

Thank you for serving your church in this way and for sharing God's word with your sisters and brothers. A few reminders:

- Practice the readings beforehand.
- Please arrive at least ten minutes before your scheduled service. "A Guide to Pronouncing Biblical Names" book is located in the Pastor's Sacristy, the small room on the right hand side at the front of the Sanctuary. If, after consulting the book, you still need help with any pronunciations, Pastor can help you.
- You may sit in one of the right-side altar chairs until it is time to read, or you may come forward prior to the Prayer of the Day.
- When speaking, please project your voice and make sure you are speaking as loudly and clearly as possible.
- The lessons may be introduced simply by saying,

"The Old Testament Reading is from the number chapter of book."

After the lesson the reader says, "The Word of the Lord." And congregation responds, "Thanks be to God."

"The New Testament Reading is from the number chapter of book."

After the lesson the reader says, "The Word of the Lord." And congregation responds, "Thanks be to God."

Thank you again for serving. Your contribution to worship is appreciated by all!

INTRODUCTION

Jesus says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is God's promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the "little flock" of which we are a part today in assembly. Faith, God's baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW)

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

READINGS

Genesis 15:1–6

Psalms 33:12–22

Hebrews 11:1–3, 8–16

Luke 12:32–40

OLD TESTAMENT READING Genesis 15:1–6

God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God's promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.

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." ²But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴But 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." ⁵He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

☞ The Word of the Lord. ☞ Thanks be to God.

PSALM 33:12–22 (READ responsively this week.)

¹²Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD! Happy the people he has chosen to his own!

¹³**The LORD looks down from heaven, and beholds all the people in the world.**

¹⁴From where he sits enthroned he turns his gaze on all who dwell on the earth.

¹⁵**He fashions all the hearts of them and understands all their works.**

¹⁶A king is not saved by the size of the army, a strong man is not delivered by his great strength.

¹⁷**The horse is a vain hope for deliverance; far all its strength it cannot save.**

¹⁸Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear him, on those who wait upon his love,

¹⁹**to pluck their lives from death, and to feed them in time of famine.**

²⁰Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

²¹**Indeed, our heart rejoices in him, for in his holy name we put our trust.**

²²Let your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, as we have put our trust in you.

NEW TESTAMENT READING Hebrews 11:1–3, 8–16

Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old — and Sarah herself was barren — because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

¹³All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them. **A** The Word of the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 12:32–40

Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

³²Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

³⁹But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."