

## READINGS FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

### Christmas Eve 6pm

#### Isaiah 9. 2-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

**3** You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

**4** For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

**5** Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

**6** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**7** Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

#### Luke 2.1-20

**1** In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.

**2** This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

**3** All went to their own towns to be registered.

**4** Joseph 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.

**5** He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

**6** While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

**7** And 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.

<sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

<sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

<sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

<sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

<sup>15</sup> 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.'

<sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

<sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;

<sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

<sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

<sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE 11pm**

### **Isaiah 9. 2-7**

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6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

#### **Titus 2.11-14**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,  
<sup>12</sup> training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,  
<sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup> 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.

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<sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

<sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## **CHRISTMAS DAY 9am**

### **Isaiah 52. 7-10**

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

**8** Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.

**9** Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

**10** The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

### **John 1.1-14**

**1** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

**2** He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

**3** You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

**4** Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

## **JANUARY 1st - Epiphany**

### **Isaiah 60.1-6**

1 “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.

3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

4 “Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip.

5 Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come.

6 Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

### **Psalms 72.1-7, 10-14**

Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

2 May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.

3 May the mountains bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

4 May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor.

5 May he endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

6 May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

7 In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.

10 May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts.

11 May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him.

12 For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.

13 He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

14 He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

### **Ephesians 3.1-12**

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

2 Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,

3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.

4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

5 which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.

6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

8 Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ,  
9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.  
10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,  
11 according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

### **Matthew 2.1-12**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem  
2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."  
3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.  
4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.  
5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:  
6 " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' "  
7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.  
8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."  
9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.  
10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.  
11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.  
12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

## **JANUARY 8th - Baptism of Jesus**

### **Isaiah 42.1-9**

- <sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
- <sup>2</sup> He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;
- <sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
- <sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be crushed  
until he has established justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.
- <sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord ,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it:
- <sup>6</sup> I am the Lord , I have called you in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
a light to the nations,
- <sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
- <sup>8</sup> I am the Lord , that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to idols.
- <sup>9</sup> See, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth,  
I tell you of them.

### **Psalm 40.1-14**

- <sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven:  
ascribe to the Lord glory and might.

- <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name:  
O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness.
- <sup>3</sup> The voice of the Lord is upon the waters:  
the God of glory thunders,  
the Lord upon the great waters.
- <sup>4</sup> The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation:  
the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.
- <sup>5</sup> The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar-trees:  
the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.
- <sup>6</sup> He makes them skip like a calf:  
Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- <sup>7</sup> The voice of the Lord divides the lightning-flash:  
the voice of the Lord whirls the sands of the desert,  
the Lord whirls the desert of Kadesh.
- <sup>8</sup> The voice of the Lord rends the terebinth trees,  
and strips bare the forests:  
in his temple all cry 'Glory.'
- <sup>9</sup> The Lord sits enthroned above the water-flood:  
the Lord sits enthroned as a king for ever.
- <sup>10</sup> The Lord will give strength to his people:  
the Lord will give to his people the blessing of peace.

### **Acts 10.34-43**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded

us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

### **Matthew 3.13-17**

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

### **JANUARY 15th - Epiphany 2**

#### **Isaiah 49.1-7**

<sup>1</sup> Listen to me, O coastlands,  
pay attention, you peoples from far away!  
The Lord called me before I was born,  
while I was in my mother's womb he named me.  
<sup>2</sup> He made my mouth like a sharp sword,  
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;  
he made me a polished arrow,  
in his quiver he hid me away.  
<sup>3</sup> And he said to me, 'You are my servant,  
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'  
<sup>4</sup> But I said, 'I have laboured in vain,  
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;  
yet surely my cause is with the Lord,  
and my reward with my God.'  
<sup>5</sup> And now the Lord says,  
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,  
to bring Jacob back to him,  
and that Israel might be gathered to him,  
for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord,  
and my God has become my strength—  
<sup>6</sup> he says,

'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant  
to raise up the tribes of Jacob  
and to restore the survivors of Israel;  
I will give you as a light to the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the Lord ,  
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,  
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,  
the slave of rulers,  
'Kings shall see and stand up,  
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,  
because of the Lord , who is faithful,  
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.'

### **Psalm 40.1-14**

- <sup>1</sup> I waited patiently for the Lord:  
and he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- <sup>2</sup> He brought me up from the pit of roaring waters,  
out of the mire and clay:  
and set my feet upon a rock, and made firm my foothold.
- <sup>3</sup> And he has put a new song in my mouth:  
even a song of thanksgiving to our God.
- <sup>4</sup> Many shall see it and fear:  
and shall put their trust in the Lord.
- <sup>5</sup> Blessed are those who have made the Lord their hope:  
who have not turned to the proud,  
or to those who wander in deceit.
- <sup>6</sup> O Lord my God, great are the wonderful things  
which you have done,  
and your thoughts which are towards us:  
there is none to be compared with you;
- <sup>7</sup> Were I to declare them and speak of them:  
they are more than I am able to express.
- <sup>8</sup> Sacrifice and offering you do not desire:  
but my ears you have marked for obedience;
- <sup>9</sup> Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required:

then said I, Lo, I come.

<sup>10</sup> In the scroll of the book it is written of me,  
that I should do your will:

O my God, I long to do it, your law delights my heart.

<sup>11</sup> I have declared your righteousness  
in the great congregation:

I have not restrained my lips, O Lord,  
and that you know.

<sup>12</sup> I have not hidden your righteousness in my heart:

I have spoken of your faithfulness and of your salvation.

<sup>13</sup> I have not kept back your loving-kindness and your truth:  
from the great congregation.

<sup>14</sup> O Lord, do not withhold your mercy from me:

let your loving-kindness and your truth  
ever preserve me.

### **1 Corinthians 1.1-9**

<sup>1</sup> Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, <sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— <sup>6</sup> just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **John 1.29-42**

<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’ <sup>30</sup> This is he of whom I said, “After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.” <sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing

with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.’<sup>32</sup> And John testified, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.’<sup>33</sup> I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.”<sup>34</sup> And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.’<sup>35</sup> The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,<sup>36</sup> and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, ‘Look, here is the Lamb of God!’<sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.<sup>38</sup> When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’ They said to him, ‘Rabbi’ (which translated means Teacher), ‘where are you staying?’<sup>39</sup> He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon.<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.<sup>41</sup> He first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated Anointed).<sup>42</sup> He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter).