not forget it,
but act upon it -
they will be blessed
in all that they do.

In the same way,
if you consider yourself religious,
but do not bridle your tongue,
your religion is worthless.
Religion that is pure and undefiled
before God, the Father, is this:
to care for orphans and widows in their distress,
and to keep yourself
from being corrupted by the world.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23*

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

Some Pharisees and scribes, from Jerusalem,
joined the crowds
who were gathering around Jesus.
They noticed that some of his disciples, before eating,
did not rigorously observe
the ceremonial washing of hands.

(For the Pharisees,
and all who keep the Hebrew law
in the tradition of the elders,
do not eat, unless they first
have a ceremonial washing of their hands;
and they perform ceremonial washing
after visiting the market;
and there are many other traditions
that they observe,
including the ceremonial washing
of vessels and furniture.)

So the Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus,
‘Why do your disciples not live
according to the tradition of the elders,
but eat without
the ceremonial washing of their hands?’

Jesus said to them,
‘You hypocrites.
You hold to your human traditions
while neglecting the commandments of God.
As it says in Isaiah,
“They honour me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.
Their teachings are human creations,
and they worship me in vain.”

Then Jesus said to the crowd,
‘There is nothing outside a person,
that by going in, can defile;
but the things that come out
are what defile.

For it is from within -
from the human heart -
that evil intentions come:
sexual immorality,
theft and murder,
greed and malice,
deceit and recklessness,
envy and slander,
arrogance and foolishness.

All these evil things come from within -
and they are what defile.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 35.4-7*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Say to those

whose hearts are full of fear:
be strong, and do not fear,
for God will come to save you,
bringing justice and recompense.

On that day,

the blind will see,
the deaf will hear,
the lame will dance,
and the voiceless will sing for joy.

Water will spring up in the wilderness,
and rivers will flow in the desert.

The burning sand will become a pool,
and the thirsty ground an oasis;

and where desert wild-animals
once lay in wait,
reeds and rushes will grow.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 146

SECOND READING – *James 2.1-9, 14-17*

A reading from the letter of James.

My brothers and sisters,

acts of favouritism
have no place
amongst those who have faith
in our Lord Jesus Christ.

If a person with gold rings
and fine clothes

comes into your assembly,
and a poor person in dirty clothes
also comes in,

and you say to the one in fine clothes,
'Have a seat up here,'

while to the other, you say,
'Stand there,'

or, 'Sit on the floor,'

have you not discriminated unjustly,
and revealed your corrupt motives?

Listen, my brothers and sisters:

God has chosen the poor in the world
to be rich in faith,
and to inherit the kingdom
that is promised
to those who love God.

But you have dishonoured the poor!

Surely it is the rich

who oppress you,
and drag you into court,
and dishonour the name of God.

The law above all other laws
in scripture is this:

'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Acts of favouritism

go against this law.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters,
if you say you have faith,
but do not act upon it?

A faith like that cannot save you.

If a brother or sister is in rags, and without food,
it does no good to say

'Go in peace; keep warm, and eat your fill,'
unless you also attend to their practical needs.

Your faith is lifeless, and in decay,
if it does not lead to good works.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 7.24-37*

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

Jesus travelled

to the northern coastal city of Tyre.

He did not want anyone

to know that he was there,
but news of his presence quickly spread.

A woman came, and bowed down at his feet,
and begged him to heal her daughter,
who was troubled by an unclean spirit.

The woman was a Syrian, a Gentile.

Jesus said to her,

'Let the children be fed first,
for it is not fair to take the children's food
and throw it to the pets in the house.'

She answered him,

'Yes, Lord, but even the pets
eat the crumbs
that fall from the children's table.'

Jesus said to her,

'Go in peace.

The demon has left your daughter.'

She went home,

and found the child resting, and at peace,
the unclean spirit gone.

Jesus travelled from there

to the region to the east of Galilee.

There they brought to him a deaf man,
with an impediment in his speech.

They begged Jesus

to lay his hand on him, to heal him.

Jesus took the man aside, in private,
away from the crowd.

He touched the man's ears,

and his tongue,
and looked up to heaven,
and sighed deeply, saying, 'effatha',
which means, 'be open.'

Immediately,

the man's ears were opened, and he could hear;
and his tongue was freed, to speak clearly.

Jesus asked them to tell no one;

but the more he asked them,
the more they proclaimed it,

All who heard it said,

'He does great works;
he even makes the deaf to hear,
and frees the tongue of the voiceless to speak.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 50.4-9a*

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 awakens me -
awakens my ear -
to learn wisdom
as a disciple of the Lord.

When I face persecution,
I do not hide my face,
or turn away,
for the Lord God is my helper.

I do not count their insults a disgrace.

I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame,
for the one who vindicates me is near.

Let my adversaries challenge me,
confront me, and contend with me,
for the Lord God is my steadfast helper,
and my adversaries
will be put to shame.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 116.1-8

SECOND READING – *James 3.1-12*

A reading from the letter of James.

Not many of you should become teachers,
my brothers and sisters,
for you know that we who teach
will be judged more strictly.

We all have many faults and failings,
and yet if only we could control the tongue,
we would soon have
perfect self-control in everything.

The tongue is like the bit
in the mouth of a horse,
that guides its entire body,
or like the rudder
that guides a great ship
in a strong wind;
it is small,
but has such great power.

One small fire
can set a whole forest ablaze -
and the tongue is like a fire,
burning with a whole world of iniquity,
corrupting the whole body,
and scorching the whole course of your life,
as if set on fire by hell itself.

Every species on earth
has been tamed,
but no one can tame the tongue -
recklessly dangerous,
and full of deadly poison.

With it we bless our God and Father,
and with it we curse our neighbours
who are made in the image of God.

Fresh and foul water
do not flow from the same spring.
Each tree produces one kind of fruit,
and not any other.

And yet from the same mouth
come both blessing and cursing.

My brothers and sisters,
this ought not to be so.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 8.27-36*

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

Jesus went with his disciples
towards the villages north of Galilee.

On the way, he asked his disciples,
‘Who do people say that I am?’

They answered him,
‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah;
and others say one of the prophets.’

Jesus asked them,
‘But who do you say that I am?’

Peter answered him,
‘You are the Messiah.’

Jesus warned the disciples
to say this to nobody.

And he began to teach them
that the Son of Man
must undergo great suffering,
and be rejected by the elders,
the chief priests, and the scribes,
and be killed, and after three days, rise again.

Peter took Jesus aside,
and began to rebuke him.

But turning and looking at his disciples,
Jesus rebuked Peter, saying:

‘Get behind me, Satan!

For your mind
is still set
on the human,
and not yet
on the divine.’

He then called the crowd,
as well as his disciples,
and said to them,

‘To become my disciple,
you must deny yourself,
and take up your cross,
and follow me.

For the more you try to save your life,
the more you will lose it,
but if you lose your life
for my sake,
and for the sake of the gospel,
you will save it.

And what would it profit anyone
to gain the whole world
but lose their very soul?’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 11.18-20*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

I was led like a lamb
to the slaughter.

They said,

‘Let us destroy both the tree and its fruit.

Let us cut him off
from the land of the living,

so that even his name
will be remembered no more!’

I did not know

that it was against me
that they were devising their evil schemes,
until the Lord made it known to me.

But you, O Lord of hosts -

you are the one who judges righteously.
You examine the heart and the mind.

Let me see your judgement upon them,
for I have committed my cause to you.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 54

SECOND READING – *James 3.13 - 4.3,7b-8a,10*

A reading from the letter of James.

It is by a life

filled with good deeds
and with gentleness
that you demonstrate
true wisdom and understanding.

Bitterness, envy,

and selfish ambition,
do not come from godly wisdom,
but are earthly, unspiritual, even devilish,
bringing disorder and wickedness
of every kind.

Godly wisdom is innocent, and peaceful,

gentle, and accommodating,
full of mercy and good deeds,
with no trace of partiality or hypocrisy;
and what is planted in peace
brings a harvest of righteousness.

