

The First Reading

Genesis 2:4b-22

The first reading is from Genesis chapter 2.

⁴ In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶ but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. ⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹² and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” ¹⁹ So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96:1-13

- 1 O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
- 6 Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

- 7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the Lord in holy splendor;
tremble before him, all the earth.

- 10 Say among the nations, "The Lord is king!
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity."
- 11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
- 12 let the field exult, and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
- 13 before the Lord; for he is coming,
for he is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Acts 10:34-42

The Second Reading is from Acts chapter 10.

34 Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. 36 You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. 37 That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: 38 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. 39 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; 40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 41 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. 42 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.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

John 3:1-16

The holy Gospel according to Saint John, the 3rd chapter. Glory to you, O Lord.

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3 Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8 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.” 9 Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

11 “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to you O Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

Gracious God, you invite those who feel most unworthy of love to a seat at the head of your table. Through the humility, vulnerability, and repentance of your church, bring a compassionate welcome to all in need of your grace. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Sustaining God, guide all people of the earth through harsh extremes in the cycles of creation—drought and monsoon, blistering heat and freezing cold. Hold in your mercy all places where lives have been disrupted by natural disasters, especially the places where there have been devastating forest fires and hurricanes. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Sovereign God, gather our country around a shared table this week during our national election. Open fruitful dialogue between people of every political party, place, age, and socio-economic status so that we may discern the common good you desire for us. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Merciful God, protect those whose human dignity has been denied and oppressed in our nation. Raise the voices of those who have been silenced and bring justice where power has been abused for personal gain. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Loving God, accompany those dealing with health concerns, anxieties, loss of loved ones, aches and pains that cannot be spoken aloud. Wrap your healing wings around all for whom we pray, especially: Bradley, Josie, Bev, Nancy, John, Linda, Dave, Jim, Brad and Jodie, Cassie & Family, Delores, Graham, Bob, Ila, Norman, Evelyn, Darrell, Donna, Beckie, Joy, Pat, Jim, Kay and Glenn, Vickie, Diane, Anna,

The friends and family of Kim Rains

and Sgt. Lacey Elliott, who continues to serve our country.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, you unite all the faithful in a banquet of your abundance. This day we remember all who now feast in your eternal presence, especially all who have died in the past year: Bill, Carol, Marjorie, and Kim. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.