

Bible Readings: August 2021

Bible Readings: **Sunday 1 August 2021** (Transfiguration Sunday)

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: **Mark 8–9 (NRSVA) | This Is My Son**

³¹ Then Jesus 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. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.’ **9** ¹ And he said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.’

² Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³ and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Then Peter said to Jesus, ‘Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ ⁶ He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷ Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!’ ⁸ Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: **1 Thessalonians 2 (NRSVA) | The Word of God**

¹³ We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God’s word, which is also at work in you believers. ¹⁴ For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Judeans, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out; they displease God and oppose everyone ¹⁶ by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God’s wrath has overtaken them at last.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 8 August 2021

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: **Genesis 1 (NRSVA) | We are Made by God (Creation)**

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. ...

²⁶Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

²⁷So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' ²⁹God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: **Galatians 1 (NRSVA) | There is No Other Gospel**

¹Paul an apostle—sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— ²and all the members of God's family who are with me,

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

⁶I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! ⁹As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

¹⁰ Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

¹¹ For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; ¹² for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³ You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. ¹⁴ I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. ¹⁵ But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him for fifteen days; ¹⁹ but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. ²⁰ In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! ²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, ²² and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; ²³ they only heard it said, 'The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy.' ²⁴ And they glorified God because of me.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 15 August 2021

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: **Genesis 12 & 15 (NRSVA) | God is Kind to Us (Blessing)**

12 ¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' ⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

15 ¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' ² But Abram said, 'O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' ³ And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' ⁴ But the word of the LORD came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' ⁵ He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' ⁶ And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: **Galatians 2 (NRSVA) | Saved by Faith**

¹ Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. ² I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain. ... ⁷ On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised ⁸ (for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles), ⁹ and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰ They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.

¹¹ But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; ¹² for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. ¹³ And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?'

¹⁵ We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶ yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to

believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. ¹⁷ But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; ²⁰ and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 22 August 2021

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: **Genesis 45 (NRSVA) | God Looks Out for Us (Protection)**

⁹Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, ‘Send everyone away from me.’ So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?’ But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come closer to me.’ And they came closer. He said, ‘I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. ⁷God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.”

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: **Galatians 3 (NRSVA) | Faith or Law?**

¹You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! ²The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? ³Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? ⁴Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. ⁵Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

⁶Just as Abraham ‘believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness’, ⁷so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. ⁸And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.’ ⁹For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed.

¹⁰For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.’ ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for ‘The one who is righteous will live by faith.’ ¹²But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, ‘Whoever does the works of the law will live by them.’ ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law

by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’—¹⁴ in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ...

²³ Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 29 August 2021

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: Exodus 12 (NRSVA) | God Rescues Us (Salvation)

²¹ Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, 'Go, select lambs for your families, and slaughter the passover lamb. ²² Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood in the basin. None of you shall go outside the door of your house until morning. ²³ For the LORD will pass through to strike down the Egyptians; when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over that door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you down. ²⁴ You shall observe this rite as a perpetual ordinance for you and your children. ²⁵ When you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this observance. ²⁶ And when your children ask you, "What do you mean by this observance?" ²⁷ you shall say, "It is the passover sacrifice to the LORD, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck down the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed down and worshipped. ²⁸ The Israelites went and did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.

⁴⁰ The time that the Israelites had lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ At the end of four hundred and thirty years, on that very day, all the companies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴² That was for the LORD a night of vigil, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. That same night is a vigil to be kept for the LORD by all the Israelites throughout their generations.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: Galatians 4 (NRSVA) | Children Not Slaves!

¹ My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; ² but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. ³ So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. ⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶ And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods. ⁹ Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits? How can you want to be enslaved to them again? ¹⁰ You are observing special days, and months, and seasons, and years. ¹¹ I am afraid that my work for you may have been wasted.

¹² Friends, I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong. ¹³ You know that it was because of a physical infirmity that I first announced the gospel to you; ¹⁴ though my condition put you to the test, you did not scorn or despise me, but welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ What has become of the goodwill

you felt? For I testify that, had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ They make much of you, but for no good purpose; they want to exclude you, so that you may make much of them. ¹⁸ It is good to be made much of for a good purpose at all times, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹ My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰ I wish I were present with you now and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: September 2021

Bible Readings: Sunday 5 September 2021

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1st Reading: Exodus 19 (NRSVA)

We Belong to God's Family (Covenant)

¹At the third new moon after the Israelites had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ²They had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. ³Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2 (NRSVA)

Missional Courage, Character & Care?

¹You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, ²but though we had already suffered and been shamefully maltreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. ⁵As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; ⁶nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

⁹You remember our labour and toil, brothers and sisters; we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was towards you believers. ¹¹As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, ¹²urging and encouraging you and pleading that you should lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 12 September 2021

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1st Reading: Exodus 20 (NRSVA)

God Teaches Us How to Live (10 Commandments)

¹ Then God spoke all these words:

² I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³ you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸ Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹ For six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁰ But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹² Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ You shall not murder.

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: Galatians 5 (NRSVA) | Live by the Spirit!

¹ For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

² Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. ³ Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law. ⁴ You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.

⁷You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth? ⁸Such persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. ⁹A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. ¹⁰I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty. ¹¹But my friends, why am I still being persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision? In that case the offence of the cross has been removed. ¹²I wish those who unsettle you would castrate themselves!

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' ¹⁵If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Bible Readings: Sunday 19 September 2021

NRSVA: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised, © 1989, 1995, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 6 & Judges 2 (NRSVA)

Don't Let Us Forget God (The Promised Land)

Deuteronomy 6: ¹ [Moses said] Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, ² so that you and your children and your children's children may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. ³ Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶ Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷ Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹ and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Judges 2: ⁶ When Joshua dismissed the people, the Israelites all went to their own inheritances to take possession of the land. ⁷ The people worshipped the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. ⁸ Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. ⁹ So they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ Moreover, that whole generation was gathered to their ancestors, and another generation grew up after them, who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

2nd Reading: Galatians 6 (NRSVA) | Work for Good!

¹ My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. ³ For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. ⁴ All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbour's work, will become a cause for pride. ⁵ For all must carry their own loads.

⁶ Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

⁷ Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. ⁸ If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹ So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will

reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

¹¹ See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! ¹² It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! ¹⁶ As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

¹⁸ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord,

Response: **Thanks be to God.**