Your conflicts and disputes

come from unworthy desires
at war within you.

You want something you do not have,

so you engage in disputes and conflicts
that lead even to murder.

But you do not have,

because you do not ask!

Or you ask wrongly,

seeking only to fulfil your unworthy desires.

So resist the devil,

and the devil will flee from you.

Draw near to God,

and God will draw near to you.

Be humble before God,

and God will raise you up.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 9.30-37*

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

Jesus and his disciples

passed through Galilee,
and he did not want anyone to know it;
for he was teaching his disciples,
saying to them,

‘The Son of Man

is to be betrayed
into human hands,
and they will kill him,
and after three days,
he will rise again.’

But they did not understand what he was saying,
and they were afraid to ask him.

Later that day, in the house,

Jesus asked them,

‘What were you arguing about,
on the way?’

And they were silent,

because they had been arguing with one another
about which of them
was the greatest.

Jesus sat down,

and called the twelve,

and said to them,

‘Whoever wants

the first place
must take the last place,
and be the servant of all.’

Then he called a little child

to stand amongst them,
and he said to the disciples,

‘Whoever welcomes a little child

in my name
welcomes me,
and whoever welcomes me
welcomes the one who sent me.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MICHAELMAS - Sunday 26 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 B

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,
a man wrestled with Jacob
until daybreak.
Failing to overpower Jacob,
he struck Jacob on the hip,
putting it 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.'
So the man asked Jacob,
'What is your name?'
And when Jacob gave his name,
the man replied,
'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 he said,
'Why would you ask my name?'
And there he 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.

SECOND READING – James 5.13-16

A reading from the letter of James.

Those amongst you
who are suffering
should pray;
and those who are strong
should sing songs of praise.
Those who are sick
should call for the elders of the church,
to pray over them,
and to anoint them with oil
in the name of the Lord;
and the prayer
offered in faith
will restore
the one who is sick,
for the Lord will raise them up;
and if they have sinned,
they will be forgiven.
Confess your faults to one another,
and pray for one another,
that you may be restored,
for the prayer of the righteous
is powerful and effective.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 22.39-43

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

After the meal in the upper room,
Jesus went to the Mount of Olives;
and his disciples followed him.
When he reached the place,
he said to them,
'Pray, that you may not come
into the time of trial.'
And he withdrew from them,
about a stone's throw,
and knelt down,
and prayed, saying,
'Father, if you are willing,
remove this cup from me;
yet not my will, but yours, be done.'
And an angel from heaven appeared to him,
and gave him strength.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

HARVEST FESTIVAL - Sunday 3 October

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Genesis 2.4-5,7-8*

A reading from the book of Genesis

When the Lord God first made
the earth and the sky,
there were no plants
or crops in the ground,
for the Lord God
had not yet sent rain
upon the earth,
and there was no one to cultivate the ground.

Then the Lord God formed Adam
from the dust of the earth,
and breathed into his nostrils
the breath of life;
and Adam became a living being.
And the Lord God planted a garden,
in Eden,
in the east;
and placed Adam within it.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 8

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 2.6-11*

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,
to be lower than the angels;
and yet you have set them
to rule over
all that you have made,
and you have crowned them
with glory and honour.’

We do not yet see this
fully accomplished
for us all,

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 indeed now 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Matthew 6.25-33*

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

Do not worry
about your life,
what you will eat,
or what you will drink,
or about your body,
or what you will wear.

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

Consider the birds of the air:
they do not plant,
or harvest,
or gather into barns,
and yet
your heavenly Father 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,
or worry what to wear,
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!

While others ask
“What will we eat?”
or “What will we drink?”
or “What will we wear?”
you are not to worry
about these things,
for your heavenly Father
knows that you need them.

