

First Scripture Reading

John 15:1-8

from the Common English Bible

¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. ²He removes any of my branches that don’t produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. ³You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can’t produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can’t produce fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything. ⁶If you don’t remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples.

This is the word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm Reading

22:25-31

from the Common English Bible

²⁵ I offer praise in the great congregation because of you;
I will fulfill my promises in the presence of those who honor God.

²⁶ Let all those who are suffering eat and be full!
Let all who seek the Lord praise him! I pray your hearts live forever!

²⁷ Every part of the earth will remember and come back to the Lord...
every family among all the nations will worship you.

²⁸ Because the right to rule belongs to the Lord, he rules all nations.
²⁹ **Indeed, all the earth’s powerful will worship him; all who are descending to the dust will kneel before him; my being also lives for him.**

³⁰ Future descendants will serve him...
generations to come will be told about my Lord.

³¹ They will proclaim God’s righteousness to those not yet born...
telling them what God has done.

Second Scripture Reading

Acts 8:26-40

from the Common English Bible

²⁶An angel from the Lord spoke to Philip, “At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a desert road.) ²⁷So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) ²⁸He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. ²⁹The Spirit told Philip, “Approach this carriage and stay with it.” ³⁰Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you really understand what you are reading?” ³¹The man replied, “Without someone to guide me, how could I?” Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. ³²This was the passage of scripture he was reading: *Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent so he didn't open his mouth.* ³³*In his humiliation justice was taken away from him. Who can tell the story of his descendants because his life was taken from the earth?* ³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Is he talking about himself or someone else?” ³⁵Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. ³⁶As they went down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, “Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?” ³⁸He ordered that the carriage halt. Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Lord's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰Philip found himself in Azotus. He traveled through that area, preaching the good news in all the cities until he reached Caesarea.