

Sentence of Scripture

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
for to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

Isaiah 9.2, 6

Prayer of the day

Good and gracious God,
who gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe,
wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Saviour of all, lying in a manger:
on this holy night draw us into the mystery of your love.
Join our voices with the heavenly host
that we may sing your glory on high.
Give us a place among the shepherds that we may find the one
for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 9:2-7

- ²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
- ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
- ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in
blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- ⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

(NRSV)

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

Psalm 96

¹ O sing to the Lord a new song:

sing to the Lord, all the earth.

² Sing to the Lord and bless his holy name:

proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

³ Declare his glory among the nations:

and his wonders among all peoples.

⁴ For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised:

he is more to be feared than all gods.

⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols:

it is the Lord who made the heavens.

⁶ Majesty and glory are before him:

beauty and power are in his sanctuary.

⁷ Render to the Lord, you families of the nations:

render to the Lord glory and might.

⁸ Render to the Lord the honour due to his name:

bring offerings and come into his courts.

⁹ O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness:

let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

¹⁰ Say among the nations that the Lord is king:

**he has made the world so firm that it can never be moved;
and he shall judge the peoples with equity.**

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad:

let the sea roar, and all that fills it:

¹² Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them:

**then shall all the trees of the wood shout with joy before the
Lord;**

¹³ For he comes, he comes to judge the earth:

**he shall judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.**

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,

¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,

¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. (NRSV)

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

Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (NRSV)

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