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

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 10 OCTOBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Amos 5.6-7, 10-15*

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

Now is the time to seek the Lord, and live,
for the Lord is preparing
to sweep through the tribes of Israel like a fire.
For you replace justice with poison,
and you trample righteousness to the ground.
You despise those who challenge you,
and all who speak the truth.
You trample on the poor,
with tax on their produce.
And so, the Lord says:
you have built fine stone houses,
but you shall not live in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you shall not drink their wine.
For I know all your offences,
and the number of your crimes -
how you take bribes,
persecute the innocent,
and deny justice to the needy.
The prudent stay silent,
for it is an evil time.
You say that the Lord God is with you,
so turn to pursue good, and not evil,
that the Lord may indeed be with you,
and that you may live.
Hate all that is evil, love all that is good,
and establish justice in your courts,
that the Lord God of hosts
might have mercy upon you.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 90.13-17

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 4.12-16*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The word of God
is living and active.
Sharper than a sword,
it pierces into the soul and the spirit,
and judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
None can hide from it,
for everything will be seen
when we are called to give an account
before God.
But now, we have a great high priest,
who has passed into the heavens,
Jesus, the Son of God,
who is able to sympathise with all our weaknesses,
for he himself has been tested,
in every way, as we are,
yet without sin.
So let us trust in him,
and approach the throne of grace with boldness,
so that we may receive mercy,
and find grace to help
in time of need.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.17-31*

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

As Jesus was setting out on a journey,
a man ran up to him,
and knelt before him, asking,
'Good Teacher, what must I do
to inherit eternal life?'
Jesus said to him,
'Why do you call me good?
No one is good, but God alone.
You know the commandments:
You shall not murder;
you shall not commit adultery;
you shall not steal,
or bear false witness,
or defraud;
honour your father and mother.'
He said to Jesus,
'Teacher, all these I have kept since my youth.'
Jesus looked at him
with compassion, and said,
'You lack one thing.
Go and sell everything you own,
and give the money to the poor;
and you will have treasure in heaven.
Then come, follow me.'
When he heard this, he was shocked,
and went away grieving,
for he had many possessions.
Then Jesus looked around,
and said to his disciples,
'How hard it will be
for those who have wealth
to enter the kingdom of God!'
The disciples were taken aback at these words.
But Jesus said to them again,
'How hard it is
to enter the kingdom of God!
It is easier for a camel
to go through the eye of a needle
than for those who are rich in earthly things
to enter the kingdom of God.'
They said to one another,
'Who then can be saved?'
Jesus looked at them and said,
'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God.
For God, all things are possible.'
Peter began to say to him,
'Look, we have left everything and followed you.'
Jesus said,
'Truly I tell you,
all who have left house,
or brothers or sisters, or mother or father,
or children or fields, for my sake,
and for the sake of the gospel,
will receive a hundredfold now
(though with persecutions),
and in the age to come, eternal life.
Many who are first now will be last,
and many who are last will be first.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 17 OCTOBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 53.4-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Truly it was our sickness
that weighed him down,
and our suffering
was his burden.

We considered
that God
had struck him down and afflicted him -
but he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities.

Upon him
was the punishment
that made us whole,
and by his wounds,
we are healed.

For we, like sheep, have gone astray,
each turning to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 91.9-16

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 5.1-6*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Each high priest
is chosen from amongst mortals
to represent them before God,
presenting their offerings and sacrifices for sin.

Having been chosen
from amongst mortals,
the high priest is able to deal gently
with the foolish, and the wayward,
for he himself
is subject to weakness.

He offers sacrifices for his own sins,
as well as offering sacrifices
for the sins of the people.

He does not presume
to choose for himself
the honour of serving as high priest,
but like Aaron,
he serves only
when called by God.

In the same way,
Christ did not glorify himself
in becoming a high priest,
but was appointed by God,
who said,
'You are my Son,
I am your Father,
and you are a high priest for ever.'

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.35-45*

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

The brothers James and John
approached Jesus, and said,
'Teacher, there is something
we would like you to do for us.
Let us sit,
one at your right hand,
and one at your left,
in your glory.'

Jesus said to them,
'You do not know what you are asking.
Are you able to drink
the cup that I shall drink,
or endure the baptism
with which I am to be baptised?'

They replied,
'Yes, we are able.'

