

## February Readings

**7 February**

**No Intro's for this week**

The Last Sunday after the Epiphany

### THE COLLECT

O God, who before the passion of your only begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Exodus 34:29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

### PSALM 99 (*responsively by whole verse*)

**[728]**

1 The LORD is King;  
let the people tremble; \*  
he is enthroned upon the cherubim;  
let the earth shake.

**2 The LORD is great in Zion; \*  
he is high above all peoples.**

3 Let them confess his Name, which is great and awesome; \*  
he is the Holy One.

**4 "O mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity; \*  
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob."**

5 Proclaim the greatness of the LORD our God  
and fall down before his footstool; \*  
he is the Holy One.

**6 Moses and Aaron among his priests,  
and Samuel among those who call upon his Name, \*  
they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.**

7 He spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud; \*  
they kept his testimonies and the decree that he gave them.

**8 O LORD our God, you answered them indeed; \*  
you were a God who forgave them,  
yet punished them for their evil deeds.**

9 Proclaim the greatness of the LORD our God  
and worship him upon his holy hill; \*  
for the LORD our God is the Holy One.

#### **THE EPISTLE**

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

#### **THE GOSPEL**

Luke 9:28-43a

About eight days after Peter had acknowledged Jesus as the Christ of God, Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen. On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. Just then a man from the crowd shouted, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

## 14 February

The First Sunday in Lent

### THE COLLECT

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan: Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

*This sermon, attributed to Moses, provides instruction for the Israelites as they approach the new territory they hope to inhabit. They are urged to remember that their new home is a gift from God: they are to remain grateful and faithful, and to place worship at the center of their new life. A reading from Deuteronomy:*

When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us." When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

### Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 (responsively by whole verse)

[719]

1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, \*  
abides under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 He shall say to the LORD,  
"You are my refuge and my stronghold, \*  
my God in whom I put my trust."

9 Because you have made the LORD your refuge, \*  
and the Most High your habitation,

10 There shall no evil happen to you, \*  
neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over you, \*  
to keep you in all your ways.

**12 They shall bear you in their hands, \*  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

13 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; \*  
you shall trample the young lion and the serpent under your feet.

**14 Because he is bound to me in love,  
therefore will I deliver him; \*  
I will protect him, because he knows my Name.**

15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; \*  
I am with him in trouble;  
I will rescue him and bring him to honor.

**16 With long life will I satisfy him, \*  
and show him my salvation.**

#### THE EPISTLE

Romans 10:8b-13

*This reading is part of a larger section of Paul's letter to the congregation in Rome. In this larger passage, Paul urges his readers to do two things: to place their faith in Christ, raised from the dead; and to remember that anyone, regardless of who he or she is, has been offered a new relationship with God by virtue of faith. A reading from Romans:*

"The word is near you,  
on your lips and in your heart"  
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

#### THE GOSPEL

Luke 4:1-13

*According to the Gospels, Jesus' baptism and blessing as God's anointed one was followed immediately by a period of intense self-examination. Each temptation in the verbal sparring match between Jesus and the personification of evil provides Jesus an additional opportunity to become more certain about his identity and his mission.*

After his baptism, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels

concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

## **21 February**

The Second Sunday in Lent

### **THE COLLECT**

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE**

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

*Abram had begun to assume that God had forgotten or abandoned God's covenant with him. In this reading we hear Abram receive a double assurance: a vision and a dream. Both the vision and the dream confirm that God will honor the covenant. In the ancient world, such a vision, followed by a confirming dream, would have removed all doubt for Abram and for those who heard this story. A reading from Genesis:*

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." 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?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." 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." He 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." And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness. Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

### **PSALM 27** (*responsively by whole verse*)

**[617]**

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom then shall I fear? \*  
the LORD is the strength of my life;  
of whom then shall I be afraid?

**2 When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh, \*  
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who  
stumbled and fell.**

3 Though an army should encamp against me, \*  
yet my heart shall not be afraid;

**4 And though war should rise up against me, \*  
yet will I put my trust in him.**

5 One thing have I asked of the LORD;  
one thing I seek; \*  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life;

**6 To behold the fair beauty of the LORD \*  
and to seek him in his temple.**

7 For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe  
in his shelter; \*  
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling  
and set me high upon a rock.

**8 Even now he lifts up my head \*  
above my enemies round about me.**

9 Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation  
with sounds of great gladness; \*  
I will sing and make music to the LORD.

**10 Hearken to my voice, O LORD, when I call; \*  
have mercy on me and answer me.**

11 You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." \*  
Your face, LORD, will I seek.

**12 Hide not your face from me, \*  
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.**

13 You have been my helper;  
cast me not away; \*  
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.

**14 Though my father and my mother forsake me, \*  
the LORD will sustain me.**

15 Show me your way, O LORD; \*  
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.

**16 Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, \*  
for false witnesses have risen up against me,  
and also those who speak malice.**

17 What if I had not believed  
that I should see the goodness of the LORD \*  
in the land of the living!

## THE EPISTLE

Philippians 3:17-4:1

*Writing from prison, Paul is unsure whether he will live to see the Philippians again. In this letter of encouragement he urges his readers to remain to the gospel message he and his colleagues had preached to them, and to resist the temptation to abandon their faith for another ideology. A reading from Philippians:*

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

## THE GOSPEL

Luke 13:31-35

*Luke uses a conversation between Jesus and some benevolent Pharisees to portray Jesus as clearly focused and thoroughly committed to confront the corrupt power structure of Rome.*

Some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

28 February

The Third Sunday in Lent

## THE COLLECT

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Exodus 3:1-15

*The "burning bush" story is one of the most famous passages of Hebrew scripture. Moses considers himself an unworthy candidate to lead the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, but is overwhelmed by the clarity of Yahweh's call. In accepting this call, Moses learns more about himself, more about God, and more about God's hopes for the Hebrew people. A reading from Exodus:*

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain." But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you':

This is my name forever,  
and this my title for all generations."

**PSALM 63:1-8** (*responsively by whole verse*)

**[670]**

1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; \*  
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,  
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.

**2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, \***  
**that I might behold your power and your glory.**

3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; \*  
my lips shall give you praise.

**4 So will I bless you as long as I live \***  
**and lift up my hands in your Name.**

5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, \*  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

**6 When I remember you upon my bed, \***  
**and meditate on you in the night watches.**

7 For you have been my helper, \*  
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

**8 My soul clings to you; \***  
**your right hand holds me fast.**

*In this letter Paul urges the believers in Corinth to remain faithful to their calling as a servant people. He reminds them that many of their ancestors, despite being blessed by God, abandoned their faith and lost their way. A reading from 1 Corinthians:*

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

## THE GOSPEL

Luke 13:1-9

*In this conversation Jesus appears to respond to questions about what it means when bad things happen. Contrary to the popular theology of his day, Jesus replies that hardship and tragedy are not the result of human sin. He urges his audience to accept responsibility for their own spiritual lives rather than seeing themselves as victims of fate.*

At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them--do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"