

**Sentence of Scripture**

Watch and be ready, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24.42, 44

**Prayer of the day**

Kindle in our hearts, Father,  
the same faith that impelled Abraham  
to set out from his home  
and to live as a pilgrim in a foreign land.  
As we, like him, look for the city  
that none but you can design and build,  
keep us watchful for your Son's coming,  
that we may be found faithful stewards  
of all that you have entrusted to us.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Readings****Isaiah 1:1, 10–20**

<sup>1</sup> The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

<sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! <sup>11</sup>What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. <sup>12</sup>When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; <sup>13</sup>bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation— I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. <sup>14</sup>Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. <sup>15</sup>When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

<sup>16</sup>Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, <sup>17</sup>learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.

<sup>18</sup>Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. <sup>19</sup>If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; <sup>20</sup>but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

(NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 50:1–8, 23–24

<sup>1</sup> The Lord our God, the Mighty One, has spoken:

**and summoned the earth,  
from the rising of the sun to its setting in the west.**

<sup>2</sup> From Zion, perfect in beauty:

**God has shone out in glory.**

<sup>3</sup> Our God is coming, he will not keep silent:

**before him is devouring fire, and tempest whirls about him.**

<sup>4</sup> He calls to the heavens above:

**and to the earth, so he may judge his people.**

<sup>5</sup> 'Gather to me my faithful ones:

**those who by sacrifice made a covenant with me.'**

<sup>6</sup> The heavens shall proclaim his righteousness:

**for God himself is judge.**

<sup>7</sup> 'Listen my people, and I will speak:

**O Israel, I am God your God, and I will give my testimony.**

<sup>8</sup> 'It is not for your sacrifices that I reprove you:

**for your burnt-offerings are always before me.**

<sup>23</sup> 'O consider this, you who forget God:

**lest I tear you in pieces, and there be no one to save you.**

<sup>24</sup> 'He honours me who brings sacrifice of thanksgiving:

**and to him who keeps to my way I will show the salvation of God.'**

## Hebrews 11:1–3, 8–16 (17–28)

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going.

<sup>9</sup> By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.”

<sup>13</sup> All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, <sup>14</sup> for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, <sup>18</sup> of whom he had been told, “It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you.” <sup>19</sup> He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. <sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac invoked blessings for the future on Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, “bowing in worship over the top of his staff.” <sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his burial.

<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after his birth, because they saw that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. <sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup> He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. <sup>27</sup> By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king’s anger; for he persevered as though he saw him who is invisible. <sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

(NRSV)

### **Luke 12:32–40**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to . . .

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>32</sup> “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>35</sup> “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; <sup>36</sup> be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks.

<sup>37</sup> Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

<sup>39</sup> “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.

<sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

(NRSV)

This is the Gospel of our Lord, **praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**