Jesus said to them,
'You will indeed drink
the cup that I shall drink,
and endure the baptism
with which I am to be baptised;
but to sit at my right hand
or my left
is not mine to grant.'

When the other disciples
heard of this,
they were indignant
at James and John,
so Jesus called them all to him, and said,
'Out in the world,
the ones they call leaders
dominate their people;
the ones they call great
exercise power over them.

But it shall not be so amongst you,
where the truly great
are those who serve,
and the greatest of all
is the one who is the servant of all.

For the Son of Man came
not to be served,
but to serve,
and to give his life for all.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 24 OCTOBER

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 31.7-9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Shout out with gladness for Jacob,
and sing with joy for Israel,
the first amongst the nations,
even as you pray,
'Save us, O Lord,
the remnant of your people.'

For the Lord says this:

'I will bring you back
from the lands of the north,
and I will gather you
from the furthest ends of the earth.

A great multitude shall return -
including the blind and the lame,
and those preparing to give birth,
even those in labour.

With weeping and prayer,
they shall return.

I will lead them by streams of water,
on a level path,
where they shall not stumble;

for I am a father to Israel,
and every child of Israel
is like my firstborn.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 126

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 7.23-28*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The former priests
were many in number,
because they were prevented by death
from continuing in office.

But Jesus lives for ever,
and his priesthood
does not come to an end.

He is able to intercede,
for all time,
for those who approach God
through him.

He is holy, righteous, undefiled,
separate now from sinners,
exalted above the heavens.

The former high priests
offered sacrifices
day after day,
for their own sins
and for the sins of the people;
but Jesus made his sacrifice
once for all
when he offered himself.

The old law appointed high priests
who were subject to weakness,
but the new law appoints a Son
who has been made perfect for ever.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.46b-52*

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

Jesus and his disciples
were leaving Jericho,
and crowds of people
were following them.

Bartimaeus, a blind beggar,
was sitting by the roadside.

When Bartimaeus heard
that Jesus of Nazareth
was passing by,
he began to shout out:
'Jesus, Son of David,
have mercy on me!'

Many told him to stop,
but he cried out all the more:
'Jesus, Son of David,
have mercy on me!'

Jesus stopped, and said,
'Call him.'

So they said to the blind man,
'Get up, come forward, he is calling you.'

Leaving his cloak,
he stood up,
and came forward to Jesus.

Jesus said to him,
'What do you want me to do for you?'

The blind man said to him,
'Teacher, let me see again.'

Jesus said to him,
'Go, your faith has made you well.'

And immediately,
Bartimaeus regained his sight,
and joined the crowds
following Jesus
along the road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

4 BEFORE ADVENT – ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

Sunday 31 October

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – Deuteronomy 6.1-9

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Moses said to the people,

‘These are the commandments, laws, and decrees,
that the Lord your God
has directed me to teach to you,
to observe in the land
that you are now to enter
and possess.

Hear therefore, O Israel,

these commandments, laws, and decrees,
and observe them diligently,

so that you,

and your children,
and your children’s children,
may honour the Lord your God,
all the days of your life,

so that your days may be long,

and you may prosper, and multiply greatly,
in this land,

flowing with milk and honey,

as promised to you

by the Lord,
the God of your ancestors.

Now hear, O Israel:

the Lord our God
is one Lord,
and you shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your might.

Keep these words,

that I am commanding you today,
in your heart.

Teach them to your children.

Recite them at home,
and when you travel;
at the end of the day,
and in the morning.

Mark them on your hand,
and on your forehead;
on your doorposts,
and on your gates.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 119.1-8

SECOND READING – Hebrews 9.11-14

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Christ is the high priest
of the new covenant.

He has entered, once for all,
into the most holy sanctuary
which is greater by far
than any made by human hands on earth.

He has entered,
not with the blood of goats or calves,
but with his own blood,
attaining
everlasting redemption.

The blood of goats and bulls,
and the ashes of a calf,
have been applied
to sanctify the bodies
of those who have been defiled.

How much more
will the blood of Christ,
offering himself,
through the eternal Spirit,
without blemish, to God,
purify our hearts
from sin that leads to death,
that we may worship the living God!

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 12.28-34a

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

One of the scribes asked Jesus,
‘Which commandment is the greatest of all?’

Jesus answered,

‘The greatest commandment is this:

“Hear, O Israel,
the Lord our God is one Lord;
and you shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,
and with all your strength.”

And the second is this,

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

There is no commandment
greater than these.’

The scribe said to him,

‘Yes, teacher, this is surely right:

the Lord our God is one, and there is no other;
and to love the Lord our God
with all your heart, understanding, and strength -
and to love your neighbour as yourself -
this is more important
than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices.’

Recognising the wisdom of this answer,

Jesus said to the scribe,

‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

3 BEFORE ADVENT

Sunday 7 November

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – 1 Kings 17.8-16

A reading from the first book of Kings.

The word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying,

‘Go now to the coastal town of Sarepta,
between Tyre and Sidon,
and live there;
for I have commanded a widow there
to feed you.’

So Elijah set out,
and went to Sarepta,
as the Lord commanded.

When Elijah arrived
at the gate of the town,
a widow was there, gathering sticks.

Elijah asked her for a cup of water,
and as she went,
he called after her,
asking also for a piece of bread.

She turned and said to Elijah,
‘As the Lord your God lives,
I have nothing baked.
I have only a handful of flour, in a jar,
and a little oil, in a jug.
I am gathering these sticks
so that I may go home,
and prepare all that remains,
for myself and my son,
that we may eat it, and die.’

Elijah said to her,
‘Do not be afraid.
Go, and do as you have said.
But first, make something from it
and bring it to me,
and afterwards make something for yourself
and your son.
For the Lord, the God of Israel, says this:
The jar of flour will not be empty,
and the jug of oil will not run dry,
until the day
that the Lord sends rain
on the earth.’

She went and did as Elijah had said,
and she, and Elijah, and her household,
ate for many days;
and the jar of flour was not empty,
and the jug of oil did not run dry.

This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 146

SECOND READING – Hebrews 9.24-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The earthly high priest

enters a sanctuary made by human hands,
a mere copy of the true one,
but Christ enters into heaven itself,
to appear in the presence of God
on our behalf.

Year after year,
the earthly high priest
enters the holy place,
to offer the blood of goats and bulls -
but Christ, entering heaven,
does not have to offer himself again and again.

Christ appears once,
at the right time,
to remove all sin,
by the sacrifice of himself.
Mortals die once, and then face judgement,
but Christ, having been offered once,
for the sins of many,
will appear at the judgement,
not to offer himself for sin once again,
but to welcome into salvation
all those who are waiting,
with eager anticipation, for him.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 12.38-44

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

Jesus was teaching in the temple,
and a large crowd was listening to him.

Jesus said,
‘Beware of the scribes!
They like to walk around in long robes,
and have people bow down to them in public.
They like to have the best seats in the synagogues,
and places of honour at banquets.
Yet they cheat widows out of their property,
while, for the sake of appearances,
they say long prayers.
They will be judged most harshly.’

Jesus sat down
opposite the place
where money was offered,
and watched the crowd
putting in what they had brought.
Many rich people were giving large sums.

A poor widow came,
and put in two small coins.
Jesus called his disciples, and said to them,
‘Truly, this poor widow
has put in more
than all those others.
For they have contributed
from all that they have to spare;
but she, in her poverty,
has put in all she had to live on.’
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

2 BEFORE ADVENT - Remembrance

Sunday 14 November

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Daniel 12.1-3*

A reading from the book of Daniel.

When the nation faces
its greatest distress -
greater than any
since the nations first came into being -
Michael, the great prince,
the protector of your people, will arise,
and your people will be saved -
all those whose names
are recorded in the book.
Many who have died
will awake to judgement -
some to shame and disgrace,
and some to everlasting life.
Those who are wise will shine
like the brightness of the sky,
and those who lead others to righteousness
will shine, for ever, like the stars.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 16

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 10.11-14, 19-25a*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The priest in the earthly temple
offers the same sacrifices,
day after day,
that can never take away sin.
But when Christ offered,
for all time,
a single sacrifice for sin,
'he sat down at the right hand of God' -
and 'his enemies
will be his footstool'.
For by his one offering of himself,
he completed the work
of taking away sin,
in full, and for all time,
so that we can now
enter the most holy place
with confidence.
Christ himself
is the new and living way
into the most holy place,
where once,
only the high priest could enter.
So with Christ as our high priest,
let us draw near with a true heart,
and the full assurance of our faith,
knowing that we are purified by his sacrifice;
meeting together faithfully,
fully confident in the promises of God,
encouraging one another
to love, and to good deeds.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 13.1-13*

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

As Jesus was leaving the temple,
one of his disciples said,
'Look at these huge stones,
and magnificent buildings!'
Jesus said,
'The day will come
when not one stone
will be left upon another.'
Later, he was sitting opposite the temple
at the Mount of Olives.
Peter, James, John, and Andrew
asked him privately,
'When will this happen?
And how will we know?'
Jesus said,
'Do not be misled.
Many will come
claiming my name,
claiming to be the one,
and many will be led astray.
But even when you hear of wars,
and rumours of wars,
do not be alarmed,
for all this must take place -
but the end is not yet.
Nation will rise against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom.
There will be earthquakes, and famines,
in various places,
but even this is only the beginning.
You will be handed over to councils,
and beaten in synagogues;
and dragged before governors and kings;
but do not fear,
for the Holy Spirit
will give you the words to say.
You will be hated because of my name;
brother will betray brother to death,
and a father his child;
children will rise against parents,
and have them put to death.
But the good news
will be proclaimed to all nations;
and the one who endures to the end
will be saved.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

CHRIST THE KING

Last Sunday before Advent

Sunday 21 November

Readings for Year B

FIRST READING – *Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14*

A reading from the book of Daniel.

As I watched,
 thrones were set in place,
 and the Ancient of Days
 was seated on his throne.
His clothing was dazzling white,
 and his hair was like wool.
His throne was flames of fire
 that streamed out from his presence.
A countless multitude
 surrounded him, to serve him.
The court assembled,
 and the books were opened.
And as I watched,
 one like a human being
 appeared in the clouds of heaven,
 and approached the Ancient of Days.
And to him was given
 authority, glory, and honour,
 that people of every nation and language
 should serve him.
His glory will last for ever,
 and his kingdom will never pass away.
This is the word of the Lord.

Psalm 93

SECOND READING – *Revelation 1.4b-8*

A reading from the book of Revelation.

From John,
 to the seven churches in Asia.
Grace to you, and peace,
 from God,
 who was,
 and is,
 and is to come.
Grace to you, and peace,
 from the seven-fold spirit
 before the throne of God.
Grace to you, and peace,
 from Jesus Christ,
 the faithful witness,
 the firstborn from the dead,
 the leader of all humankind,
 who loves us,
 and by his sacrifice
 freed us from our sins,
 and made us to be a royal priesthood
 serving his God and Father;
 to him be the power and the glory for ever.
Amen!

Look! He is coming with the clouds!

Every eye will see him -
even those who pierced him.
All the nations of the earth
will cry out to him.

'I am the Alpha and the Omega',
says the Lord God,
'the first and the last,
the beginning and the end,
who was, and is, and is to come.'
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 18.33b-37*

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

Pilate asked Jesus,
'Are you the King of the Jews?'
Jesus replied,
'Do you ask this for yourself,
or because others
have said it about me?'
Pilate said,
'Your own nation
and your own chief priests
have handed you over to me.
What is it
that you have done?'
Jesus answered,
'I have no earthly kingdom.
You see that I have no warriors
fighting to protect me.
My kingdom is not of this world.'
Pilate said,
'So you are a king!'
Jesus replied,
'You use the word "king".
I came into the world
to proclaim the truth.
For this I was born;
and everyone who seeks the truth
listens to my voice.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.